



St Mary's Woodford

Annual review 2022

including the Annual Report
and Accounts



St Mary's Woodford
APCM
Annual Report

Introduction:

2022 started with considerable concerns about the Omicron variant of Covid and ended with very encouraging attendance at Christmas services and events. It has been a difficult year with war in Ukraine since February, increasing concern about the climate, two British monarchs, three prime ministers, economic turmoil, rising inflation, and extreme weather of over 40 degrees in July and at least -6 degrees in December with snow and ice lying for a week. Through it all and in each individual and family crisis we have been reminded that God's love is stronger than all else and that in Christ, God is with us in every moment of our lives. Thank you for all that has been contributed to St Mary's and the lives of our communities and the ways God has been glorified.

Significant events and changes during the year include:

- The first fundraising Race Night, joint Choral Evensong and Soul Night in a few years in February, July and October respectively
- Ecumenical gatherings in January and during Lent with Methodists, Roman Catholics and other local churches for the first time in a few years
- YACHT INC 13s-16s leading a service for Racial Justice Sunday
- First Friday lunches, Second Sunday lunches, parish lunches and Christmas Day lunch fully re-established, the latter with support from community volunteers; Mission events returned
- Prayer Ministry team re-established on Sundays after the 10am
- Using Christmas as a theme for November's successful Charity Bazaar
- A fundraising concert for Ukraine in April with the choir of the Roman Catholic Ukrainian Cathedral, London
- Celebrating the 50th anniversary of re-consecration in June with Bishop Guli visiting, a community afternoon tea and exhibition about St Mary's Past Present and Future
- Becoming a hub for the Diocesan Communities for Ukrainians Scheme jointly with All Saints Woodford Wells in partnership with Citizens UK and supporting those hosting
- Hosting English as a Second Language lessons in the Memorial Hall from July for new arrivals from Ukraine
- Joining with South Woodford Baptist Church, Holy Trinity South

Woodford, Broadmead Baptist Church and Restore Church to pray for Ukraine in March and with an Easter Day popup stall in South Woodford

- Offering a bird seed prayer labyrinth in the churchyard in July
- Offering a book of condolence and special prayers and services following the death of her late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, during September
- Offering our first Wave of Light service during Baby Loss Awareness Week in October
- Hosting our first Repair café in October with support from many local partners
- Offering our post-service coffee and Baby & Toddler group as warm spaces
- Civic Remembrance with Jewish and Muslim faith leaders' involvement for the first time
- Having our first community Christingle on a Friday afternoon in December
- Linda Wiskin finishing her term as church warden and being replaced by Philip Petchey
- Anne Jones becoming a deputy warden
- Clare Reeves being appointed as Children's and Families' Ministry Coordinator across the parishes of Woodford, Wanstead and Aldersbrook
- Jeanette Meadway joining the ministry team



We are continuing to work within the framework of Growing God's Kingdom at St Mary's (drawing on principles from Leading Your Church into Growth) with a developing focus on listening to God, listening to our communities and focusing all that we do on being sustainable and realistic, while offering opportunities to explore faith while serving all. Parochial Church Council had a vision away day in September with a follow-up discussion in November. Many groups within the church community have asked to discuss prayer and so the first six months of 2023 will focus on prayer and pilgrimage because this will help us in our listening and resting in God's love, attending to the development of values-based approaches centrally and locally within the Diocese of Chelmsford and supporting us in working towards a five year strategic plan for St Mary's. All of the areas of church life mentioned in this report would be very glad of new people joining, bringing with them new ideas and approaches. Support and training, where needed, is available. If you or someone you know would like to support a particular area of church life, please contact the Rector or the church office, or please contact the team leader if you know them.

Worship and Life of Faith

Music Report

As the Parish continued to emerge from the COVID-19 Pandemic, and last-minute changes were needed in response to the Omicron variant in Winter 2021, 2022 has allowed the musical aspects of parish life to grow into levels seen before the Pandemic. We are very lucky to have a choir that are not only committed to producing high levels of quality week by week, but are also dedicated to seeing the musical offerings of St Mary's thrive and grow to keep our inherited tradition alive. This year we have seen many great examples which can not all be mentioned here. In the Summer, we celebrated fifty years of the rededication of the church with a Festival Eucharist where we were joined by the *Godfrey Ensemble* of brass players, performed new commissions for the service, and acknowledged, and looked forward to, the journey of the Parish through music. The annual Festival of Lessons & Carols saw the choir joined by friends and a congregation for the first time since the Pandemic to expectantly observe the yearly occurrence of the Nativity of our Lord. It has also been a joy to work with other choirs both in St Mary's church and further afield. The ecumenical Passiontide service included a *come & sing* choir reflecting our links with other churches in the area. To celebrate the end of the choir year, singers from the MMU joined our choir for Choral Evensong – an arrangement that had not happened for quite some time. It was uplifting to

have so many singers from the MMU who share the same passion for music to join together and sing the traditional office with music that is an inherent part of the Church of England. It was also an honour to be part of the Woodford Churches together service in St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Church with choirs from across the area.

After agreement by the PCC, the contract for the maintenance of the organ has been moved to William Drake Organ Builders. During the first visit, the quality of the instrument was confirmed by the specialists, and we are soon to have work done to the organ which will greatly enhance the sound and safeguard this important part of the church for future generations. We have also been lucky enough to receive a new upright piano for the Gwinell Room from the now closed United Reformed Church. This has not only found improved Friday choir rehearsals, but has been welcomed by other musicians who use the Church.

Above all of these achievements, it is essential to note that the regular musical worship of the Parish has been unbroken. I must finish by thanking the choir for their support of this fundamental aspect of the Parish, but also the Rector, Churchwardens, and PCC for theirs too. Please do not hesitate to get in touch should you wish to be a part of this wonderful tradition we are lucky to have at St Mary's.

Henry Metcalfe
Director of Music

Bell Ringing

We started 2022 by holding the District Bellringing Meeting at St Mary's. It was lovely to invite visiting ringers to ring with us and enjoy tea and cakes and Rowena kindly celebrated evensong for us. We have managed a number of quarter peals throughout the year including ringing for the Queens Platinum Jubilee and then later in the year for her passing , tolling a bell just before her funeral and the ringing a half muffled quarter a few days later.

We enjoyed a busy food and fun day showing lots of people up the tower. We are fortunate to have three young learners at the moment who are not far off being able to ring on Sundays.

We finished the year ringing a quarter for Monty Hollinsworth's christening in December and his mother Helen has just come back to join us ringing again after her maternity leave , welcome back Helen !

Kate Walker

Flowers

The flower group have had a very busy year after two years of lockdown with no flowers in Church. Hopefully this is a good sign of better times ahead. We would be very pleased to welcome more help, it is an enjoyable job!

Hazel Lovejoy



Sacristy

Once again the last year has been one of constant change but one of coming back more to normal procedures and happenings.

Numbers have however dropped away since before Covid and the acceptance of bread & wine is still not back to normal as many parishioners are still only receiving in one kind not two. Work done by the Sacristan and her team is very varied and includes supplies of wine, wafers, candles etc. to be ordered, keeping vessels clean, linen washed & ironed, giving of their own time for preparation of services and be available for extra duties i.e. weddings, christenings, funerals and so on. All this is done on a regular basis & preparing services on a monthly rota.

I am blessed by my team of three who have once again proved to be reliable and most willing to take part and I do thank them very much for their efforts in keeping this vital work going.

Sally Phillips

St Mary's Online

We continued to develop our online services and were able to provide enhanced live streaming for example for the part of the Remembrance Sunday service held outside. We continue to look at ways of improving the quality of sound and audio visuals for the church and online congregations.

Our website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages are our main communication for latest news, and any last minute changes in services; and our weekly emails update readers on our events as well as those in partner churches, and the local community. We are pleased that the number of subscribers to the email list has grown over the last year.

Viveca Dutt



Junior Church

This is the first year of our New Junior Church; bringing a more cohesive approach and giving choice for all families and across all ages. Our purpose is to nurture and encourage the faith journey and belonging of children, young people and families to be a core part of St Mary's

and the wider community. This new approach has been a huge success.

The families who attend are all regular, enthusiastic and contribute hugely to our sessions and to Church life and wider community events. We have members ranging from 3 to 16 years old who come together for fellowship, bible stories and learning about God through creative activities, music and continue to focus on prayer as a theme, our sessions following the liturgical calendar.

We led some wonderful All Together services this year with lovely feedback from the congregation. Particularly well received services were Harvest, Remembrance, Christingle and a service on prayer where we shared the jelly Bean Prayer and handed out Prayer flowers to all.

In the Autumn term Linda Wiskin introduced some new style sessions

called Godly Play which the children are enjoying very much.

Our 13-16 year olds have a new group on Sunday evenings called **YACHT INC 13-16s** they discuss anything and everything about the church and God. They relate real world problems in the present to Jesus's lessons and teachings. As a youth group they are very open and honest with each other and their opinions in all of their discussions. Sarah Reynolds & Verity Kay



Pattern of Worship and Reflection

We have been pleased to offer worship in the church building every week on Sundays and midweek this year. Our 10am Sunday service has been livestreamed each week, as have several special services during Holy Week, Easter and Christmas and baptisms and funerals. 8am Sunday Communion services, Sunday evening services, Wednesday Communion services and monthly Communion with Prayers for Wholeness and Healing services have been well-supported, as well as all our special services.

Many people are involved in preparing and delivering our worship and thanks are due to those who clean, maintain, decorate, prepare and organise the church spaces; who read, lead, prayers and liturgy; who offer bellringing, organ and other instrumental music and singing; and all who welcome, participate, support, prepare and offer refreshments and activities and so many different ways.

Contemplative Prayer

We have become quite ecumenical. For some years a lady from Bridge Church has joined us and this year, not only has a gentleman from St Anne Line done so, but he has led a session on “Lectio Divina”. Other themes have been poverty, the refining qualities of fire, the Lord’s Prayer and the four practical virtues viz., prudence, temperance (moderation), counsel and justice. We also resumed our vigil for the work of the church in Kenya, initiated in 2019, but interrupted by Covid.

The attendance at the Ash Wednesday Meditation was disappointing but that for Good Friday was well supported as was our Advent Quiet Morning. On Good Friday we contemplated the Stations of the Cross illustrated by Mark Lewis’ graphite drawings while the theme of the Quiet Morning was, “Prepare ye the Way of the Lord”. This drew so many helpful comments and insights for those present that perhaps we should consider a different name for the future.

Rowena Rudkin

Financial Review

After two years of deficits, £18,116 (2021) and £10,171 (2020), we finally have a surplus of £47,547 in 2022 for our General Activities. We are very grateful for the generous Legacy of £50,008 from Mr A N Brown in early May, which relieves us of the pressure of having another year of shortfall. At the PCC meeting in January 2023, we agreed to transfer £15,000 of this surplus to the Fabric Fund.

HSBC has been introducing more bank charges and restrictions. In July 2022,

the PCC agreed to apply for a Current Account with the Co-operative Bank, with almost no bank charges and it will be in operation from 2023.

It is our Accounting Policy to re-evaluate the Curate's House every five years and in September 2022, the PCC agreed to value the property for £750,000 (£690,000 in 2017) based on the recent Sold Prices in nearby properties.

Whilst our property is appreciated in value, unfortunately our CBF Securities Fund dropped by 13.4% to £86,080 (£99,422 in 2021). In comparison, although FT100 gained 0.9%, our loss is in line with the Global Stock Market hit by the Ukraine War, Energy Crisis and the high inflation.

This is the first time I prepare the Report for St Mary's. I herewith thank Jane Fone for her time and effort during this transition period and our team for their continuous support. I would also like to thank Brenda Layzell-Smith who joined us for payroll from 2022.

Shirley Lai

Community and Mission

Eco Church

We continued our feasibility studies into longer term alternative heating for the church and other ways to improve our energy efficiency. There are many options and we are grateful for the help of an external consultant who is guiding us through the technical, financial and environmental complexities. We are also developing a set of guiding principles that can be the foundation of all our church activities as we strive to take better care of God's creation.

We have been pleased to develop our relationships with partner churches in the area through meetings to share knowledge and experience of how to approach the many ways of becoming greener.

Viveca Dutt



Mission

With the resumption of activities after Covid, Mission committee has been able to distribute the funds raised by the Bazaar to the charities, missions and good courses supported by the Church. Last year, the family Bingo Night took place in February and was well received by those able to attend. Harvest saw the support of the Manna Centre and a speaker for the Church Army in November. We continue to support our CMS Mission partners Tom and Verity Clare in their work in Uganda.

Please continue to pray for them; here are more details of how you can subscribe to their mailing list for regular updates: <https://mailchi.mp/7edda23d83b7/claresinuganda>

The Christian Aid collections are led by Stephen Wiggs who is always please to have help form volunteers in May.

“Send a cow” which so many support as an alternative to individual Christmas cards, has become “The Ripple Effect and the charity also benefitted from the resumption of the Big Breakfast in January. Thanks are due to Wendy, Roberta, Stephen, Lesley and Moira .We meet some three to four times a year. If you are interested in joining the committee or taking part in any events, we are always interested in welcoming new members.

Linda Wiskin

Kenya Report

Our partnership with Kenya continues. Our Link parish, The Church of the Good Shepherd, Muchunguri, the Vicar is now Ven Jenard Nyaga Nthiga, (who visited here in 2010), he has returned to Muchunguri having been moved on in 2007 by the bishop.

The Church congregations have all been manifestly affected by Covid19

just as we were. Lockdown closed all the churches for a while and even now many have not returned. Despite regular fundraising activities, they have still been short and we have helped on an occasional basis.

The Dispensary - they have now upgraded the dispensary and the government has inspected the premises and promised to employ staff to run the immunisation services that are required but no date has been set for when this should start.



(continued on page 23)

St Mary with St Philip and St James
High Road South Woodford E18 2PA

www.stmaryswoodford.org.uk

Registered Charity No: 1127596



PCC and Clergy Report for 2022

The Parochial Church Council meets every other month: the Standing Committee meets in the alternate months to transact business requiring more urgent or detailed attention and decisions.

The Standing Committee comprises the Rector, Wardens, Deputy Wardens, Secretary and Treasurer. PCC receives periodic reports from the following committees:- Fabric, Eco-church, Mission, Children's & Young people's, Events, Trustees of the Memorial Hall, Deanery Synod members, Education Scrutiny, Neighbourhood Ward Panel and the MMU.

The PCC has continued to meet in hybrid style over the course of the last year with our summer and spring meetings in person and our winter meetings on Teams. This has worked well particularly when it was cold and icy outside. Standing Committee and the warden team has worked hard to deal with the challenges the last year has brought, particularly around the cost of living, as trying to manage the church finances has become even more complex.

PCC held an away day in September to think and pray about growing God's Kingdom and how we can develop a plan for the next few years.

Adela Kay



Finance Review 2022

After two years of running in deficits, £18,116 (in 2021) and £10,171 (in 2020), we finally have a surplus of £47,547 in 2022 for our General Activities. We are very grateful for the generous Legacy of £50,008 from Mr A N Brown in early May, which relieves us of the pressure of having another year of shortfall. At the PCC meeting in January 2023, we agreed to transfer £15,000 of this surplus to the Fabric Fund.

Our banking with HSBC was getting more difficult as they have been closing more and more branches but at the same time introducing a number of new bank charges and restrictions. In July 2022, the PCC agreed to apply for a new Community Direct Plus Current Account with the Co-operative Bank, with almost no bank charges and it will be in operation from 2023.

It is our Accounting Policy to re-value the Curate's House at 33 Elmhurst Drive every five years. At the PCC meeting in September 2022, we agreed to value the property for £750,000 (£690,000 in 2017) based on the recent Sold Prices in nearby properties of similar sizes. Whilst our property is appreciated in value, unfortunately our CBF Fixed Interest Securities Fund dropped by 13.4% to £86,080 (£99,422 in 2021). This reflects the current economic situation.

The General Fund Reserve excluding the balance of the Earmarked monies covers approximately seven months expenditure.

I would also like to thank our team for their continuous supports: Jane Fone, Anne Jones, Brenda Layzell-Smith, Michael Lovejoy, Dave Snowdon, Pete Alderson, Sheba Lockley and the Wardens.

Shirley Lai

Church Contact Details

Rector	The Revd Dr Elizabeth Lowson 020 8504 7981 rector@stmaryswoodford.org.uk		
Parish Office	St Mary's Church 207 High Road, E18 2PA 020 8505 3000 info@stmaryswoodford.org.uk		
Authorised Preacher	Mark Spencer-Ellis		
Lay Readers	Mark Lewis, Rowena Rudkin		
PCC Secretary	Adela Kay	Treasurer	Jane Fone/ Shirley Lai
Independent Examiner	Lorraine Catherine Purdy FCCA		
Bankers	HSBC Suite D, The Business Centre Faringdon Avenue, Romford RM3 8EN		

ST MARY WITH ST PHILIP AND ST JAMES WOODFORD

Balance Sheet at 31 December 2022			
	Note	2022	2021
		£	£
FIXED ASSETS			
Freehold Land and Buildings	4a	750000	690000
Investments	4b	86080	99422
Total Fixed Assets		836080	789422
CURRENT ASSETS			
Sundry Debtors	5	18015	6528
CBF Deposit		258340	222501
Bank Balance		35935	38930
		312290	267959
LIABILITIES			
Amounts falling due within one year		7611	4082
NET CURRENT ASSETS		304679	263877
NET ASSETS		1140759	1053299
FUNDS			
Unrestricted			
General Purpose	8	1001427	922222
Earmarked		111558	101004
Total Unrestricted Funds		1112985	1023226
Restricted Funds		27774	30073
TOTAL FUNDS		1140759	1053299
Signed: <u>Ehanson</u> 16/04/23 <u>See line</u>			

ST MARY WITH ST PHILIP AND ST JAMES WOODFORD

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES For the year ended 31 December 2022

Note	2021 GP Fund £	2022 GP Fund	Ear- marked £	Restrict- ed £	2022 Total	2021 Total £
INCOMING RESOURCES						
Voluntary Income	96565	158958			158958	96565
Income From Charitable Activities	1528	1466			1466	1528
Other Income	26407	29984		4740	34724	30078
Investment Income	2871	4464	1271	104	5839	2925
Other Trading Activities	2074				-	2074
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	129445	194872	1271	4844	200987	133170
RESOURCES USED						
Grants				4000	4000	2000
Activities Directly related to the Work of the Church	136680	135911	5717	3143	144771	143418
Fundraising and publicity	247	-	-		-	247
Church Management and Administration	8891	9618			9618	8891
Governance Costs	1743	1796			1796	1743
TOTAL RESOURCES USED	147561	147325	5717	7143	160185	156299
NET INCOMING/OUTGOING RESOURCES	(18116)	47547	(4446)	(2299)	(40802)	(23129)
Interfund Transfers	-	(15000)	15000	-	-	-
Profit on Property Revaluation	-	60000	-	-	60000	-
Loss/Profit on Investment Revaluation	(7076)	(13342)	-	-	(13342)	(7076)
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	(25192)	79205	10554	(2299)	87460	(30205)
BALANCES BROUGHT FORWARD	947414	922222	101004	30073	1053299	1083504
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD	922222	1001427	111558	27774	1140759	1053299

ST MARY WITH ST PHILIP AND ST JAMES WOODFORD

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - Note 1

Accounting Policies

The PCC is a public benefit entity within the meaning of FRS102. The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011. and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the individual accounts of PCCs, and with the Regulations' "true and fair view", provisions, together with FRS102 (2019) as the applicable accounting standards and the 2019 version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and reporting by Charities (SORP (FRS102)).

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention except that the Curate's House is stated at a fair value as agreed by the PCC and investments which are stated at market value.

Funds

Unrestricted funds represent the funds of the PCC which are not subject to any legal restrictions regarding their use and are available for applications to the general purposes of the PCC. This category includes both the General Purposes Fund and funds earmarked for a particular purpose by the PCC. Restricted funds are those funds which may only be used for the restricted purpose for which they were given or otherwise obtained.

The accounts include all transaction assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law.

They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Incoming resources

Income from donors and other voluntary income

Planned Giving is recognised only when received.

Collections are recognised when received by or on behalf of the PCC.

Income tax recoverable on gift aid donations is recognised when received or when calculated and submitted for payment.

Grants and legacies to the PCC are accountable for as soon as the PCC is notified of its legal entitlement and the amount due.

Funds raised by the Charity bazaar and other events are accounted for gross unless related expenses are immaterial in amount.

Donated good are recognised at fair value, unless it is impractical to measure this reliably. An equivalent amount is included as expenditure under the relevant heading in the statement of financial activities. Monies received in relations to donated goods sold are included under the relevant heading in The Statement of Financial Activities when the good are sold.

Charitable trading

Fees for weddings are included in this caption and accounted for when due.

Other ordinary income

Rental income from the letting of the curate's house is accounted for when due

Income from investments

Interest on deposits is accounted for when receivable and any related tax recoverable is recognised at the same time.

Resources Used

Grants

Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over or when awarded if that award creates a binding obligation on the PCC.

Activities directly related to the work of the church The diocesan quota is accounted for when payable.

Fixed Assets

Consecrated land and buildings and movable church furnishings

Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by s.10(2)(a) and (c) of the Charities Act 2011 Chapter 2, s.10(2)(C).

No value is placed on movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal since the PCC considers this to be inalienable property. All expenditure incurred during the year on consecrated or beneficed buildings and movable church furnishings whether maintenance or improvement is written off as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activities and separately disclosed.

Other land and buildings held for use in the work of the church.

The curate's house is included under this caption. It is stated at a fair value as agreed by the PCC.

Investments

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date. The Statement of Financial

Activities includes net gains and losses arising on revaluation and disposals throughout the year.

Equipment

Equipment used within the church premises is depreciated on a straight-line basis over four years. Individual items of equipment with a purchase price of £5000 or less are written off when the asset is acquired.

Current Assets

Amounts owing to the PCC at 31 December in respect of fees, rents or other income are shown as debtors less provision for any amounts that may prove to be uncollectable.

ST MARY WITH ST PHILIP AND ST JAMES WOODFORD

Note 2 Incoming Resources

	General	Earmarked	Restricted	2022	2021
	Fund	Funds	Funds	TOTAL	TOTAL
	£	£	£		£
Voluntary Income					
Planned Giving	64197			64197	61586
Income Tax recovered	17604			17604	14483
Loose Collections	6334			6334	4160
Sundry Donations	14460			14460	8059
Donations Earmarked	-		335	335	-
Church Appeals	5579			5579	7445
Floodlighting Donation	390			390	365
Magazine Donations	386			386	467
Legacies	50008			50008	-
	158958		335	159293	96565
Income: Charitable Activities					
Fees - weddings etc	1466			1466	1528
Other Income					
Rent - Curate's House	22950			22950	22200
Churchyard Income	1500			1500	1500
Fund Raising	5534			5534	2707
Bazaar Fund Raising			4405	4405	3671
	29984	-	4405	34389	30078
Investment Income					
Interest and Dividends	4464	1271	104	5839	2925
Other Trading Activities	-				2074
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	194872	1271	4844	200987	133170

ST MARY WITH ST PHILIP AND ST JAMES WOODFORD

Note 3 Resources Used

	General	Earmarked	Restricted	TOTAL	TOTAL
	Funds	Funds	Funds	2022	2021
Grants	£	£	£	£	£
Mission societies			2300	2300	2000
Church societies			1000	1000	
Charities e.g ELHAP			700	700	
			4000	4000	2000
Activities directly related to church work					
Diocesan Quota	89279			89279	92738
Rector's Expenses	486		(20)	466	146
Music, Organ & Choir	7893		184	8077	3652
Service Expenses	453			453	1014
Heating/Light/Water	7993			7993	4675
Cleaning	4051			4051	3703
Routine Maintenance	3431			3431	2817
Clergy house expenses	3795	565		4360	4987
Churchyard Expenses	3139			3139	3679
Insurances	3200			3200	3058
Interegnum ex-	-			-	116
Junior Church	63			63	-
Memorial Hall Contributions	5880			5880	5700
Printing and stationery inc magazine	1483			1483	1700
Sundries	354			354	93
Outreach inc family	3709		2979	6688	10215
Fabric Expenditure	702	5152		5854	2405
Churchyard Access Road	-			-	2720
Total directly related to Church work	135911	5717	3143	144771	143418
Fund Raising and Publicity					
Stewardship Expenses	-			-	247
Church Management and Admin					
Parish Office and Telephone	9618			9618	8891
Governance Costs					
Treasurers/ Secretary Expenses	78			78	75
Independent Examiner Fee	1718			1718	1668
	1796			1796	1743
TOTAL RESOURCES USED	147325	5717	7143	160185	156299

Notes 4 to 7

NOTE 4 FIXED ASSETS For Use By The PCC

NOTE 4a Freehold land and buildings

Freehold land and buildings comprise the “Curate’s House” at 33 Elmhurst Drive.

The gross book value is based on a fair valuation as agreed by the PCC in 2022.

NOTE 4b INVEST- MENTS	2022	2021
	£	£
CBF Fixed Interest Securities Fund Income Shares		
Market Value at 31/12/21	99422	106498
Market Value at 31/12/22	86080	99422
Loss/Profit on revalu- ation	-13342	-7076
NOTE 5 DEBTORS		
Prepayments	-	625
Other Debtors	18015	5903
TOTAL	18015	6528

NOTE 6 STAFF COSTS

During the year the PCC employed a Director of Music, family worker, administration secretary and a cleaner/caretaker. Employment costs are included in the respective expenditure heads. No present member of the PCC received remuneration or expenses.

Salaries 2022 £27195 (2021 £22419)

NOTE 7 SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Restricted retiring collections for 2022 for which the PCC acted solely as a post-box amounted to £9069 (2021 £1467)

Notes 4 to 7

NOTE 4 FIXED ASSETS For Use By The PCC

NOTE 4a Freehold land and buildings

Freehold land and buildings comprise the “Curate’s House” at 33 Elmhurst Drive.

The gross book value is based on a fair valuation as agreed by the PCC in 2022.

NOTE 4b IN-VESTMENTS	2022	2021
	£	£
CBF Fixed Interest Securities Fund Income Shares		
Market Value at 31/12/21	99422	106498
Market Value at 31/12/22	86080	99422
Loss/Profit on revaluation	-13342	-7076
NOTE 5 DEBTORS		
Prepayments	-	625
Other Debtors	18015	5903
TOTAL	18015	6528

NOTE 6 STAFF COSTS

During the year the PCC employed a Director of Music, family worker, administration secretary and a cleaner/caretaker. Employment costs are included in the respective expenditure heads. No present member of the PCC received remuneration or expenses. Salaries 2022 £27195 (2021 £22419)

NOTE 7 SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Restricted retiring collections for 2022 for which the PCC acted solely as a post-box amounted to £9069 (2021 £1467)

**SUMMARY STATEMENT OF FUNDS FOR THE YEAR ENDING
31st DECEMBER 2022**

FUND NAME	Fund Balanc-		Incoming		Outgoing		Transfers	Gains and		Fund Balanc-	
	Brought Fwd	Resources	Resources	Resources	Resources	Resources		Losses	Carried For-	Carried For-	Carried For-
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General Fund	232222	194872	194872	147325	147325	(15000)	(15000)	(13342)		251427	251427
General Fund	690000	-	-	-	-	-	-	60000		750000	750000
Fabric Fund	92867	1168	1168	5152	5152	15000	15000			103883	103883
Clergy House	8137	103	103	565	565					7675	7675
Music Fund	4758	396	396	184	184					4970	4970
Pinney Me-	200									200	200
Missionary	4475	4448	4448	4000	4000					4923	4923
Family Work-	20640			2979	2979					17661	17661
Agency				(20)	(20)					(20)	(20)
TOTALS	1053299	200987	200987	160185	160185	-	-	46658	-	1140759	1140759

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC at St Mary's Woodford

I report to the PCC on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31st December 2022 which comprise the Balance Sheet, Statement of Financial Activities and related notes.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the PCC's members you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act;
or


the accounts do not accord with those records; or

the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Lorraine Catherine Purdy FCCA

Clay Ratnage Strevens & Hills
Suite D, The Business Centre
Faringdon Avenue
Romford
Essex
RM3 8EN

Signed: 
Dated: 18/4/2023

Secretary's Report

The PCC supports the Rector and Clergy in their Parish Ministry and has certain legal responsibility for the Church. Members of the PCC are either ex officio or elected by the Annual Meeting of the Church in accordance with the Church Representation rules. During 2022 the following served as members of the PCC:

Rector Revd Elizabeth Lowson

Church Wardens

Until April 2022	Linda Wiskin Viveca Dutt
From April 2022	Philip Petchey

Elected PCC members

	Gwen Wiggs (until April 2022)
	Stephen Wiggs (until April 2022)
	Sally Phillips (until April 2022)
	Kate Adu-Baah
	Jano Goodchild
	Ian Layzell-Smith
	Gemma Low (from April 2022)
Deanery Synod	Sarah Reynolds
Deanery Synod	John Wiltshire
Deanery Synod	Linda Wiskin (from April 2022)
Deputy Warden	Philip Petchey (until April 2022)
Deputy Warden	Jano Goodchild
Deputy Warden	Anne Jones (from May 2022)
Treasurer	Jane Fone
Secretary	David Snowdon (until April 2022)
Secretary	Adela Kay (from April 2022)
Safeguarding officer	Jackie Peacock (co-opted 2020, elected May 2022)

Electoral roll. In April 2022 there were 166 names on the electoral roll of which 95 were resident in the Parish and 71 non-resident. . This compares with 158 in 2021.

Adult Church attendance (October 2022 average)				
Sunday				Wednesday
8am	10am	10am Sung Eucharist	Evening service	10:30 am
in- building	in-building	online	In building	in building
10	76	40	18	14

At Makutano we support the St Michael and All Angels Childrens Home in the grounds of the Church at the other end of the Mbeere Diocese; a 90 minutes' drive away. We currently sponsor seven boys in Secondary education, who having passed their primary exams went on to various Secondary schools depending on their Exam results. We



continue to seek sponsorship for the children, especially now that three have completed their education and need to do post education courses to secure employment. Anthony Matheka Watheka is now in his final year doing a *Degree in Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality Management* course at Zetech University, (with our support) in Nairobi.

The Home now has nine children including two girls at Makutano. The Home has been refurbished . Only two children are now in Primary school and more children are likely to join very soon; they are waiting for registration of the home which will bring long term financial maintenance.

Wendy Littlejohns

Communities for Ukrainians



With so much concern for the people of Ukraine, in the spring we joined the Communities for Ukrainians scheme led by the Diocese of Chelmsford in partnership with Citizens UK and we formed a hub with All Saints Woodford Wells, while also keeping dialogue and support with people hosting locally in Aldersbrook, Wanstead, Walthamstow, as well as one St Mary's household. Together with local

churches, we created a #WoodfordPrays time of prayer for Ukraine at South Woodford Baptist Church and many of our local community contributed to a collection of items being delivered to Ukraine. A member of our congregation with links to the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Mayfair suggested a fundraising concert here and the Cathedral Choir's visit led to £4000 being raised for Ukraine in a very well attended concert, including civic dignitaries.

We were approached by a local host of people from Ukraine with English as a Second Language teaching skills and agreed to support three community volunteers running weekly beginner and intermediate language classes for people newly arrived in the UK, especially from Ukraine.

Local Links and Relationships

These continue to develop in positive directions. We are growing relationships with all who use the church buildings and offering a welcome from the Rector or a church warden at every concert and providing staff support. There was a positive response to including Muslim and Jewish leaders in the Civic Remembrance leadership. The ecumenical ecochurches network we host continues to be supportive and appreciated and it may become interfaith. We helped furnish a flat for someone with only a bed, donated microwaves and Christmas gifts to local food banks and held a free toy take and swap. Community volunteers seems to be an area of growth and much potential and is already much appreciated in the bereavement café, Baby & Toddler group as well as English as a Second Language lessons, and the Christmas Day lunch and Repair Café also benefitted from this. We continue to make good use of social media in communicating with the local community and hope to extend this further during 2023, including reflecting on how we communicate about our faith, how we can discover together with our communities more about God's love and action in the world and what we might fruitfully change.

Schools

There are three schools within the parish boundary: Churchfields Infants School (3-7 years), Junior School (7-11 years) and St Aubyn's School (2.5-13 years). The Rector has contributed to collective worship at Churchfields Juniors, and welcomed both Churchfields Juniors and St Aubyn's schools for Christmas services at St Mary's. Good communication has been maintained with Churchfields Juniors throughout the year with visits to church from all year groups, and large numbers of St Aubyn's cadets and parents/carers joined the Civic Remembrance service at St Mary's.

Memorial Hall

All the trustees for the Memorial Hall must be drawn from the church electoral roll and we are currently seeking three new Trustees, especially with finance, fundraising and buildings skills.

Memorial Hall staff work hard to maintain the facilities, building and welcome to many community groups. Annual reports for Woodford Parish Church

Memorial Hall can be found on the Charity Commission website at: <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/214670/charity-overview>

St Mary's Sunflowers - Babies and Toddlers Group

This year has seen a rise in numbers for us to the point where we are consistently up to the limits of the room. We have a large group of regulars as well as a steady stream of new families and we have loved getting to know them and their children well enough to plan activities and source play equipment they will particularly enjoy.

We received some lovely feedback at the end of last term that focussed on our warm welcome and our thoughtful rotation of toys and activities for the children.

We have introduced a separate imaginative play table for smaller groups which has been very successful and allows parents and carers to get to know each other better while they interact with their children.

We are lucky to have a small group of volunteers and supporters who help us with everything from refreshments to ideas and prayers and spreading the word for us among the community.

Going forward we are planning more themed sessions in response to the families enjoying our Red Nose Day, Ice and Chinese New Year themes. We also hope to play outside in the spring.

Clare Reeves

Regular Church Users

The church space and Gwinnell Room have been regularly used throughout 2022. We have a wide range of users from our mid-week ecumenical group through to children's groups such as Music Monsters. Modality choir returned to in-person rehearsals on a Monday evening and two well attended concerts in Summer and Winter. We have a new regular booking with Felicitas choir rehearsing on a Wednesday evening and are hosting their Summer concert in 2023. We welcomed a new weekly Pilates group and welcomed back the RSPB, Grove Townswomen and Woodford Friends and Neighbours who meet monthly. Our uniformed groups continue to use the Gwinnell Room on a Friday afternoon and we've supported some of their fund raising events with more to come in 2023.

It was lovely to see the Stratford Festival back with multiple choirs competing during a packed day in February with choirs warming up in the Memorial Hall and performing in church. This followed the Valentine Singers whole day

singing workshop held in January. We welcomed Evening Chorus and the Meljon singers who held concerts in church and who feel the space is wonderful and ideal for their performances. Trinity Laban held a student performance evening which was full of enthusiasm and talent while much younger students at St Aubyns and Churchfields held their end of term concerts here – enthusiastically supported by their parents.

We were really happy to see Yuki Negishi back, performing pieces she was taking on a concert tour, and John Bradley back with the St Mary's Chamber Music Ensemble including Deborah Aloba, our long standing singing teacher. Finally, we were able to host Redbridge Summer holiday club activities for children through the Free Your Mind charity including mini-masterchef thanks to our kitchen facilities, and an NHS away day which was much appreciated by a local NHS Psychology team.

Girlguiding at St Mary's



The 1st Woodford Rainbows, Brownies and Guides and the 9th Woodford Brownies meet every Friday of term time. The units are all recovering both financially and in terms of numbers of attendees and volunteers. That said, the year has been a busy one for all the units and Woodford South District; The girls take part in activities, challenges, games and crafts on the themes of Know Myself. Specific events of note for us this year have been; The Food & Fun Day where the

Guides sold a record number of hotdogs for charity, attending the civic Remembrance service at the war memorial where leaders offered crafts afterwards for all the families to enjoy, a civic Christingle where families were encouraged to join in with the girls celebrating, a private Odeon screening of Matilda the Musical before its general release date, a District Disco in the Pankhurst Hall and a trip to the wonderful WOADS Pantomime!

Our units have been lucky to have visits from Rev Elizabeth to talk about special events in the church calendar, they have been invited into church and had special sessions with Henry at the organ.

We have done some fantastic charity fundraising work and good turns with beneficiaries such as St Mary's, Macmillan, The Salvation Army and Churchfields Nursing Home.

Clare Reeves

Woodford Friends and Neighbours

Our first meeting was in February, we entertained ourselves with A Beetle Drive. The next month John Watkins gave us a very relaxing evening with beautiful nature photography called Living the Dream, in April we had wine and cheese afternoon. In May, Professor David Hatch gave a very interesting talk on the mission to rescue twelve boys and the coach "trapped underground, called The Thai Cave Rescue. June, we asked back Kate Poole for a talk called, "Grandad" , Samuel Bridge a man that missed the worst. Unfortunately, we had to cancel our afternoon cream tea in July.

We had our annual summer meal in August, and September was Bingo. Roger Torode gave us an illustrated talk in October, on London Transport in our local area.

In November Mike Payne, entertained us with a very interesting talk on Mysterious Meridians of Highams Park, and our Christmas meal was at the Cocked Hat.

Our group continues to have a very friendly, welcoming atmosphere.

Averil Gray died recently, she was member of our group ,and it was always pleasure to be in her company .

Many thanks go to the committee for their continued help.

Pat Smith (chairman)

Events Group 2022



2022 was a really successful year for all 4 big social events we put on, Race Night, Food & Fun, Soul Night and the Christmas Charity Bazaar. Not a clanger amongst them. Our

extra gig in June for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee evening BBQ for a communal concert watching party suffered somewhat in numbers from the inclement weather, but those who came enjoyed themselves. Race Night was as popular as we'd like it to be for a winter's evening out for families and friends, it's simple formula appeal never wanes. A bargain too!



Food and Fun was a lovely sunny May day thankfully, busy with lots of local attendees, many first timers, young and not so young. We think we had more than ever before attending; tower viewing, coconut shy, cakes for sale, all a sell out as usual. If he shines on us it really is a 'Let my people come' enjoy the company sort of day.

Soul Night too excelled all expectations on attendance despite us charging an entry for the first time. As hoped it didn't deter, the opposite in fact. The Capones improve each year like a fine maturing wine! And the DJs sure know what buttons to press and tunes to choose to entertain a hall full of happy souls.



And lastly the Christmas Bazaar and a return of Father Christmas' grotto. What a hit! A few changes made worthy improvements, and we have another winner. Sold out Santa topped the bill along with stalls emptied of goodies and happy punters galore.

A big thank you to everyone that's been able to help make

our fellowship social event fund raisers the buzz they regularly are, and also to those that came and enjoyed them. Here's to more of the same in 2023.

Richard Walker

St Mary's Chamber Music Ensemble

Not many churches have an associated Chamber Music Ensemble, but here at St Mary's a group of amateur music makers get together about twice a year as friends to perform in concerts. The friends are all volunteers, and as a consequence, all money raised by the concerts is given entirely to the church and Memorial Hall.

In 2022 there were two concerts. The first was entitled *This England*, and was described as a "musical and literary garland". For it II worked with Penny Freeston, who selected a rich and varied selection of poetry to go with the

music. It included a group of well known songs from Shakespeare's plays, plus a work by Edgar Elgar, and a little known Piano Trio by the English composer Ethel Smyth. The second featured the music of Antonin Dvorak, and was entitled *From the People*, to reflect Dvorak's fascination and belief in the music of his people of Bohemia. It included his much loved *Dumky* Piano Trio and Piano Quintet, plus songs inspired by the Serbian and Gypsy folk traditions. First, I'd like to thank Peter Wall who has over the years participated in most the SMCME concerts, but also offered much leadership in various ways. Along with Peter and Penny, I'd like to thank Mark Lewis who participated in the readings, and (from outside the immediate St Mary's community), dear friend Deborah Aloba, John Suddaby, Nic Bilham, Martin Liebeck and Elizabeth Hart. We have two concerts planned for 2023: the first a Brahms programme for April 15th, and the second a programme of the music of Mozart and Haydn for the autumn. Do come!

John Bradley

Bereavement Café

Bereavement cafes have been held regularly throughout the year at St. Mary's on the first Tuesday morning of each month and at Christchurch Wanstead on each third afternoon. We are not trained counsellors or therapists, just using our own life experiences to offer supportive listening and to help people work through their own experience and feelings. Three members of the St. Mary's congregation form the regular team at St. Mary's, backed up by members of the Wanstead team when necessary. With everyone being prepared to cross-cover between the sites when needed, we probably have enough volunteers to meet current demand. Our thanks and best wishes must go to Judy Noble who is moving out of the district, and who has played such a leading role in the running of the cafes in recent years.

The number of people coming to us for support is less than before the Covid-19 lockdown, and there is an urgent need for more publicity. A new form of wording has been devised for use locally and we are listed regularly in the South Woodford Gazette. Volunteers leave cards in libraries and other relevant places, but other ideas would be much appreciated.

Judy Noble

Snaresbrook Crown Court Chaplaincy: St Mary's

It's fair to say that the Crown Court has become a much more stressful place in the last two years for just about everyone who works there or is otherwise involved in the Criminal Justice system. Even before Covid huge delays were mounting up, principally because of the major cuts in the budget made by the Ministry of Justice. As we come out of Covid almost all of the 20 courts are busy but some trials have already been scheduled for 2024.

One development since our reopening – though this is more of an impression than a numerical survey, is that we are having rather fewer conversations with visitors as they often just want to sit or pray somewhere peaceful. We see lots of busy people glancing in as they pass the Chapel, and some of them make the time to come in when they are next in Court.

One observation for which there is measurable evidence is that we are getting through lots more votive candles than we used to pre-Covid. There is no charge for them but there is a jar for donations, and regular and occasional visitors have contributed about £100 this year, which all points to the conclusion than many of the visitors to the Chapel are pretty stressed.

We also enjoy significant support from our liaison Judge, Laurie West-Knights KC, and from our administrative liaison, Helen Ainslie. Thanks to Helen the Chapel has had its first deep clean for many years.

Since Covid we have had some success in recruiting new members of the Chaplaincy Team, principally from St Gabriel's and from St Mary's. We also made a tentative start in trying to develop towards being an Ecumenical Chaplaincy with someone from St Thomas of Canterbury who has an encouraging track-record of recruiting volunteers.

Mark Spencer Ellis

Neighbourhood Watch

The Churchfields ward panel exists to provide a point of contact between local residents, neighbourhood watch and the local Met Police safer neighbourhood team. The Churchfields ward covers the area enclosed by the A406, Broadmead Rd, The Epping New Road and Chigwell Rd. Local councillors and members of Redbridge's Our Streets team often attend as well. The panel meets quarterly and hears updates on local crime from the police and can set the primary focus of the Safer Neighbourhood Team. Vehicle crime (theft of and theft from) is the most frequent crime in the area due to easy access to the A406 and the M11. However, burglary, sexual offences and anti-social behaviour are also an issue.

The current focus of the safer neighbourhood team is stamping out anti-social behaviour.

Dave Snowdon

Magazine

The magazine aims to contribute to the Growing God's Kingdom at St Mary's by reflecting and supporting fellowship and the spiritual development of the active worshipping community at St Mary's. The magazine also aims to reach out to the community more widely, largely through its availability on St Mary's website to those of other denominations and faiths as well as of no faith. We therefore don't assume all our readers know who people referred to in the magazine are and what they do. We like to feature items of local interest and concern, for example referencing local means of support for those facing difficulties. If you have a paper copy of the magazine why not share it with others.

Please do send in articles and ideas. Thank you for those of you who do so. Photographs, particularly those of children and young people (with permission to publish), are welcome: 'portrait' layout as well as the more usually sent in 'landscape' please. The magazine team aims to get the right balance of different types of articles. We love to hear your views on this. Penny Freeston and Peter Wall

Core Support

Secretary, PCC and Standing Committee

The PCC and Standing Committee continue to meet on alternative months, the PCC meets on odd months and the Standing Committee on even ones. The work of the PCC is now driving towards a five year plan with a view to focussing on Growing God's Kingdom at St Marys. We have in addition been discussing a vision for St Marys and trying to define our core goals going forward.

We regularly discuss the fabric of St Marys and going forward there are a number of faculties in place to do planned works.

Electoral Roll

Number at Annual Meeting 2022: 166 (up from 158 in 2021)

Pastoral Care

Much pastoral care has been given and received by individuals keeping in touch with each other and especially those within our fellowship on the Sunday prayer list for changed or acute needs and on the monthly Prayers for Wholeness and Healing prayer lists or known to be in need. Prayer Ministry team members pray after each Sunday 10am service for those who write requests or who visit the chapel in person, and for any needs of which they are aware. Sadly, this has been a year with considerable pastoral need.



There have been seven people baptised (all children), one marriage in church, five funerals in church, a further twelve funerals conducted by the ministry team at a Crematorium and the burial of three sets of ashes in the memorial garden within the churchyard at St Mary's. Mark Lewis has begun to lead funerals. Four members of our Ministry Team take home

Communion to those unable to attend church. With Ministry and Mission Unit colleagues, a pastoral care course ran in January & February for those engaged in pastoral care including bereavement café and Snaresbrook Crown Court Chaplaincy.

Safeguarding

We want St Mary's to be a safe place for everyone in our community and therefore follow the Church of England's policies and procedures rigorously. Safeguarding appears as a standard item on every PCC agenda in order to ensure that we keep up to date with requirements. As Parish Safeguarding Officer I meet regularly with the Rector and churchwardens when necessary. This year will be extra busy as everyone within our church who holds a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) certificate issued in 2019 and 2020 will require new checks this year if they are remaining in their role. DBS certificates issued in 2021 will require new checks during 2024. DBS checks will then be repeated on a three-year cycle.

I am pleased to report that members of our PCC and group leaders have undertaken various levels of safeguarding training recently. Some courses are available online whilst other have to be booked in advance. Anyone can complete the Basic Awareness or Foundation course online. If you are interested in doing so or would like to discuss any safeguarding matters with me my contact details are on the blue poster in the Church entrance, in the parish directory and on St Mary's website.

Best practice on safeguarding can be found on the Church of England's website:

Fabric and Church Building

This has been a year of routine maintenance. One or two areas of damp have been successfully addressed by clearing the gutters and minor repairs have been effected.

A faculty has now been granted for re-surfacing the drive in front of the church. This will involve modest widening and the provision of some form of lighting. The details are being sorted out and quotes sought but it may be that, by the time you read this, the PCC will have approved the work.

Every five years the Diocese pay for a survey of the church – usually referred to as *the Quinquennial* - to see what repairs and maintenance is required. Our Architect, Alan Frost, carried out a thorough inspection in September. The church building is essentially in good shape but some additional things have been added to our *To do* list. There will need to be some re-tiling work in the corridor outside the Gwinnell Room and we are currently investigating the extent of what will be required.

The church is indebted to David Mason: both for his hard work and for the wide range of skills he is able to use on our behalf.

Philip Petchey

Wider Faith Links

Deanery

St Mary's representatives John Wiltshire, Sarah Reynolds and Linda Wiskin. Deanery Synod is the collaboration and consultation forum that sits between parishes and the Chelmsford Diocesan Synod. St Mary's is part of the Redbridge deanery synod, which brings together the five MMUs. We are part of the West Roding Partnership MMU. The Synod give us a way to communicate with local churches as well as our diocese. There is a standing agenda, including reports from Treasurer, Education scrutiny, Children and youth, Vocations, Diocesan synod and General synod. In addition, each meeting has a key theme talk and discussion. Notable talks have been,

Growing Good – Polly Taylor, Church Urban Fund - Churches grow holistically (through their social action and other ministries) shared five characteristics: presence – perseverance – hospitality & generosity – adaptability (integrating different backgrounds and cultures) – participation (getting people involved as a pathway to discipleship)

Talk and Q&A with the Bishop of Chelmsford—Bishop Guli shared her upbringing in Iran, and the events that led to her family’s exile in Britain and how she came to be Bishop of Chelmsford and what she has found in the Diocese: there was weariness but also openness to change—she is confident that together we will discern the way forward: we need to journey well together. She sees the Diocese as a blessing and gift and she sees her role as empowering – we have a shared responsibility/accountability.

Sarah Reynolds



MMU

This year the MMU has held 3 committee meetings and in May held a pilgrimage walk which was very well attended. The pilgrimage started at Aldersbrook, went via St Mary

the Virgin, Christchurch, Wanstead and St Peter’s in the Forest before ending at St Marys Woodford with tea and cake. It was a lovely afternoon with people from all four churches riding or walking all or part of the route. We plan to do another pilgrimage walk in June 2023 doing the route in reverse ending at Aldersbrook this time.

In January we planned a joint Epiphany party which took place at St Peters, we hope that our links with our local churches will continue to grow and contribute positively to the communities around them.

Adela Kay



Three Faiths Forum

This group held two discussions during 2022. The first at Cranbrook United Synagogue regarded prayer where our Rector spoke about Christian prayer alongside Jewish and Muslim speakers – there was much recognition of what our prayer lives have in common and some good-natured joking about how often we pray within each tradition – Jews pray three times a day; Muslims pray five times a day; and Christians might pray seven times a day within monastic patterns but more commonly once or twice. Later in the spring, a discussion about welcoming refugees took place at Ilford Islamic Centre, where

Dr Mohammed Fahim, Lynne Bishop of Barking and the CEO of Refugees at Home gave interesting and challenging presentations and introductions to discussion. In late 2022, leaders of the network met and made plans to offer four meetings in 2023.

Redbridge Faith Forum

The Redbridge Faith Forum is an active partner of Redbridge Council, who fund their office and regularly consult on various community matters. Since I discovered its existence, I have reported my experience of meetings in the magazine, to encourage more engagement. Redbridge churches work tirelessly to make many positive contributions to the whole community, but hardly engage with the locally majority Faiths represented by the RFF.

It is not just the responsibility of St. Mary's. I meet few other Christians on Zooms or at meetings, but one meeting was held this year in Church in Ilford Vine United Reform Church and several Churches advertised their activities/openings in the information emails. And some other Christian denominations also recognise the need for Christians to engage. The RFF explores areas of agreement, such as care of the Elderly, or support for young people with mental health issues, and disagreement, such as the faith-based rights of fathers to choose their daughters' husbands. Important issues!

Bishop Guli thinks more engagement essential, on difficult as well as easy topics. I am moving to Cardiff. I'm hoping someone will read this, and decide to explore further. It is not always comfortable, but necessary to understand some of the social changes occurring during our adulthood, and to reflect on how we as a Christian Community, want to engage. Welcome to chat, if you're interested.

Judy Noble



Generosity in numbers...

Mission Societies	£	Special Collections	£
Church Mission Society	2000	Makutano	1122
Medicines for Muheza	300	Crisis	249
Mission societies total	2300	Manna Centre	180
		Marie Curie Cancer Care	155
Church Societies		DEC Ukraine	4838
Bible Society	200	DEC Afghanistan	649
Manna Centre	200	DEC Pakistan	445
Church urban Fund	100	Leprosy Mission	1011
Essex clergy Charity	100	Ripple Effect—Send-A-Cow	420
Christian Aid	200	(plus £450 sent direct)	
Church Army	200	Total	9069
Church Societies total	1000		
Charities			
Marie Curie	100		
Royal Society for Blind	200		
ELHAP	200		
Samaritans	100		
Royal Assn for Deaf People	100		
Charities total	700		
Total	4000		

Thank
You

