



REPORTS FOR

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

ON

TUESDAY 30TH APRIL 2024

At 7.30 P.M.

at

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH



LOWER SYDENHAM ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS REPORTS - 2022/23

VICAR'S REPORT - REV. IFEANYI CHUKUKA

As we embark on a new ecclesiastical year, we reflect with profound gratitude on the strides God has taken our church family. We are thankful for the divine works manifested within our congregation and outreach efforts. Despite facing adversity, our commitment to mission and spreading the radiance of the gospel in Sydenham and beyond has remained unwavering. We take pride in our achievements and eagerly anticipate the opportunities that lie ahead.

In drafting this report, I am mindful of the challenges persisting within the Church of England and the wider Anglican communion. These trials necessitate fervent intercessions and courageous testimony from the faithful who hold dear Christ and His Church. We also pause to remember Bishop Karowei Dorgu, whose passing we mourn, and await with hope the appointment of a new Area bishop, trusting that it will bring joy akin to Easter tidings. I commend the steadfastness of our parish members and extend our solidarity to those feeling isolated in these turbulent times. Rest assured, our earnest prayers, spiritual support, and willingness to lend an ear are with you.

Our ministry's journey has been marked by notable advancements, thanks to the collective efforts of many. We owe a debt of gratitude to the unwavering grace and leadership of our churchwardens, Donna Wilson and Denisha Knole. Their dedication to our church and its community is deeply appreciated. Our gratitude also extends to Brenda for her adept administrative skills, which have been pivotal to our church's seamless operations. We are equally thankful to Sybil for her astute financial stewardship and to Mo for her multifaceted support. We celebrate Yemi's ordination as SPA by the diocesan Bishop and her contributions to our outreach initiatives.

We are profoundly grateful to Tilie, Pippa, and Chizoba for their vital role in nurturing the spiritual growth of our youth. Their dedication to our children and youth ministries has been exemplary. Under their mentorship, our young parishioners now lead services on the first Sunday of each month and participate in Sunday School on the third Sunday. We also rejoice in the presence of our diocesan bishop, Rt Revd Christopher Chessun, during St Michael's patronal festivities in 2023.

We are delighted to welcome Venerable Chukwudi Osundu, along with his wife Ada and their family, as new members of our community here at St. Michael's. Their presence enriches our congregation, and we extend a warm embrace to them. Please note that Venerable Chukwudi Osundu's Permission to Officiate (PTO) is currently being processed by the diocese. Likewise, Fr Ray has continued to be a beacon of support, providing pastoral care and unwavering assistance to our congregation. His guidance has been instrumental. We also acknowledge Morwenna, our lay leader, for her nurturing presence and pastoral care as she transitions into retirement.

Our thanks go to Luiza, our administrator, for her diligent efforts that ensure our church's smooth functioning. We also recognize George, our organist, for his musical talents that have uplifted us, especially in times of need.

The church has played an instrumental role in bolstering St. Michael School's mission, offering essential spiritual guidance and support. This partnership has nurtured the school's spiritual vitality and ecclesiastical mission. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all contributors to this noble cause. We are also heartened by Fr David Howland's role as the school Chaplain and the positive impact of his collaboration with the Vicar in advancing the school's church mission.

We are thrilled with the ongoing Young People's Pizza Club at our church, gathering that convenes quarterly. This club provides a vibrant forum for youth to bond over pizza, engage in discussions about faith, and navigate life's questions together. We're confident that this initiative will continue to foster meaningful connections and bolster the spiritual journey of our young members.

We're equally excited about the continued success of our Zoom Bible Study. This virtual group offers a chance for community members to come together, study the Scriptures, and share insights in a cozy, welcoming setting. We anticipate that this study will act as a catalyst for encouragement and personal growth among its participants.

This year's Mothering Sunday was a particularly joyous occasion, and we continue to support the nurturing role of the mothers within our ministry. We are grateful for the leadership and dedication of all the women at St Michael's church.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to the selfless volunteers who serve across various ministries. Your dedication to sharing your time, talents, and resources is pivotal in spreading hope and love within our community and beyond. Your embodiment of the gospel's teachings has been a beacon of inspiration and has played a crucial role in the thriving of Sydenham.

We seize this moment to express our profound appreciation to everyone who has supported the ministry of St Michael's church in countless ways. Your contributions have been instrumental in furthering our mission and extending the reach of the gospel's life-changing message. We pray for God's continued blessings and guidance as we endeavour to shine as a beacon of light and hope. We are immensely thankful for your steadfast support and commitment to the gospel.

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT - DENISHA KNOLE

We have noted an increase in attendance at our weekly Service with both adults and children. This is very encouraging to see and brings much life to the Church especially when the voices are heard singing the hymns in unison.

Yemi was commissioned as a SPA in November 2023 and functioning in her newly appointed role. This addition to the Parish has opened a call for those who believe they are called into ministry to speak with Reverend Ifeanyi or Morwenna.

Denisha has fully taken on the role of one of the Churchwardens working closely with Donna who is the serving Churchwarden. Donna will be on temporary leave from her role as Churchwarden from mid April for a period of six months. Melvin has been elected and agreed to stand in for that period of time. He is receiving training and being supported as he learns the duties of the Churchwarden working closely with Denisha and the DCC members to ensure the continued organisation and running of the Church.

The DCC has been discussing ways to increase the Church visibility and how to raise funds to further support the Church. They have decided on a Church fund raising Fete, happening on Friday 12th July 2024, where the intent is to reach out to the community in a fun and entertaining manner and invite them in showing grace, love and compassion through our words and action. We are currently in the planning stages and the School has been made aware in order for the children to be part of it. The congregation will also be involved as their ideas and contributions are highly valuable.

We have started to serve tea and biscuits on the first Sunday of each month and so far it has been noted that this has been very well received by our congregation.

This year we have had four baptisms thus far, two adults and two children.

There has been no major or outstanding building work currently to our Church building. As far as I am aware the Church is in good condition structurally. The Church interior requires a fresh coat of paint in the near future but currently funds are not available and this has been discussed at DCC level.

Reverend Ifeanyi has had a new addition to his family. His family welcomed a baby boy (Ifeanyi) in 2023 and it has been delightful to see baby Ifeanyi in our Church Services. We wish Reverend Ifeanyi and his family God's warmest blessing.

The running of a Church is more than what meets the eye. Since I have taken on the role of one of the Churchwardens, which I believe I am still a work in progress, and the experience thus far has taught me much wisdom. I appreciate every single person for their continued commitment and support in serving to make St. Michael's & All Angels Parish a beautiful Parish to worship in.

TREASURER'S REPORT - SYBIL CAREY

Introduction and Notes to the Annual Accounts

Year Ending 31st December 2023

Forest Hill Team Ministry

The District Church Council of St Michael and All Angels Church, Lower Sydenham

The DCC of St Michael and All Angels Church (DCC) consist of those PCC members of the Forest Hill Team Ministry who normally attend St Michael's Church. The DCC is a sub-committee of the PCC of the Forest Hill Team Ministry. It has delegated powers from the PCC in relation to financial activities associated with St Michael's Church and Hall.

Objectives and activities

The DCC of St Michael and All Angels Church has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish of the Team Ministry the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

Funds

The DCC has identified funds as follows:

Unrestricted Funds

- DCC General Purposes Fund: managed by the DCC.

Restricted Funds

- DCC Buildings Fund: managed by the DCC and only used to pay for improvements or repairs to the church and hall buildings and fixtures.

The accounts include monetary transactions, assets and liabilities for which the DCC can be held responsible. They do not include the accounts of Church groups that owe affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

The church's three sources of annual income are:

- Rental from St Michael's Primary School £16,445
- Congregational giving £13,340
- Tenants £16,387

Rental from the church and hall from all tenants (including School) is £32,832. this year, compared to £36,727 in 2022. The reduction is partially due to an unforeseen delayed payment of last quarter of the school rental in December. Also, some Hall hirers are finding it difficult to keep up with the increased rents this year, and we have not had any major new lettings, since Spectrum Montessori left.

The church's top three sources of annual expenditure are:

- Parish Support Fund (Diocesan Quota) £26,350
- Utilities £20,125
- Salaries £9,929

In 2023 expenditure exceeded income by £18,381. The main reason being the very sharp increase in utility costs (more than trebled, compared to 2022 - £6,424) combined with the delayed final quarter rental.

The financial outlook for 2024 is largely dependent on a reduction in the cost of Gas prices, which was nearly tripled for us this year. Our Church being a large 1950's building with all large glass windows on all sides, is hard to heat up. Not having the heat at least moderately on, is out of the question. An increase in rental / gaining new tenants is also very desirable.

I thank our wonderful small congregation who regularly donate. Thanks to them, we can carry on carrying on. My thanks to Simon Taylor, Treasurer of St George's Church, who is my mentor and as per usual, checks and sends off my Gift Aid applications and checks the account for completeness. Also, to Peter Stubbs, Treasurer of St Bartholomew's Church for checking the final account.

Notes on the Accounts

Note 1

The License Fee from St Michael's Primary School. The school uses church owned land (most of the playground including the dining hall and the garden to the rear of the church) and pays rent. The current quarterly rate is £5,481.25.

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINER TO THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS, LOWER SYDENHAM

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023.

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023.

Respective Responsibilities of the Trustees and the Independent Examiner.

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is required.

It is my responsibility to:

- a) examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- b) follow the procedures laid down in the *General Directions* given by the Charity Commissioners section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- c) state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the *General Directions* given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the management committee concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in a full audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matters have come to my attention:

1. which give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - a) to keep accounting records in accordance with s. 130 of the 2011 Act; or
 - b) to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting records have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Peter Stubbs - Treasurer, St. Bartholomew's Church, Sydenham.

REPORT BY THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINER ON THE ACCOUNTS FOR ST. MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS, LOWER SYDENHAM, FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023

The level of gross income (being less than £500,000) and the size of the balance sheet, confirm that the PCC require an independent examination rather than a full audit of accounts. The accounts have been produced using the Receipts and Payments method, rather than the Accruals method, which is acceptable as the level of gross income is also less than £250,000.

An understanding of the PCC's organisation, accounting records, activities and nature of its assets, liabilities, income and expenditure was gained from a survey of the accounting records and discussions with the treasurer of St. Michael's in previous years. No failures were identified in the accounting records. An analytical review of the financial statements was carried out to look for inconsistencies and unusual events in the year and compared to previous years. No unexpected fluctuations were discovered in the financial statements beyond those due to the pandemic. Enquiries did not reveal any post balance sheet events which would have significant impact on the financial statements for the year.

Figures in the financial statements were cross-referenced to and checked off against the accounting records to confirm the links between the two. Tests were made of the arithmetical accuracy of the financial statements and the cash book.

While total income in 2023 was at a similar level to the previous year, costs increased by £13,000 due entirely to the increase in utility costs i.e. energy. The overall deficit in the General Purposes fund in the year was £18,000 but allowing for one quarter rent from the School not received before the year end, the actual deficit was £13,000. With only £6,000 of reserves left in the fund at the end of 2023 there is a clear need to increase income or cut costs. Probably the solution lies in a combination of factors: increasing rental income from new tenants or via increased charges, falling energy costs which seem to have peaked and if necessary, reducing or deferring the Quota paid to the Diocese (which is the largest cost).

Peter Stubbs -Treasurer, St. Bartholomew's Church, Sydenham.

ST. MICHAEL'S SCHOOL - BERYL FIELDER (Chair of Governors)

The School continues to thrive under the leadership of the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher, very ably supported by all the teaching and support staff. The children are encouraged to live an abundant life and display kindness, confidence and maturity in their daily lives.

This year Rev. David Howland, School Chaplain and Rev. Ifeanyi have been working together and the Wednesday morning collective worship where parents/carers are invited to attend have been successful in forging relationships further between the School and Church community.

Prior to the pandemic, the School had looked into the possibility of joining the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education's Multi Academy Trust. Unfortunately, due to the lockdown, this did not continue at the time. However, following consultations with the Governors, staff and families, the School has now applied to join the SDBE MAT and we hope this should be finalised in the summer. I would like to thank everyone for their continued hard work and commitment and look forward to the exciting time ahead.

SUNDAY SCHOOL REPORT - TILIE BENTIL-MENSAH

Sunday School sessions are going well and we are very blessed and thankful for that. The children are always happy to be learning and spending time in fellowship with each other.

Sunday School sessions are held once a month - the 3rd Sunday of the month. Currently there are 3 leaders (Chizoba, Pippa and Tilie) and about 5 children attending each session, on average. We also have a few young people who are great helpers during the sessions.

Children & Young People's Services: these Services, which are held on the 1st Sunday of the month, continues to be a blessing to us all, as we have our young people and children participating in all aspects of the Service. There are 13 young people on the rota for co-leading.

Many thanks to all the leaders, helpers and children for all their dedication to the children's ministry at St. Michael's.

8TH SYDENHAM GUIDES - COLLEEN CREASEY

The 8th Sydenham Guides meet on Thursday evenings from 6.30-8.30 p.m. We currently have 28 Guides who have made their Guide promise. During our meetings we play games, complete badges, learn life skills and take part in crafts.

Over the past year we have completed a variety of different badges such as Christmas pudding challenge badge where the Guides ate Christmas pudding mug cakes, made items that looked like Christmas puddings and played games with a Christmas theme. They also completed a Bounce badge which was a special badge released for the leap year. The Guides had to complete a list of 29 things which signified the 29 days in February, they jumped 29 times, completed 29 star jumps and played games in which they had to pick up 29 items. It was a fun badge which the Guides enjoyed. Recently we have been focusing on the Guiding History badge learning a variety of knots, semaphore and the phonetic alphabet.

In April we went bowling and in October they took part in a London challenge where they had to travel to photograph as many central London sights as they could in a limited amount of time. Part of the Guide promise is to serve the community so the Guides have been doing shopping challenges and donating the items to a local food bank.

Over the next year we will continue to serve our community. We have just started to volunteer our time at a local care home to make a difference to the older members of the community. We are hoping to organise a weekend away where the Guides will learn camping skills.

BROWNIES - They are flourishing and meet on Monday evenings from 6.30 - 8.00 p.m. No report received from them before publishing this document.

2ND SYDENHAM RAINBOWS - COLLEEN CREASEY

The Rainbows meet on Monday evenings from 5.15 - 6.15 p.m. We currently have 18 Rainbows with 14 having made their Rainbow promise. After Easter we will be having another 4 join us. During our meetings we play games, complete badges, learn life skills and take part in crafts. This year the girls have been completing badges such as Fruit and Veg, Helper, Nature plus many more.

At Christmas we did a Snow badge with lots of water based activities and we made indoor dens. We completed a London badge where we dressed up as a character from a London musical, did some etiquette activities to see what it would be like to be Princess Charlotte. We have had our yearly Rainbow Sleepover which was themed on characters from Beatrix Potter. In the summer we will be trying to follow tracking signs around the local area trying to get everyone to complete two theme awards so that all Rainbows can gain their Bronze Rainbow award.

We have 25 girls on our Rainbow waiting list and now the age has been lowered to 4 our unit capacity is struggling to offer places till some of these girls are 5.5 years. Guiding is very popular. We are looking forward to new and exciting things in September.

ST. MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS P.C.C./D.C.C. MEMBERS 2023/4

Vicar:	Revd. Ifeanyi Chukuka
Church Wardens:	Mrs. Donna Wilson, Mrs. Denisha Knole
Treasurer:	Mrs. Sybil Carey
Deanery Synod:	Mrs. Maureen Laurence, Mrs. Yemi Akinsamni
DCC Secretary:	Mrs. Brenda Ayling
D.C.C.	Revd. Ifeanyi Chukuka, Mrs. Beryl Fielder, Mrs. Maureen Lawrence, Dr. Victor Ayeni, Mrs. Tilie Bentil- Mensah, Mrs. Sybil Carey, Mrs. Donna Wilson, Mrs. Yemi Akinsamni, Mrs. Denisha Knole, Mr. Melvin Onwuta, Mrs. Victoria Familoni, Mrs. Brenda Ayling.

MUMS & TODDLERS GROUP (LITTLE ANGELS) - SHELBY BEATON

I would like to thank you for enabling us to carry on opening the toddler group in the church hall.

It's still a big hit, and sometimes up to 25 children at a session. It does provide a safe place to play, mums to meet, have a coffee/tea and a healthy snack for the children.

We have kept the entrance fee to an affordable amount, which is then put back into the group for toys/arts & crafts/ Easter eggs and Christmas presents with a party etc. Also giving a donation to the church each term.

Since Covid - lots of local groups haven't re-opened, so we are lucky to be able to use the hall and hopefully put a smile on some little children's faces.

Also I would like to thank Brenda & Sybil for their support - if not for them we wouldn't be able to run the group.

ELECTORAL ROLL - BRENDA AYLING

Membership of the revised Church Electoral Roll stands at 51 with about 16 children attending. We have, however, many members on our Worship/Social Register. Anyone wanting to be included on the Electoral Roll should contact the Church Wardens or Brenda Ayling for a form.

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH & HALL USERS

	ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH GROUPS	Time	Contact	Tel. No.
MONDAY Hall:	Mums & Toddlers Rainbows Brownies	9.30 am- 11.30 am 5.30pm - 6.30 pm 6.30pm - 8.00 pm	Shelby Beaton Colleen Creasey} Colleen Creasey}	07956 266 399 "girlguiding.org.uk /interested"
Church	Homework Club Breakfast Club (Daily)	3.30 pm - 6.00 pm 7.30 am - 9.00 am	Sarah Hukporti Kaba	shukportikaba@g mail.com
TUESDAY Hall:	Mums & Toddlers Pilates class	9.30 am- 11.30 am 6.30 pm - 8.00 pm	Shelby Beaton Brenda Nassali- Liston	07956 266 399 07983 502 887
WEDS. Hall:	Mums & Toddlers	9.30am -11.30 am	Shelby Beaton	07956 266 399
THURS. Hall:	Guides	6.30pm - 8.30 pm	Colleen Creasey	"girlguiding.org.uk /interested"
FRIDAY Hall:	Good Times	18.30 pm-20.30pm	Victoria Familoni	07988 320 035
SAT. Hall:	7 th Day Adventists	9.00am - 6.00 pm	Pastor Esson	07985 408 669
SUNDAY Church:	St.Michael's Service	10.00 a.m.	Revd. Ifeanyi	07930 614 660
Hall:	I AM Church	13.00-17.00 pm	Emi Makuka	07426 151 473