



# APCM 2024

**ST MICHAEL'S, ST STEPHEN'S &  
ACKROYDON COMMUNITY CHURCH**

**being transformed | in Christ  
bringing hope | for everyone**

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# WELCOME

**being transformed | in Christ | bringing hope | for everyone**

Welcome to the Annual Report of St Michael's Southfields, Ackroydon Community Church and St Stephen's East Putney. We are multiple congregations spread across three locations, but together, we are one family in Christ.

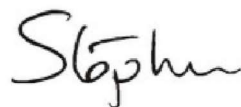
Within these pages, you will find a synopsis of the many activities, projects, and ministries that we have been running over the last year. I hope that as you read about them, you will find encouragement and vision. They make for good reading. Many of the regular projects that we operate have deepened. Our services have grown. New people have been welcomed and fresh initiatives begun.

If you have joined us this year for the first time, then this summary will give you a good insight into all that we do.

As these pages tell the story of the last 12 months, you will see that our church has been busy! I am blessed to work with such an amazing and hardworking team who are constantly bringing God's Kingdom in this place. They are passionate for God's kingdom, gifted with creativity and lots of fun to work with.

And yet, none of this is possible without so many of you who volunteer. You generously give your time and lend your expertise in service.

Thank you. Enjoy.



Rev Stephen Melliush

# SUNDAYS & WORSHIP

## 2023/24 HIGHLIGHTS

- The joy of gathered family worship at the start of the 10:30am service, including Toolbox and Xtra
- Responding to our young people to be more involved in our services, they recently ran The Six.
- We celebrated many baptisms and dedications - welcoming both new families and church families together.
- Supporting growing worship teams - with 36 people regularly involved with our bands and production teams across our churches, new tools and a refined song list are improving our musical confidence and giving us opportunities to be more reactive to the Holy Spirit.
- Our Christmas services were well attended with high levels of community engagement.
- Our 9am service at St Stephen's continues to be a beautiful, reflective time.



## COMING UP IN 2024/25

- **Involvement in Intergenerational Worship** - We have been exploring how our Toolbox and Youth ministries engage with Sunday services, which will present exciting opportunities for more diverse leadership in our sung worship.
- **Growing the team** - We have particular gaps in our production team (sound, visuals, streaming) so we will look to recruit and train in these areas.



## PRAYER POINTS

- **Pray** that our times of gathered worship will provide moments for encountering the Holy Spirit and for making lasting faith decisions.
- **Pray** for our teams serving on Sundays, that we can continue to invest in ourselves and each other.
- **Pray** that we are guided by God in the best ways to lead our congregation into the presence of Jesus this year.

# TOOLBOX TOTS

## 2023/24 HIGHLIGHTS

- **Puppet Church** - This new weekday service aimed at toddlers and their families and carers is based around Bible stories and is delivered in a vibrant and meaningful way. It is centred around puppets and includes music, arts and crafts and an opportunity to connect with others. We are so thankful that the service is growing as we minister to Christians and seekers.
- **Toolbox Tots** - Our Sunday mornings aim to be fun and to nurture faith. It has grown this year, and we have worked hard to develop a great team of volunteers who are committed to seeing our 'tots' grow and flourish. It has been wonderful to worship together as a family beforehand.
- **Early Bird** - This monthly service is full of enthusiasm. Our vision has been to continue communicating Gospel truths to children and parents, whilst allowing families to connect and develop friendships.
- **Thursday Tots** - Our very popular playgroup has a constant flow of new parents and carers each week. There is a wonderful atmosphere and collaborative spirit, with adults fully involved with the children during the session.
- **Peace and Play** - This is a calm, supportive space for new parents to connect and for little ones to make new friends. It has been wonderful to see core members lead this group with care and wisdom, thoughtfully sharing reflections that build faith and confidence.

## COMING UP IN 2024

- **Development of Puppet Church** - Collaborating with the wider staff team has been hugely valuable and we have learnt so much from the process and each other. We plan to involve more families from the congregation, tapping into their faith and creativity.
- **Tots Worship** - This year, worship has been a key part of every tots group and service. It will remain a focus for 2024 as we think of ways to encourage a real love for worshipping God at church and at home.



## PRAYER POINTS

- For God's blessing on our Sunday groups; that we would listen closely to Him as we prepare.
- That families in our church would look forward to attending and feel encouraged in their faith.
- That our volunteers see the value of serving and the impact on the church and their own families.
- That the Tots team continue to meet the needs of the local community, drawing more families to Church and planning events that enable people to meet with God.
- That all our families would feel truly connected to God and to one another, growing in faith.

# TOOLBOX & FAMILIES

## 2023/24 HIGHLIGHTS

- **Toolbox is growing** - The most wonderful wave of new families are joining Sundays, some because children are inviting their friends along. We now join the wider church for worship before going to Toolbox, which has given us beautiful moments of worship and prayer together.
- **Communion Course** - 11 Children received Holy Communion for the first time on 3 March 2024. We loved running the course and celebrating their commitment to following Jesus with the wider church family.
- **Bible Journaling** - Our scripture-based art and craft after-school club is a mid-week discipleship moment for younger members of Toolbox, allowing children to be creative, get messy, and spend time with God.
- **Cell groups** continue to grow and are a vital part of the Year 5 & 6 kids' discipleship, linking them to the wider community of the church.
- **F Factor** - Our latest Faith in the Family day was our biggest yet with fantastic input from Clare Luther and Will van der Hart.
- **Links with schools in the community** - We have hosted and visited many primary schools in our local area this past year including Southmead, West Hill and Sheringdale.
- **Continued relationship with St Michael's School** - As well as whole school assemblies every Monday, we have re-established a weekly lunchtime club, Kingdom Kids, which is a fantastic time to connect with the children in our community.
- **Young mums** - we are continuing to build relationships and meet needs as they arise.

## COMING UP IN 2024

- **Family Conversations: Date night** - Our home-grown version of the marriage course is coming this Spring, with over forty couples already signed up.
- Our plan for the next season is to carry on our current activities, encouraging more families to join us on the journey, meeting needs where they arise, and increasing connections with the community.

## PRAYER POINTS

- **Date night** - for marriages to be strengthened and fun to be had.
- **Volunteers** - thank God for our amazing volunteers who make Toolbox happen each week.
- **For the families in our church** - that they would know how important they are to their Father in heaven, and courage to keep inviting others to join us.



# YOUTH

## 2022/23 HIGHLIGHTS

- **SeptemberFields Youth Festival** – Our annual youth festival gathered Year 7-13s overnight on the church field. This festival provided a great opportunity to introduce the Year 7s to Youth and set up our vision for Youth for the next academic year.
- **Light Fest** – In October we held a large event that served as an alternative for Halloween. Vineyard youth group joined us as we played laser tag and had a neon disco!
- **Friday Night Youth** – This happens once a month and is a great opportunity to spend time building relationships with those who might not be part of our Sunday Evenings or Cell groups. We have run events such as Christmas Youth Party, Live action Pac Man and other fun activities.
- **Sunday Evenings** – these provide an opportunity for our older and younger youth groups to go deeper in faith, discuss relevant topics, and tackle issues that are applicable for each age group as well as play loads of fun games.
- **Cell Groups** – Cell groups provide an opportunity to discuss specific topics in a small setting in a more engaged way.



## COMING UP IN 2024

- **Wild Fires** – We are taking a group of our year 9 - 13s to this festival in the summer instead of DTI.
- **SeptemberFields**- we are running our annual summer youth event at the start of September to kick start the academic year with the youth.

## PRAYER POINTS

- **For more volunteers** to help us on Sunday evenings and Friday nights.
- For our young people to grow in relationship with God and each other.

# ACKROYDON COMMUNITY CHURCH

Outreach on the West Hill Southfields Estate began years ago with a youth club, and has continued with numerous activities, events, and the formation of a new church, with Bishop Christopher awarding us a Bishop's Mission Order at the end of 2018. **Praise God!**

## 2023/24 HIGHLIGHTS

- **Significant growth** – Numbers at the church have grown 50% on last year to an average of 30 people. A few weeks ago, we had over 40 people, only just squeezing everyone in! Kadin is with us every other week and we loved welcoming our curate Jonny and wife Ally in June. We have live worship each week and you should be there for our prayer times - God is moving in power and lives are changing.
- **Nativity Live** – We kicked off the festive season by telling the Nativity story featuring farm animals, a great (and smelly!) way to be immersed in the story of Jesus' birth! Jonny gathered local kids to act and they loved being involved; it felt like an Ackroydon nativity for the Ackroydon community.
- **Christmas bundles** – Over 160 families in the area received an amazing Christmas bundle. It was lovely seeing smiles on people's faces as they were blessed with food and gifts. Thank you to those who gave financially and all the incredible volunteers who spent hours preparing and distributing the bundles.
- **Pancake Party** – We ran a pancake party during half term, organised by church members Stacey, Halima and Fiona, with games, crafts, and pancakes galore! A key part was a moment to talk about Lent and pray together.



## OPEN HOUSE

- **Social club for older residents** meeting weekly on Mondays. It has been running for ten and a half years now and is still viewed as a highlight for many of our regulars.
- **Pray** for isolated older people and for friendships to deepen.
- **Praise God** more older people have joined us, gradually growing our numbers.
- **Praise God** for an influx of volunteers from the estate, making it a more dynamic offering.



'You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden... let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven,' **Matthew 5:14, 16.**

Many times we have walked and prayed around the estate with the vision of being a light on a hill.

## ACKROYDON'S IMPACT IN THE DIOCESE

- **PIONEER CURATES** Rich is regularly asked to deliver training in the pioneer stream for curates. Jonny is also a pioneer curate. Each one has, as part of their 3-4 year curacy, the aim and requirement to develop a new worshipping community. Rich is helping them consider how to develop missional communities in their contexts. It is an honour to be asked to share our mistakes, failures and God's grace as part of our journey towards a mature estate church. Rich and Jonny recently ran a seminar on estate church growth at a conference about Mixed Ecology of Church.



## LOOKING FORWARD TO 2024/5

- **PLEASE PRAY** - we have a new group that has begun on Wednesday mornings. A group of ladies from the estate are meeting in a similar format to a home group, intending to deepen their relationship with God. This is a vital and exciting development.
- **A PERMANENT HOME** - We meet in Ackroydon Hall for most of our activities; it is being demolished and rebuilt in 2025 as part of the Council's housing strategy. To ensure we continue (and increase) the impact on the community, we are signing a short-term lease on a unit next to the hall. This will enable us to help other hall users find a new home. Simultaneously, we are planning youth provision, budgeting courses, a playgroup, 24/7 prayer and more. Please pray as we go through planning and project development so that we can deliver a good facility for the community.

We pray for God's Kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven in these exciting ventures. Amen.

# SOCIAL ACTION

## 2023/24 HIGHLIGHTS

### Community Lunch

- Over 2,000 meals were served to 40+ guests each week, a 43% increase from last year.
- The 11 O'Clock Club launched in January 2024 offering a social hour with activities, such as bingo, quizzing or crafting for guests immediately before Community Lunch.



### Wandsworth Foodbank

- Emergency referrals to UK Food Banks have increased by 400% in the last 10 years.
- The most common reason for referral (85%) is benefits payments being too low to cover essential costs.
- Each Monday St Michael's sees 10+ referrals, a significant increase from 2022/23.



### Glass Door Winter Night Shelter

- From November 2023 to April 2024, our night shelter hosts 35 people and serves a nutritious hot three-course hot meal prepared by our volunteer team, providing a warm welcome.

### Ukrainian Supper

- Running on the first Friday of every month at Brathway Hall, our social supper for Ukrainian refugees provides a space for guests to meet and talk over a delicious, volunteer-prepared hot meal.
- *'Thanks to these meetings, at least for some time we forget the war in our country, about our many problems and rest our souls.'* - Svetlana

### St Michael's Kitchen Garden

- The number of vegetable beds and trees planted continued to grow through the year. All the produce is used by Community Lunch or given, free of charge, to local residents in need and St Michael's Food Bank.
- Continued to play an important role in supporting the physical and mental health and well-being of all volunteers and in promoting St Michael's green and sustainable ethos.

### Heidi Klein Sample Sales

- An amazing £32,515 was raised in 2023/24 from these twice-yearly sales. This money has been used to fund our social action projects.

### Christmas Bundles

- Last Christmas we provided 168 families (684 individuals) with all that they needed to make a full Christmas dinner, including vegetables, mince pies and a Sainsbury's voucher.



## COMING UP IN 2024

- To partner with Learn to Love to Read for a second summer to provide 'Read & Feed' sessions for children and parents on Wednesdays through the school holidays.
- Develop and deliver a Life Skills course as both a standalone event and as part of existing projects, at St Michael's and Ackroydon Community Church.
- Continue to develop the 11 O'clock Club prior to Community Lunch, aiming to develop friendships and address isolation among our guests.
- To extend the vegetable growing season at the Kitchen Garden through the use of our new polytunnel.

## PRAYER POINTS

- **Give thanks and pray** for our amazing, committed volunteer teams, without whom none of these projects would be possible.
- **Ask God** to inspire others to use their skills and passions to join existing and new projects in the future, so that we can continue to show God's love to our community.
- **Pray for strength, justice and peace** for those facing big struggles at present, especially with the cost of living crisis and for the war in Ukraine to end.

# Sparkle & LITTLE FINGERS AT ST STEPHEN'S

## 2023/24 HIGHLIGHTS

- **The growth of Sparkle, our intergenerational community centre**, now meeting on three days in two locations. It has over 75 members and has engaged with over 200 primary school children (at 3 different schools) and 70 nursery children.
- **The launch of a Sparkle informal faith group** meeting after the session on Thursday at St Stephen's to provide a holistic approach to wellbeing.
- **Little Fingers Nursery** continues to provide a happy, friendly and fun environment for children aged 2-4 years Monday to Thursday term time. Ally Fitter joined the Little Fingers team in September alongside the existing team of Wendy, Lisa and Sharon.
- **A growing range of activities at Little Fingers** with a sports teacher, dance workshops, and input from St Michael's, alongside the usual painting, playdough, water play and dressing up.
- **Little Fingers & Sparkle combine** on Tuesdays and Thursdays, connecting our pre-schoolers with their 'Grandfriends' for singing, crafts or completing puzzles together. Both children and adults thoroughly enjoy our Sparkle time together.



## COMING UP IN 2024

- **We celebrate** the 2nd Birthday of Sparkle and plan to grow to a third location.
- **Seeking ways** to improve the space at St Stephen's, including the nursery space.

## PRAYER POINTS

- **Pray that Sparkle would continue to grow** and bless more people without diluting the quality of the project, and ensure that EVERYONE who attends Sparkle has value and purpose.
- **That our faith pathways at Sparkle** would draw people closer to God in this season of life.

# BRATHWAY HALL

## THE STORY SO FAR

- The project to build Brathway Hall and two key worker flats above was completed in March 2020. The flats were then occupied by church staff members and for many months of the pandemic, the hall was used by the Wimbledon Dons volunteers to distribute food to local residents in need.
- We currently have two members of staff and their families living in the flats above the hall.
- The hall itself is now a well-established blessing to our community, providing space for a wide range of activities to take place.
- In the past year, new users have included Wandsworth Hospital and Home Tutors, the Bereavement Course and a new home group, plus a baby massage class starting soon. All while hosting the Ukrainian Supper once a month, using the kitchen to pre-prepare food for Sparkle and Community lunch once a fortnight and weekly activities such as Rainbows, Toolbox Xtra, and Youth.

# SMALL GROUPS

## 2023/24 HIGHLIGHTS

- **Groups continued to support one another** through prayer, encouragement and discussion - enabling friendships to flourish and deepen.
- **The wide variety of small groups** happening at St Michael's, St Stephen's and Ackroydon include evening home groups, daytime groups, Men of Bacon and Ignition first thing in the morning, Families Home Group on a Sunday, Peace & Play, and our informal evening prayer walking group.
- **A new group** has started for the women of Ackroydon with a focus on the Bible and discipleship.



## PRAYER POINTS

- **Pray that God would raise up new groups and leaders** - the need is growing!
- **Pray for our amazing small group leaders** – that God may sustain and bless them in this vital ministry.

# MISSION PARTNERS

## AS A CHURCH WE SUPPORT SIX MAIN CHARITIES:

- **Regenerate UK** runs a variety of programmes for children, young people and their families in Roehampton, and partners with other London estate communities to initiate similar projects.
- **Medair**, particularly in South Sudan, Ukraine, Turkey and Syria – saves lives in emergencies, provides healthcare, nutrition, safe water, sanitation, shelter and infrastructure.
- **iThemba**, South Africa, runs education, sports, training, crèche and feeding programmes.
- **Christian Solidarity Worldwide** works in over 20 countries across Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America, defending everyone’s right to freedom of religion or belief.
- **RedTribe** works in partnership with a remote and traditional Maasai community (Kenya/Tanzania border) to bring hope for a better future by improving health, education, and alleviating poverty.
- **Hope For Justice** exists to bring an end to modern slavery by preventing exploitation, rescuing victims, restoring lives, and reforming society.



## RECENTLY IN 2023

- **Mission Possible** dinner, dancing and auctions night on Saturday 20 May was our annual fundraising event, and £25,000 in profits went to our mission partners and social action projects. It was a brilliant evening to hear from our mission partners and be together. Thank you for coming, giving and to the amazing team who organised a cracking evening.

## PRAYER POINTS

- For each of the **6 charities**, particularly for their leaders and management.
- For **Mission Possible** happening on Saturday 11 May.

# ST MIKE'S CAFÉ & COMMUNITY HUB

## 2023/24 HIGHLIGHTS

- **10-Year Anniversary** - The cafe turned 10 in September 2023 and we celebrated by turning the church car park into our own open-air cafe celebration.
- **Work Experience** - We continue to offer our younger community an opportunity to gain valuable work experience and complete their Duke of Edinburgh volunteering. This platform offers insight into future working life, teamwork, confidence and resilience.
- **The Pavilion Café** - Cafe on the field continues to flourish on a Friday afternoon after school in the summer term; we had an extended season last year because the sun just kept shining!
- **Hosting** - The space just keeps getting busier as footfall is steadily growing, resulting in an 18% uplift in turnover compared to 2022/23
- **The Refill at St Mike's** - Continues to grow and there are plans to do a re-launch in May this year with a big marketing push in the local community



## COMING UP IN 2024/25

- A budget has been agreed for cafe refurbishment. We anticipate doing the work over the summer.
- A new snack/lunch menu is also planned, including cakes, savoury pastries & soup.
- School holidays and Saturday morning openings are under discussion.
- Plant care and propagation within the cafe space is being developed under the Grow Project.
- We look forward to taking on more staff on a shift basis as we are increasingly busy.

## PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for the café to continue to grow and show more people that this is the front of house to the church during the week, welcoming all who enter with increased smiles!
- That we continue to promote our inclusive environment and welcome all people with or without a faith to feel safe and loved at all times.
- That more of our customers might become part of our congregation and that increasingly the café can facilitate a fresh expression of church.

# MINISTRY STAFF

**Vicar:** Rev Stephen Melliush

**Senior Leadership Team:**

Rev Richard Boothroyd, Rev Louisa Davies  
Megan Taylor, Kate Elliott

**Worship Pastor:** Sean Skinner

**Pioneer Curate:** Rev Jonny Fitter

**Accounts:**

Christine Lipton, Susan Sangamneheri

**Sparkle and Social Action:**

Emma Chisholm, Gaby McWhinnie  
Fran Overy-Brewer, Kathy Melliush

**Kids and Youth:**

Jen Constable, Celia Richardson  
Kadin Barber, Lucy O'Boyle

**Cafe Lead:** Eithne Brading-Keane

## SAFEGUARDING

At St Michael's Southfields, and St Stephen's Putney and Ackroydon Community Church we are committed to safeguarding the children and vulnerable adults in our care. You can read our safeguarding policies on our website.

Our Parish Safeguarding Officers are Jon Frostick and Megan Taylor.