



The Diocese of  
**Southwark**

**The Bishop of Southwark**

The Rt Revd Christopher Chessun

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31 January 2025

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

### **Parish Support Fund: Thank you!**

I would like to thank you and your church for your dedication and commitment to the Parish Support Fund (PSF) which has enabled our diocese to achieve a collection rate of 99.7% by the end of 2024. This very high rate of collection is testimony, not only to the great generosity of the people and parishes of our diocese, but of their deep commitment to the mission of Christ and his Church. This generosity has helped to resource mission and ministry in our many parishes throughout South London and East Surrey.

My fellow Bishops and I are deeply appreciative for each church community and the contributions so many parishioners generously - and very often sacrificially - give to provide your parish pledges. These gifts fund our current and future clergy and lay ministers, affirm and teach our children and young people, assist the poor and enable us to challenge injustice - all seeking to bear good fruits of faith for future generations and a hopeful future.

Undoubtedly, living out the biblical principle of mutuality has been more challenging with the current economic and reputational challenges facing our Church. I and my fellow Bishops are so grateful for those PCCs who share their resources generously and proportionately to sustain other parishes, as well as those who strive to offer a little more of their limited budgets each year to support mission and ministry. These gospel messages of generosity and mutual care underpin the PSF and are integral to our covenant partnership.

The Apostle Paul emphasises the importance of supporting fellow believers: "So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith." (Galatians 6:10) Thank you for prioritising the needs of your spiritual family in making your 2025 pledges. I am grateful to the 47% of parishes who met my request to increase their pledge by 3.5%, the rise in our indicative costs, helping us to fund the stipend increase for clergy and the increase in Employer's National Insurance. Some of you will be aware of the significant proposals before General Synod to help to develop the Church's longer-term missional and financial health and improve clergy well-being with a substantial rise in stipends in 2026. The effect that this may have upon our diocesan and parish finances is unclear but challenging, meaning that managing our diocesan costs carefully and growing our PSF pledges will remain vital.

**Christ  
Centred  
Outward  
Focused**

**The Diocese of Southwark**

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Company Secretary: Nicola Thomas



I would be grateful if you would share my thanks with your PCCs and congregations, celebrating how together we can meet the needs of others and bear witness to the transformative power of the Gospel. I have a deep sense of gratitude for our shared ministry, and thankfulness to God for the many blessings we enjoy in our diverse diocese.

As we face the challenges of 2025, may we pray with hope and joy that God's love be poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit and that we continue to practise and encourage kindness, keep others as safe as possible, and in all things to be Christ Centred and Outward Focused.

With my prayers, appreciation and good wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christopher Chessun". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**The Rt Revd Christopher Chessun**  
Bishop of Southwark