



StMARY*with*StALBAN  
PARISH CHURCH *of* TEDDINGTON

# Annual Parochial Church Meeting

**27 April 2021**

**Review of Year to 31 December 2020**

**Via Zoom.**

## **CHURCH ELECORAL ROLL**

Names added	3
Names removed	16
Net loss	13
Total number on the revised Roll	348

Of the 348 names on the Roll, 115 are in respect of people who reside outside the parish who habitually attend public worship in this parish. The names removed from the Roll relate to 8 persons who have died and 8 who have moved away.

Jennifer Paynter  
Church Electoral Roll Officer  
St Mary with St Alban  
11 April 2021

## Contents

<b>Vicar's Report</b>	3
<b>2020 Proceedings of the PCC</b>	4
<b>Finance</b>	
Treasurer's report (See separate formal statement of finances entitled 'Annual Report')	
<b>Fabric</b>	
Building Development	7
Churchyard	8
Parish Hall	9
Recording St Mary's	10
<b>Worship &amp; Nurture:</b>	
Safeguarding	11
Children's Ministry	11
Choir & Music	12
Churches Together	14
Nurture Courses	16
<i>"Reflections in Strange Times"</i>	17
<b>Communications:</b>	
Working group report	18
<b>Pastoral Care:</b>	
Working group report	18
Community Café	19
Memory Café	20
Parish Care Team	20
Winter Night Shelter	21
<b>Links:</b>	
St Mary's & St Peter's CofE Primary School	21
Hampton Deanery Synod	23
2 <sup>nd</sup> A (St Mary with St Alban) Girlguiding	24
1 <sup>st</sup> Teddington Scout Group	25
Activate	26
ALMA	28
Fairtrade	28
First Wednesday Club	29
Handbells	29
Parish Pub Lunch group	30
Plain & Pearl	30
Traherne Group	31
Welcare	31

## VICAR'S REPORT

My last report was only written 6 months ago, due to the postponement of the annual meeting in 2020. So not a huge amount has happened since. And it seems appropriate to repeat a section of that report which referred to the first half of 2020:

“...in early 2020 we ran a very encouraging *Alpha* course for the first time and we bade farewell to Azariah France-Williams after three and half very creative and fruitful years as our Associate Priest. He ‘upped our game’ in many ways, not least in his engagement with SMSP School, his community outreach and his pastoral care of the congregation at St Peter & St Paul. I greatly enjoyed working with him and wish to record my gratitude for his ministry with us. We wish him well in his new pioneer ministry in Manchester.

Azariah’s departure led to the courageous decision by the PCC of St Peter & St Paul to stop running regular Sunday services and to merge with St Mary with St Alban. A very moving ‘Final Service’ was held in March, followed by a ‘Coming Together’ service the next week. Sadly, lockdown started a few days later but our integration has continued online and in other ways. Moreover, the building of St Peter & St Paul is now accommodating an exciting Sports Ministry (*Activate*) and a Community Café, both of which have long been in our Mission Action Plan.

Since September, I’m pleased to report that *Activate* has been very busy with both in-person foodbank deliveries and online activities that combine physical exercise with spiritual reflection. They are set to launch more group activities as the lockdown restrictions are lifted -and it’s wonderful to have Rev Chris Kennedy around. His enthusiasm and energy are infectious, and he’s been a great help in running our 9am Family Service at St Peter & St Paul.

I’m also excited to see the relaunch of the Community Café in May and look forward to a fruitful partnership with the NHS Social Prescribing Team as well as *Activate*. Together, we can develop a programme of activities that meets the needs of those who have perhaps suffered most during lockdown.

One of the most significant developments during lockdown has been the need to get up to speed with online church. This has provided some lasting benefits. Firstly, there is a much bigger group of people praying for, and on behalf of, the parish. Instead of one or two people occasionally joining the clergy in church for daily prayer, we now have ten to fifteen people joining us every morning and evening on zoom. This provides a wonderful bedrock for everything that we do. Secondly, we now have the equipment and know-how to continue livestreaming our services. This means that people can continue to worship with us even when illness, location or other commitments prevent them from coming to church. We’ve had some wonderful stories of people reconnecting with us, even though they’ve moved out of the area some time ago. Thirdly, this livestreaming capability is already proving to be a huge blessing for funerals and will be popular for baptisms and weddings as well, enabling family and friends from all over the world to participate in these momentous life events.

I’d like to record my particular thanks to Fred Squire for masterminding the installation of our new equipment as well as operating it at every service and editing nearly every video since March last year. It’s been almost a full-time job and we certainly wouldn’t be so well set-up without his dedication. We’ve also benefitted hugely from the

professional support of James Ward who has ensured that our big services have had the 'full treatment'.

Our musicians and clergy alike have adapted very well to online services and I thank them all for their dedication and willingness to learn new skills. I'd like to thank Mary Hawes especially for running Family Worship online every Sunday (as well as Zoom Coffee) and creating PowerPoint hymn slides every week. I'm likewise very grateful to our churchwardens, Robin and Carla, who have worked tirelessly to ensure that the critical risk assessments and safety measures have been put in place for when we've been able to return to worshipping in-person. I also want to thank our Parish Administrators, Suzanne and Emma, for doing a similar job in respect of our parish halls and for ensuring an excellent weekly flow of communication via our e-bulletin and social media.

In short, we've come through the pandemic in remarkably good shape and can look to the future with justifiable hope and optimism. We have a Mission Action Plan which identifies five priorities that I look forward to working on with everyone (see separate MAP document). And I'm eager to share the revised plans for our *Building Anew* project which should be ready very soon. Finally, I'm delighted that Caroline has agreed to extend her ministry with us beyond her 3-year curacy which finishes in June 2021. From July she will be Associate Vicar. It continues to be wonderful privilege to serve alongside her and alongside you all.

### **2020 Proceedings of the PCC**

**Katherine Matthews**

There have been 6 PCC meetings during the last 12 months all of which have been held via the video conferencing app, Zoom due to the CV crisis. The 1<sup>st</sup> meeting normally takes place following the APCM and the new elections to the PCC and Deanery Synod as appropriate. However due to the CV crisis, the APCM was delayed until October 2020.

The first meeting held on 14 May opened with the vicar seeking PCC reflections on the response of St Mary's to the CV crisis. It was agreed that there had been several successful initiatives including the formation of the Parish Care Team & the Big Ring Round. A significant number from the congregation attend both Morning & Evening Prayer via Zoom and the regular podcast, *Reflections in Strange Times*, offers interesting and challenging thoughts on our faith and how we respond to the current challenges. The online Sunday services have been well-received.

The vicar provided an update on the future plans for the Parish of St Peter & St Paul regarding the administration of the parish, its geographical spread, the church building and clergy stipend and vicarage. Of particular note was the likelihood that the church building be established as an Extra Parochial Place, known as the Teddington Mission Hub, accommodating a number of ministries as they emerge, eg the Community Café, the Sports Ministry and the temporary relocation of St Michael's Sunday services during their building renovations. The vicar was also pleased to report that the Rev Chris Kennedy had recently been appointed to post of Pioneer Sports Minister.

Steve Randall, chair of the Governance group for the Building Development project, presented the latest architectural drawings which would form part of the faculty to be submitted to the DAC for our building plans. The project was running to plan at this stage but concerns were expressed that delays would now be inevitable given current

uncertainties.

Fred Squire, treasurer, presented a revised 2020 budget to the PCC (amended to reflect uncertainties due to the CV crisis) and this was unanimously approved by the PCC.

The PCC passed 2 resolutions at this meeting one with regard to Chancel Repair Liability and the other in respect of the revised policy on memorials & ashes.

The second meeting in July was opened with the vicar's reflections on the recent Black Lives Matter protest and subsequent campaigning following the murder of George Floyd in the United States. These protests together with the book written by Father Azariah France-Williams entitled "*Ghost Ship*" challenge us to confront racial discrimination and as a result the vicar reported that plans were in place to form a discussion group focussing on these issues.

Since the APCM had not yet taken place, Sarah Williams, who was due to retire as churchwarden, had been unable to relinquish her responsibilities. Carla Maroussas had put her name forward to be elected as the new churchwarden and the PCC were in favour of her being elected as acting churchwarden in order for Sarah to stand down.

Robin Field-Smith, churchwarden, explained the plans put in place to reopen the church for public worship due to relaxation of some of the CV restrictions.

The Building update reported on the recent excavation of trial pits in the churchyard and the positive initial feedback on our plans from the DAC and other interested bodies.

Finally, the vicar reported that plans for SPSP continue as reported previously and that the sports ministry will now be known as "*Activate*".

The third meeting in September opened with reflections on the resumption of public worship and the welcome news that all Sunday services are now taking place as normally as possible bearing in mind government guidelines with the 10am service also being live-streamed. The Zoom coffee mornings on Sundays continue to provide an opportunity for us to chat and get to know members of the congregation we may not have previously engaged with.

Given that the recording and live-streaming of services seems likely to continue, Fred Squire presented options to the PCC of equipment which the church could buy to offer a more effective and efficient process for filming and streaming. New equipment has subsequently been acquired and there has been very positive feedback from those who continue to view the online services.

Nikki Harrison gave a detailed presentation of the fund-raising strategy for the Building Project. She highlighted the funding streams we can consider and provided information on the potential amounts available from certain trusts or foundations alongside the processes and criteria we would need to satisfy to be eligible for funds.

Further updates on *Activate* revolved around staff appointments and related safeguarding procedures. The vicar also confirmed plans for the dissolution of the parish of SPSP and the redrawing of the parish boundaries for St Mary's & St Michael's, Fulwell.

The 4<sup>th</sup> meeting in November took place following the delayed APCM. Consequently, this was the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting for the newly elected churchwardens and PCC. Appointments of vice-chair, treasure, secretary, Standing Committee, children's champion & vulnerable adults' champion were confirmed. The PCC ratified the parish safeguarding policy and fully approved the final Churchyard Development Plan presented by Robin Field-Smith. Mission updates were provided on *Activate*, the community café and Nurture courses, including Advent and Pilgrim courses.

Unfortunately, by the time of the next meeting in January 2021, a 2<sup>nd</sup> national lockdown due to the CV crisis had been announced early in the new year and the clergy team had decided to once again close the church for both services and private prayer. Ideas were discussed with regard to engaging children, young people and other "hard to reach" groups during this lockdown and what the church might prioritise once lockdown restrictions were eased. The PCC acknowledged the innovative ways in which the church has communicated with and served those in the local community and how these have contributed to maintaining spiritual well-being during this challenging year.

The vicar reported that, despite current restrictions, the *Activate* team has been proactive with involvement in youth services and further liaison with GPs and the social prescribing team to begin online classes and meeting groups. The Pilgrim course was also proving popular with over 30 people joining in.

The Building Anew update reported that pre-app consultation to LBRUT had been submitted and the project timeline remains unchanged to the time when the formal application for planning permission is submitted

Carla Maroussas reported that the new Sustainability group had met once and agreed its focus on the church's energy use, the biodiversity of the churchyard and the church's response to the long-term impact of the CV crisis.

At the final meeting in March there was some optimism regarding the resumption of in person services from Palm Sunday onwards. Although social distancing and other guidelines will need to be followed, it seems likely that the church will be able to resume several of its normal activities soon.

The PCC approved the new Mission Action Plan devised by the clergy team and churchwardens. The MAP uses the framework set out by the Diocesan 2030 vision while simultaneously encompassing our overall parish vision of fostering faith & friendship. The vicar's report explains the aspirations behind the MAP in further detail.

The PCC were also unanimously supportive of the ideas set out by the Sustainability group on the church's response to the climate emergency.

The building update reported some preliminary feedback from LBRUT on the pre-app submission. The council seem to be largely supportive of the plans but did request some modifications to the designs as regards the extent to which the new building extends into the churchyard. The PCC will assess the alternative suggestions to overcome this at the next meeting in May 2021.

The PCC approved the 2020 Financial Statements & Annual Report and the proposed budget for 2021.

## **Fabric**

### **Building Anew**

**Steve Randall**

The 'Building Anew' project to equip our beautiful church with the facilities needed to flourish in the future has continued to move forwards encouragingly over the past year, under the careful oversight of the Governance Group (GG), its expert advisers and ultimately the PCC. Inevitably, though, the rate of progress has been hindered by the pandemic.

As outlined in last year's report, a concept design for the proposed new development has been prepared by our appointed architect and team of engineers/consultants. Excavations of several trial pits in the area of the churchyard that would be affected by the proposed development have been completed. The findings revealed no significant archaeological deposits or articulated burials and confirmed that the ground conditions are capable of supporting the foundations of less than one metre deep. On the basis of this information, a preliminary cost plan has been prepared by our quantity surveyor. This estimates the project costs excluding VAT at just under £920,000, with a contingency of nearly £215,000 added to this for potential archaeological and other unforeseen costs.

With this work completed, the project is now in the pre-application ('pre-app') consultation phase. This involves presenting and discussing the proposed scheme - initially with statutory bodies and in due course with all other stakeholders - to elicit feedback and advice before finalising the scheme to be submitted in the formal planning application.

The pre-app consultation with the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) delegation was concluded in the autumn. The delegation included not only the Archdeacon and other Diocesan advisers, but also representatives from Historic England, the Church Buildings Council and The Georgian Group. The feedback was largely very positive, with the DAC concluding that the church had carried out a lot of high-quality work and there were no major hazards that needed to be overcome for the project to proceed, only certain details to be confirmed. Most of these details have now been addressed either by our architect or the project team.

The pre-app consultation with Richmond Council's planning department is currently ongoing, following submission of the documentation required in December. Discussions in an interim virtual meeting held in February were very encouraging, but we are still awaiting the formal written feedback at the time of writing. Once this has been received, any advice given will be taken on board and the final phase of the consultation process commenced. This will involve presenting the proposed scheme to the congregation, local groups such as The Teddington Society, and the local community, for their feedback.

In parallel, the preparation of communication materials is underway, together with the process to commission an artist for the integrated artwork to be installed in the development. Extensive work has also gone into preparing a fundraising plan, including the identification of relevant grants available. The intention is to begin the fundraising campaign once formal planning permission has been received.

It remains unclear to what extent the pandemic and its knock-on effects will protract the engagement processes needed with Richmond Council. Subject to this, the current

project time plan envisages completing the consultations with all stakeholders during the first half of this year and submitting the formal planning application approximately one month after that. Depending on the time taken to receive planning approval and then to raise the funding required, construction will commence either in the second half of 2022 or early 2023.

In any event, the GG and project team will continue to move the project forward as quickly as possible, without compromising on quality, prudence and rigour in all areas and processes. Once again, huge thanks are due to John Ramsey, the project manager, and all those involved for their tireless commitment, expertise, patience and good humour throughout the challenging past year.

## **Churchyard**

**Robin Field-Smith**

For some months of the past year the church was closed in response to COVID, and when open we had to re-arrange the pew access to allow for social distancing. We used wooden chairs to block off pews, and small squares of cardboard with green ticks to show where seats were available. This has been preferable to use of orange and white striped tape! This arrangement will remain for as long as is required to meet national and church provisions. We also brought back into use the south chancel door, allowing for better ventilation during services and easier access for clergy, servers and the few singers allowed.

Interestingly, when we have been able to open the church, we have received many favourable comments, and there has been a noticeable increase in visitors coming in to light candles. To ensure we have been ready to receive visitors we have been blessed with the support of our Holy Dusters, especially Ursula Midgely and Christine Casemore, to clean surfaces and make sure the church has been looking both smart and welcoming.

Another benefit of the pandemic has been the emphasis on “streaming” of services, either live or recorded. To enable this better, we obtained formal permission to upgrade the Wi-Fi system, and install a new camera and microphones. A key person behind this capability is Fred Squire who has been on site almost every Sunday and feast day to enable our services to be viewed in real time.

We have also installed a new thermostat to ensure the heating is on when needed, and had our Goodbox card reader on view and switched on, to enable congregations and visitors to tap their bankcards for donations.

All in all, it has been a time to reflect on the beautiful building we have inherited, benefitting from the care and devotion it has enjoyed for many centuries.

Outside the church we have looked to develop the churchyard, which is a site of “exceptional significance”. During the last year we have finalised with the London Borough of Richmond, who are responsible for the upkeep of closed churchyards, a policy and top-level plan, which the PCC approved in November. We are now putting together a 5-year action plan involving both regular maintenance and areas of development.

The main labour effort is provided first by *Continental Landscapes*, under contract to the Council, who clear leaves and cut grass, and empty the garden rubbish bags. But a



key other group is the Holy Gardeners, ably led by Tony Swan and Sally Stones, a lovely set of volunteers who turn out every month, twice or more, to deal with those vital bits of tidying, cutting, trimming, new planting, and watering, amongst many other tasks, which are helping to make the churchyard look more appealing every month.

We now have membership of *Caring for God's Acre*, the charity that provides support and advice on churchyards and burial grounds. They promote "*Loving your Burial Ground*" week, which we will be celebrating in June 2021.

One aspect of the COVID year has been the option to offer worship outdoors, where the restrictions are less severe. We will certainly be using our beautiful churchyard more as a place for worship in future even when life returns to what we knew it before restrictions were imposed.

Another area we are promoting is "Adopt a Grave", encouraging anyone so moved to choose a grave or two to keep tidy of weeds, saplings and unnecessary overgrowth, and helping honour the memory of past residents. Another attraction is that two of our church recording group have offered to help with genealogical research on the families of those named on adopted graves.

Looking to the future we hope to install small display boards to tell something of the biodiversity of the place, more benches to allow visitors to rest awhile, and litter bins to minimise the scatter of unwanted rubbish.

### **Parish Hall**

**Jo O'Hagan**

It will come as no surprise that the majority of the five meetings the Committee have held over the past year have been virtual. In addition to the three scheduled meetings, some of the committee met in May and July to identify the challenges raised by Covid-19 and to decide how best to continue to try to provide the services of the Hall safely for the community.

Thanks to Suzanne's dedication and hard work in identifying and implementing the many and varied government rulings during the pandemic, the building was quickly made Covid compliant with an increased cleaning regime, extra signage and social distancing. As a result, the hall was able to open its doors exclusively to Playwam for the months of June and July; and in August and September some of the other regular users were able to resume activities until further restrictions effectively closed the building to them again last autumn.

Despite the closures, Suzanne and our caretaker Alex have continued to care for the maintenance of the building. Some of the electrical work which had been identified as needing attention in February 2020 has now been tackled and over the next year we hope to be able to complete the upgrade of lighting, fuse boards and other essential features to guarantee the safety of the hall and, we hope, reduce the carbon footprint with greater power efficiency. Regular servicing of equipment has been carried out and in general the fabric of the hall is in good condition. The electrical work undertaken will result in the need for redecoration in places but this can only be carried out once all the current work is completed.

Sadly, the pandemic has had a profound effect on the economic as well as the social aspect of the hall with a drop in income of over 50% in the past year. Few members of

the community have been able to set foot inside the hall but we greatly appreciate the support shown by so many of our regular users who, we hope, can be welcomed back into this vital community space in the months ahead. I know that Suzanne has maintained communications with many of the regular users of the hall and we have all appreciated the support and loyalty shown by all concerned.

The committee remains a small one and this year we have been joined by Nick Fenton, whose experience and knowledge is greatly appreciated. My thanks to all the committee for their hard work and support. Finally, I am sad to report that Jim Carthew has decided to stand down from the committee after many years loyal and devoted service. I would like to record our thanks to Jim for the many hours he has spent helping to maintain and repair so many things in and around the Hall. He may have retired but still made time to prune the roses last month! Thank you, Jim!

The hall may have been a quiet and apparently deserted facility over recent months but the Parish Office has continued to function magnificently and I know that we all look forward to returning to face to face contact in the hall in the months ahead.

### **Church Recording Project**

**Sue Stevens**

It has turned out that our Church Recording project is one of the last to be completed under the auspices of the national Arts Society. Their commitment ends in June this year, when local societies will take over responsibility for new projects, with greater autonomy.

Due to restrictions the monthly meetings of volunteers were cancelled, although three were managed between lockdowns in September, October and December. Even so, volunteers have clocked up over 200 hours of input in 2020/21. Most recording and photography have been completed, and now refinement and correction of all details are being carried out. Some of that can be done on-line, but measurements need to be checked, so hopefully limited opening from April 2021 will permit this.

Liz Chalmers, the Project's Arts Society co-ordinator has been collating, reformatting and checking the input from volunteers, and when appropriate, has asked others to proof-read. She has been the leading organiser of the new Church Recording system, just launched, and therefore has been somewhat occupied.

The local co-ordinator, Robin Field-Smith, has continued to devote many hours to combing parish documents, and updating all volunteers. Spin-offs from the project are that Mary de Soyres and Sue Stevens have been discovering information about individuals with church memorials, such as Julia Lemon to whom the Jairus window is dedicated, and several people with churchyard graves. Many of their histories are colourful and can fill in gaps in local history. Also the discovery of a previously unknown and unpublished 'History of St. Alban's', transcribed and researched by Sue Stevens, with copies now with relevant organisations, has been of interest.

The CR project has revealed exactly what the church owns, its provenance and history, and how important it is. It is also clear that there have been personal and community benefits to volunteering together with people with common interests.

It was hoped that the Project would be completed in 2020, but 2021 is now the target.

## **Worship & Nurture**

### **Safeguarding**

**Mary Field-Smith**

“Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility”

I am pleased to report that no safeguarding concerns were raised during what has a relatively quiet year on the safeguarding front since most church activities involving children or vulnerable adults had to stop. The exception was the setting up, at the very start of the pandemic, of the Care Volunteer team under Sarah Williams. All volunteers who came forward were required to have a DBS check if they did not already have a current certificate. Our umbrella organization, *Thirtyone:eight*, were most efficient, turning round most applications in under 48 hours.

The Safeguarding Team (Sarah Williams, Ruth Chaperlin, Kay Cassidy and Mary Field-Smith) met once to discuss points in the Action Plan from the Safeguarding Self Audit which was completed in October. Some Action points carried over from the previous audit are unable to be addressed due to the pandemic. While the Parish scored highly on that audit, there is no room for complacency and it will be important that training is up to date for church officers and all volunteers once normal activities are resumed.

The Activate ministry has also fallen under our safeguarding remit and will hopefully soon be re-engaging in sports activities involving children and vulnerable adults as well as involvement with the Community Café.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team has been under tremendous pressure due to changes in staff; this has resulted in slower response times to non-urgent enquiries. In light of this it was decided to set up a Deanery Church Safeguarding Officer’s Network, to which there was a very positive response, with 16 of us joining the first meeting by Zoom in March. Our Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, Andy Munro, also joined us and shared some information, including that DBS renewals would now be every three years instead five. This will affect many of our volunteers and Kay, who is our Lead Recruiter, will eventually be contacting them to carry this out.

### **Children’s Ministry**

**Ruth Chaperlin**

The last twelve months have brought many challenges for so many, but the need for social distancing and the inability to meet face to face due to Covid-19 restrictions, have affected children both in our church, and in wider society, particularly hard.

Due to lockdown and the limitations imposed by Covid-19 regulations, our usual children’s activities have had to be severely curtailed during the last year, including the suspension of Children’s Church groups on Sunday mornings, and also the Church Mice service for pre-schoolers on Wednesday mornings.

Special thanks and recognition must be given to Mary Hawes for her hard work and dedication to keeping Children’s Ministry going, both in church and online, during these challenging months. In spring 2020, with church doors shut for the foreseeable future, Mary began offering a relaxed Family Fun Time via Zoom on Sunday mornings. This was hugely appreciated by families missing the opportunity to come to church for family worship on Sundays.

In August 2020 when in person church services gradually resumed, the 9am family service was one of the first to come back, and proved incredibly popular with local families. This was held at St Peter and St Paul church, to enable the 9am and 10am congregations to be kept socially distanced in order to comply with Covid regulations.

It was hoped that the Wednesday morning Church Mice toddler service would be able to resume in November, but sadly this was unable to go ahead. It is hoped now that summer 2021 will see this up and running again, as it has been such a popular and important part of Children's Ministry at St Mary with St Alban.

In November 2020 came the second national lockdown, and when church doors had to close again, Mary Hawes resumed the Sunday morning Family Fun Time sessions, including a bible story and craft activity. This continued right through until March 2021, and has been so important for the families that join her, and one another, on a Sunday morning.

Since Easter 2021, St Peter and St Paul church is back in use for the 9am family service as in-person services have now resumed on a Sunday morning on a ticketed basis. This will continue while social distancing guidelines are in place.

## **Choir & Music**

**Derek Saunders**

### *General comments:*

The new Mass setting by Margaret Rizza is now familiar with the congregation in our 10am Eucharist services. DS has written a new Kyrie and arranged the Rizza *Agnus Dei* for 4 parts. DS is still hoping to explore other settings particular during times when the congregation are not singing. DS was regularly selecting hymns however this has reverted to Joe for January to March lockdown period. DS continues to be paid on a pro rata basis.

With services that have taken place with singing the choir has been 4 or 6 in number. With reduced rehearsal time the anthems have been less ambitious however the results have still been pleasing. Most rehearsals have taken place via Zoom this year. When small choirs have sung, they have met on Fridays whilst other members joined on zoom. Short Rehearsals for the choir before Communion service on Sunday mornings continue.

An organ roster of some regularity and consistency has been established between Dean Ryan, Rachel Pickering and Edward Buxton. They are covering most services and are establishing a good relationship with the musical director and choir.

Funerals and Weddings. Little scope for music here.

Music Library. DS is extremely grateful for the help of Susan Jacobs and Chris Miller and for their help with organising this. However, we still use a lot of photocopied music. In order to reduce this choir members have purchased a large anthem book which is now used on a regular basis. DS is also working on building up sets of regularly used music.

Looking ahead we are extremely grateful for the care and consideration given to music and the new extension. In our talks we are hopeful for a larger space to rehearse in, more accessible music shelving and a larger robing wardrobe. RFM and Dean Ryan

have looked into the prospect of a new digital organ and have made considerable progress in deciding on the make and type. DS has spoken with Joe regarding a more popular approach to one of the Sundays every month. This project has been put on hold owing but will be looked at in the near future.

The choir did just manage to squeeze in its second charity concert event, first started in Easter 2019. The choir consisted of our own number plus local people in surrounding choirs (church and otherwise). A Choir of about 70 (plus 4 soloists) and an orchestra of 30 produced a wonderful evening of music centred around Mozart's C minor Mass. This was a considerably improved event using All Souls Church in Twickenham. They were marvellously supported of the event and space proved perfect for the concert which hosted a full house of about 300 people. Monies raised (£2400) was given to Momentum – a children's charity. With thanks to JS for being able to whip up such a talented orchestra with minimum costs. Huge thanks to Kay Cassidy for making the admin of the event go so smoothly.

Recordings – Fred Squire has been most helpful in providing me with recordings of choir renditions. He has built up of bank of music which is now safely stored. Many thanks FS.

Post covid DS has a concert in mind which incorporates favourites from the Church Calendar. This could also involve a recording. TBC

Whilst expanding the work of the choir and music, DS is always keen to point out the importance of music serving to enhance the message and words of the Church services. This is the main function of the music provided at St Marys with St Albans. DS is extremely grateful for the support of Joe and his team – this harmonious and good working relationship is key to the evolution of music at the Church.

### **Achievements in a challenging year:**

#### **March 2020 – October 2020**

The Choir continued to meet every Friday during lockdown up until the end of July. This proved to be a great source of well-being and companionship for all concerned. Music was rehearsed on Fridays every week without a break with some staying on for the social afterwards in the comfort of their own home. DR kindly provided accompaniments and Choir members were asked to record their own part at home and send in their recordings to the DS household. The results were far beyond what was thought imaginable – weekly hymns, anthems and some voluntaries were provided for the pre-recorded You Tube services. Luke Saunders did some wonderful editing to bring the different parts together and Isabel Saunders provided weekly hymns as a soloist. Huge gratitude is owed to both, for making the music in those services work so well. Fred Squire and James Ward were most helpful in dealing with musicians who often did not leave much time for editing! Dean Ryan should also be thanked for the continued support he offers to the Church extending to accompanying rehearsals. As restrictions were eased, the choir even managed to meet as a six in Bushy Park and record some hymns and music for services. Particularly apposite was the rendition of *Will Your Anchor Hold* with live birdsong and wind effects!

#### **November 2020 – December 2020**

The choir continued to sing as a group of six for the services on You Tube. Anthems remained simpler and tribute should be paid to the members who cooperated so well

with the rota. A larger choir gathered to record hymns for Remembrance Day. The year culminated in a fine carol service that used an even larger choir (20) videoed and recorded in the church. This proved highly successful and has had 704 views.

### **January 2021 – March 2021**

For this time no choir was able to sing. We continued to meet via Zoom on Fridays with socialising continuing on afterwards. This has proved popular and has helped to sustain the spirit of the choir.

Joe and Ros ably flew the flag for many weeks harmonising hymns skilfully and were then joined by Lydia Baines. The latter's professional approach helped to boost the soprano line - much gratitude is due here. Edward Buxton has become a considerable addition to our organ rota and he was particularly helpful at this time.

### **Final thanks**

A vote of thanks should be given to Dean Ryan who plays so accurately and reliably in a large proportion of the services. He is our number one organist for the more important services.

My thanks also go out to all of the choir – particularly the regulars but also to some notable irregulars. They have been a source of tremendous strength and their love, friendship and good humour make them wonderful musical companions. This comradery has helped us all get through an extraordinarily challenging year.

### **Churches Together**

**Malcolm Eady**

*For over 50 years the different Christian churches and denominations in Teddington have worked together and supported each other under the framework of Churches Together in Teddington (CTT). They all have the same basic calling - to worship God, to share the good news about Jesus Christ and to work for the good of all people.*

The CTT Council is made up of representatives of the Churches in Teddington, Hampton Wick and Fulwell - the Methodist, Baptist, Salvation Army, Catholic, and the Church of England. It meets four times per year and organises a number of joint services and events. Co-operation between the churches is good and attendance at the special services held in each other's churches is high. The web site is <http://www.teddingtonchurches.org.uk>

The Chairperson this year was David Lunt up to September 2020, then Revd. Karen Wellman from St Mark's Church.

## Activities.

Each year the council organise joint services at Easter, and in the summer, Carol singing at the switching on of the Christmas lights, a Christmas leaflet for the whole of Teddington, Lent courses, prayer walks and a street collection for Christian Aid. In 2020 none of these events took place because of the Covid restriction. We still met, but via zoom, to support each other and to see in what ways we could continue our work together.

We were able to hold a very limited joint service this Easter on Good Friday. It was limited in size and was held in the church yard of St Mary with St Alban.

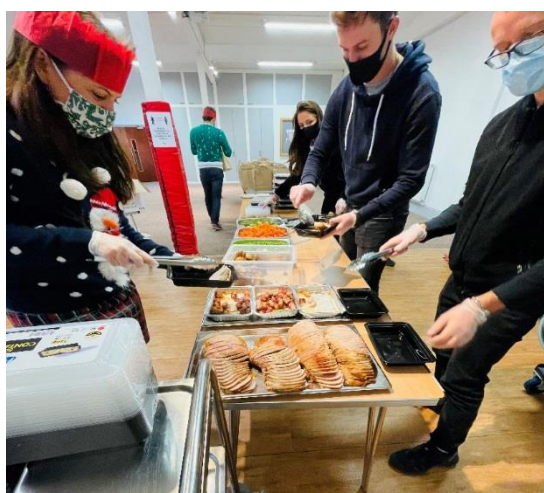


The main event each year is the **Christmas Day Lunch** at Elleray Hall. Because of the restrictions brought about by the prevalence of COVID 19 this annual lunch for the lonely, elderly and vulnerable was not able to be held in the normal way. It was the turn of the congregation of St John's Hampton Wick to organise the lunch and it was decided to provide a lunch in people's homes rather than bringing them together in Elleray Hall.

All the preparations were done in their catering size kitchen under the supervision of Luis the chef, who in past years has prepared it at Elleray hall. A full Christmas Dinner with all the trimmings and including a generous dessert was supplied in a microwaveable tray to 182 people. Vegetarian and gluten free meals were provided as requested. 100 volunteers helped overall in the preparations and in the distribution on Christmas Day.

Beautifully wrapped presents were also given out. These had been delivered to the church by congregations and members of the community well ahead of Christmas so that quarantine rules were abided by.

All this was enabled by a grant of £900 from the Hampton Fund plus donations of food and gifts by individuals and organisations including surplus food from a charity called Surplus to Supper.





We are allocated 4 representatives on the council. Your representatives are: Rev. Joe Moffatt, Anne O’Neal, Rev. Caroline Halmshaw and Malcolm Eady

**Nurture Courses**

**Rev Caroline Halmshaw**

This years’ nurturing faith programme has been a well-attended part of the life of our church. We’ve held all our courses remotely, usually using Zoom and making the most of its adaptability, so that when the groups were larger than 10, we could go into smaller groups to enable discussion. We found the courses worked well using this medium and as well as nurturing faith, they enabled much needed social contact. We were delighted to make links with the Community Café, some people who met us through the café, joined us for our Pilgrim and Lent groups.

***Daily Prayer***

Shortly after Lockdown we started a Morning and Evening Prayer group on Zoom. The group, which is made up of 25 people also connects through WhatsApp. We meet every day to Pray the morning and evening the Daily Prayer. This group prays for the life of the parish and intercedes as events unfold. People who take part have grown in confidence to lead this service and have got to know and support each other in new ways during this demanding year.

***Daily Prayer – a personal reflection by Sue Lindenberg***

*Throughout the Pandemic Lockdown, and using Zoom, Morning and Evening Prayers have continued Monday to Saturday. With the enforced isolation for many of us the discipline of logging on for Daily Prayer was, and still is a life saver - not only are the prayers and readings uplifting and comforting, but interaction with others and our clergy whom we have come to know over the past year has been such a blessing. I have met and come to know so many more folk from our church through Daily Prayers on Zoom than I had since joining the congregation some sixteen years ago. Daily Prayer is often followed with a short informal chat before we go our separate ways.*

*I have learned to lead prayers occasionally, and to read and respond - something I would never have considered doing before.*



*To aid communication a Daily Prayer WhatsApp group was created. At first this was rather formal - a means of notifying us of such things such as who was down to lead Daily Prayer, and the names of those needing prayer. As we went further into Lockdown, in addition to notifications appertaining to Daily Prayer the WhatsApp evolved into a platform for supporting one another, sharing anything and everything from photos to anecdotes, give away or for sale items, recipes, jigsaw puzzles, even a trampoline! This of course still further united the prayer group members as we learned more about each other.*

*There was a time when I Googled everything - now I first check out our DP WhatsApp!*

### ***Ghost Ship Discussion Group***

Azariah France-Williams, the former Associate Vicar of St Peters and St Pauls published a book about racism and the Church of England. We ran a 5-session course to understand better the experiences and issues he raises. This was attended by 16 people and has led to a follow-on group who will propose a series of actions for us to implement locally as well as part of the broader church. This discussion was led by Carla Maroussas and Caroline Halmshaw.

### ***The Advent course 2020***

We held an Advent course on three consecutive Wednesdays in December. The theme was Comfort & Joy, focusing on the hope that Christmas brings alongside acknowledging that for those who have lost loved ones or livelihoods during this year, that Christmas is also a time of comfort and consolation. Sarah Williams and Caroline Halmshaw led this group.

### ***Pilgrim 2021***

We ran two consecutive courses over a six-week period in January and February. The first was on the Lord's Prayer and for people who were new to Pilgrim and as a follow up to last years' Alpha course. The second course was based on the final pilgrim book on the Kingdom of God, for those who had previously taken part in a Pilgrim course. 19 people participated in the course on the Lord's Prayer and 11 in the one on the Kingdom of God. The Church Wardens, Joe Moffatt, Sarah Rae, Sarah Williams and Caroline Halmshaw led these groups.

### ***The Lent course 2021***

We ran three Lent courses based on the book, Rooted in Love, which is edited by the Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally and written by the London area Bishops. This was a popular course focusing on major themes which include, who is the Christ we serve? What does it mean to be part of the Body of Christ? And how can we live more Christ centred lives? Over 40 people took part, 22 in the morning and 18 in the two evening groups. This course was led by the Church Wardens, Joe Moffatt, Sarah Rae, Sarah Williams and Caroline Halmshaw.

### ***"Reflections in Strange Times"***

**Sue Lindenberg**

Throughout the Pandemic Lockdown members of the Teddington Clergy recorded a Thought for the Day in the form of a podcast. The first of these was recorded on March 23rd 2020, the first day of the first Lockdown. The podcasts continued daily for a few months and are now every Wednesday. For me, and I am sure very many others these talks were, and still are immensely helpful, reassuring and great levellers during these still uncertain and often very anxious times. To date there are 108 podcasts. I am so

grateful for this resource and often go back and listen to a podcast again - there is always one that fits the bill according to my spiritual and or personal needs on that day. Thank you to the clergy who have, and still are contributing to this wonderful collection of Reflections.

## **Communications**

### **Working group report**

**Jennifer Paynter**

The group was formed in 2009 and our role is to engage and communicate effectively with all in the church and the wider community.

The group brings together a team who maintain the website and social media, publish and distribute the monthly newsletter, and design and produce literature for the various services and events throughout the church year.

Communications during 2020 became more important than ever before due to the outbreak of Covid-19 at the beginning of the year. Despite the national lockdown and imposed restrictions, the group quickly rose to the various challenges. We were able to continue meeting via Zoom.

The monthly e-bulletin became a weekly email, and an important way to communicate with members of the church. Face to face services were cancelled and moved on-line, and links to a new YouTube channel were provided on a weekly basis. Thanks to Fred Squire and his endless hours of recording and editing, these virtual services were available to everyone, anywhere and at any time.

The website also became even more important as a way to connect during lockdown. In addition to the constantly changing news items, links to all virtual services were provided and a donate button was added to the homepage. Throughout the year, the website was continually updated and overseen by Sally Hatch.

The editorial team (Sue, Penny and Julien) still managed to produce all 12 newsletters for the two parishes – in digital form when restrictions forced printing to stop and back to paper when they eased. The newsletter's usual hardcopy distribution continued to grow, thanks to Susan Jacobs and her management of over 70 deliverers. The newsletter remains a key part of the church's outreach and is now posted through the letterboxes of over 5,500 households.

Thank you to all the volunteers who continue to give their time and expertise to the group.

## **Pastoral Care**

### **Working group report**

**Sarah Williams**

The Parish Visiting Team (PVT) is part of the church's Pastoral ministry and its role is to offer friendship and a personal connection between the church and local community.

The work of the PVT has been curtailed considerably over the last year due to the Covid pandemic.

### **Baptisms**

Following the national lockdown in March 2020, there were no baptisms for several months. We were able to welcome a handful of families for baptisms during the temporary easing of restrictions in the summer but this was short-lived and there have been no baptisms since September 2020. As such, baptism numbers are significantly down on 2019 but a comparison of figures is unhelpful given the extraordinary circumstances of the last year. For the baptisms that were able to go ahead, the PVT continued to support the families with home visits or, during the Covid restrictions, a telephone call.

It is hoped that our usual very active baptism ministry will pick again as we start to emerge from lockdown. The signs are certainly extremely promising. We have had numerous enquiries and already there are 8 baptisms in the diary for the summer with various others pending. The PVT look forward to resuming normal service.

### **Work with the sick/lonely/vulnerable**

Again, the work of the PVT in this area has been affected by the pandemic. However, support to was provided to local residents through the church's Care Team.

We retain our links with Teddington Memorial Hospital through Sue Stevens. She reports that two members of the hospital visiting team did go in for a short while during the interregnum between lockdowns, but clearly this work has also been impacted by Covid. The team has kept in regular contact with each other with fortnightly Zoom meetings.

### **Community Café**

**Clare Rider**

Monday 5 October 2020 saw the launch of the Teddington Community Café, following many months of preparation. Initiated by church members seeking a practical way to promote the mental health and well-being of local residents, the project has been developed in partnership with NHS Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and two of our neighbouring charities, Ruils and Richmond Aid. The café aims to offer a welcoming space with a friendly, calm and positive atmosphere, and with many volunteers on hand to chat over coffee and cake. It should be of particular benefit to those feeling socially isolated at this time.

In undertaking background research, the café team became aware of the large number of local organisations which offer interesting activities and valuable services. The café, with its central location at St Peter and St Paul's Church, on the corner of Church Road and Broad Street, is an ideal place to signpost these. It also provides a convenient venue for social prescribers to meet clients and to offer healthcare advice.

After a very successful start, endorsed by customers who appreciated the warm welcome, the conversation, quality hot and cold drinks and delicious cakes, the café was forced to close at the beginning of December 2020 due to the increased Covid-19 restrictions. It will reopen weekly on Mondays, from 1.30pm to 4.30pm, as soon as permitted to do so.

## **Memory Café**

**Sarah Williams**

The Memory Cafe, usually held at SSPP on the first Tuesday afternoon of each month was suspended during the Covid pandemic. We were able to meet for the first 3 months of 2020 but then, sadly, had to close our doors when the national lockdown was announced.

We hope to be able to reopen in early summer. After such a hiatus, reopening will involve a relaunch; spreading the word that it has restarted; and re-establishing relationships with guests that we had successfully built up as well as hopefully attracting new guests. We look forward to ensuring that the Café continues to meet its primary aim of being a friendly, informal space where those who seek respite from the challenges of loneliness and memory problems continue to be unconditionally and caringly welcomed.

## **Parish Care Team**

**Sarah Williams**

The Parish Care Team was set up in response to the Covid pandemic. We were part of a collective response from local churches to reach out and offer practical, emotional and spiritual support to those in our community who were shielding, vulnerable or lonely.

A postcard was dropped through the doors of local parishioners offering to help with shopping and other practical tasks or a phone call to those who were feeling isolated. People could either telephone the parish office or email the dedicated Care Team address. We received a significant number of requests following this mainly for help with shopping as people struggled to establish online deliveries. There were also requests for a friendly telephone call from people feeling anxious and lonely and others asking for prayers for loved ones who were suffering from Covid.

The postcard drop also resulted in an incredible number of local people coming forward to offer to join our team of volunteers. Some were from SMwSA whilst others were from various local churches or were members of the community who wanted to help. We carried out DBS checks on volunteers and Mary Field-Smith, our Safeguarding Officer, worked tirelessly to ensure that excellent safeguarding standards were maintained. The volunteer team became well established. A WhatsApp group for volunteers was set up and details of requests for help sent out. We never had to turn down a request and this is testament to the commitment of the volunteer team.

As the first national lockdown eased and parishioners who had been shielding were able to establish home food deliveries, the number of requests for help decreased. The Care Team does remain active and we retain a number of volunteers who are able to help out if needed. Some volunteers remain in contact with those that they helped during the height of the pandemic.

We received positive feedback from volunteers in terms of their involvement and from local residents grateful for the help they received. The connections that were established, the goodwill created and the care shown by so many was incredibly heartening. It has been a wonderful example of the local community pulling together in a time of considerable challenge for us all.

## **Winter Night Shelter**

**John Mulcahy**

On Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April we completed our 4<sup>th</sup> winter shelter season in conjunction with the Glassdoor Homeless Charity in the extraordinary circumstances of the covid pandemic. This season we were unable to offer a space in the hall for guests to sleep as government regulations precluded it. Instead, we were restricted to just providing dinner and even that was a cut down version of the dinner service we have always taken pride in delivering in St Mary's Hall.

Every night of the week a different parish served a meal at The Vineyard in Richmond. Covid precautions meant that everyone was temperature checked on arrival and numbers were limited to 16 to allow for adequate spacing. We cooked the food at home on Sunday nights and ferried it to the venue in an insulated carrier, Deliveroo style. No tablecloths or flowers, the food served in disposable containers and much restricted interaction between volunteers and guests made for a very different experience for all.

Most of the guests had accommodation of some sort, be it in a shelter or elsewhere and many took take away portions for friends. As always, the guests were overwhelming nice, polite, clean and tidy ordinary people and were an absolute pleasure to cook for, and to chat with to the extent we could. It's obvious to all concerned that the dinner service is about so much more than just providing a meal. Hopefully next Autumn we will be able to offer more guests a more welcoming environment and a safe place to sleep once again and also to be able to involve more volunteers as we have done previously.

## **Links**

### **St Mary's & St Peter's CofE Primary School**

**Malcolm Eady**

*St Mary's & St Peter's C E Primary School is a Voluntary Aided Church of England School, sponsored equally by the two Teddington parishes. It was set up by the local vestry committee in 1832 and is one of the oldest schools in the borough. 21 years ago it expanded from a one to a 2 form entry school and then in 2011 it expanded again to produce a three form entry school. There are currently 610, year children on the role a reduction of 13 over this time last. The pupil capacity of the school is 630.*

*It is now a larger than average primary school ( in the top 20% for size ); free school meals numbers are well below average as are the number of children requiring special educational needs ( 8.7% compared to 14% nationally ). The percentage of pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans is 2.7%, which is significantly above the national average. Attendance is very good, 98.7%, with a high return rate following the return after lockdown. It was graded as Outstanding at its last Ofsted inspection and by the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report*

*The aims and values of the school can be found on the school website: <http://www.smsponline.co.uk/>. It is well supported by the two local parishes and the London Diocesan board ( LBDS ) for schools.*

## School report for 2020/21

### 1. Response to the Covid pandemic.

The school has coped well with the upheavals caused by the Covid Pandemic. The school was divided into year group bubbles. There was a management focus on keeping the bubbles separate and so limiting the effects of any Covid cases. Out of a staff of seventy, ten contracted Covid. During the lock downs about 90 children came into school out of 610.

Last spring the school had already started to plan for online learning before the lockdown was announced, so it was able to quickly implement a programme using Goole classroom. For most children the lockdown lasted from March until the end of the summer term. Live meetings with their teachers were via Google Meet.

During the autumn term the children were in school but in their year bubbles. At Christmas the staff organised a Nativity story trail around the building for all the children to follow and enjoy as well as each year group recording a celebration for their families to view online, as there were no “on-stage” Christmas productions.

During the second Lockdown (from January to March) the online provision was improved with a concentration on the academic and wellbeing provision. Below are just some of the activities and support packages which were provided:

- Careful identification of vulnerable children/EHCP/SEND and bespoke support for these children and families; (*EHCP - education, health and care plan, SEND - Special educational needs and disabilities*).
- Daily class meetings with teachers and lesson explanations;
- Group interventions;
- SEND interventions;
- SEND online meets with children;
- Online marking;
- Home delivery of laptops and school resources;
- Weekly paper lesson packs;
- Individualised book bags and comprehension sheets;
- Reminder phone calls for children who missed meetings;
- Instructional videos from teachers and TAs (*Teaching assistants*);
- Visits to families who weren't engaging;
- ELSA (*emotional literacy support assistants*) phone calls (meeting in person if the child is in a school bubble);
- In- school sessions for new SMSP children;
- Where necessary time in school to set children up on Google Classroom;
- Ad-hoc time in school for children eg. parents with medical appointments;
- Sports challenges;
- Daily Head/ clergy/ music assemblies;
- Music lessons;
- Extra- curricular activities;
- Additional Google Classroom rooms for differentiation of work by ability and
- Learning style and individual work and interventions for children with EHCPs.

This comprehensive list is just to show how much the school, during the lockdown periods, has had to change the way it delivers things and some of the new activities which it has had to provide.

## **2. Governor roles**

The Rev Mary Hawes is the chair of Governors and Rev Joe Moffatt is also on the governing board and so is Rev Simon Pedley from St Michael's, Fulwell.

Our meetings have been online since March 2020. We have had our normal range of committee meetings, but we have not been able to hold our annual Governor visit to all the classes in the school and our meeting with the school council.

## **3. Key issues**

The key issue this year is the same as it has been for a number of years – finance.

When compared on a benchmarking exercise with similar schools in outer London, we received the lowest in grant funding, but when total income per pupil is considered, we are about at an average level. We struggle every year to produce a balanced budget. Unlike some schools we have not had to reduce staff levels. We are noticing a trend of families moving away from London, as parents can work online. There has always been a small number of children who move away in years 4 & 6 to go into private education. Every child leaving makes it harder to produce a balanced budget.

We are extremely grateful to fund raising work of the friends of the school, who help keep the school very well equipped.

In January the Head Teacher Mr Logan informed the governors that he would retire at the end of the summer term. Four years ago, Mr Logan tried to 'retire', but the governors were unable to appoint a replacement, so he returned to the role three days a week, with Mrs Bateman taking the role of Acting Head Teacher for two days a week. He has indicated that this time there will be no comeback. A recruitment process is therefore under way and it is hoped to hold interviews later this month.

## **Deanery Synod**

**Sue Stevens**

Due to Covid restrictions meetings there were only two meetings, both held on Zoom. Both were chaired by Garth Watkins, and led by the Area Dean, Rev Tim Garrett.

The November meeting was addressed by Bishop Graham who updated people about his 2030 Vision. The overall vision is "For every Londoner to encounter the love of God in Christ" and Bishop Graham expanded on this by defining our ambitions & our priorities and the resources we have or will need in support of these.

This was followed by breakouts into smaller groups to discuss possibilities for individual parishes. There was a focus on reaching out to groups who have not been traditionally part of church communities.

The February meeting introduced three new incumbents followed by a Common Fund update. Attendees listened to an interesting presentation by The Revd Canon Miles Baker, Kensington's Area Director of Ministry who spoke about 'The future of Vocations'. The position in the Kensington diocese is positive, with 50 curates, 63 ordinands in training, and 37 potential candidates on discernment. The discernment process is changing to detect candidates' potential rather than evidence of experience.

This was followed by Rev Chris Kennedy giving an update on the progress of the *Activate* project whose vision and outreach are rooted in Christian doctrine and seeks to build community through activity that invigorates faith. Further information is available on the website; <https://www.activatechurch.org.uk>. In spite of lockdown Chris was already working with 2 schools and 7 sports clubs, reaching out in innovative ways and he has also started an online exercise class and started conversations on social prescribing with local doctors.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> A (St Mary with St Alban) Girlguiding**

**Kathy Gold**

### **Rainbows**

*Jan-March:* Worked on our Explorer badge and undertook activities such as building a tent, dressing for all climates, knowing the local area. We also had a district campfire which was great fun.

*Apr- Jul:* With the challenges that came with home working and home schooling, there was not a huge appetite for further activities although we did manage 3: Mother's Day, NHS badge & Father's Day.

*Sept-Dec:* We started back with games in the park until we were able to meet face to face indoors in October. We worked on our autumn paw badge making tree collages, weaving hedgehogs and learned about 'Dias de Los Muertos' which included a related activity. After half term, we resorted to Zoom for the few sessions left in the term which included a Christmas scavenger hunt and Christmas wreath making.

### **Brownies**

The brownies started the year with games and arts and crafts. Into lockdown we decided not to meet virtually but sent home challenges and badge work for the girls to do. As soon as we could we set off to meet outdoors in the park for as much of the autumn term as we could. We took photographs, went for walks, took part in scavenger hunts, did bark rubbings, made bug homes and played lots of games. We took part in the County Christmas challenge. Everyone is looking forward to getting back together.

### **Guides**

We started our year with Taskmaster challenges and Games evenings. Into February we learnt some first aid and celebrated International women's day. The whole district got together for an indoor camp fire which unknown to us would be the last time many of us would see each other and our guides for a long time.

As Lockdown began, we realised that we could keep guiding going although in a way no one had ever imagined – via Zoom meetings. Despite tech difficulties and trying to adapt the activities the unit managed to completed many elements of our programme. We had a jokes evening, made and flew paper planes, made suffragette rosettes, set up bird feeders, took a photography challenge and many scavenger hunts in our own homes. Guides camped out at home- indoors and out.

We baked pizzas, made armpit fudge and ice cream, mug cakes, scones and made our own butter to go on them.

In autumn, we had a brief get together for a few weeks, making ourselves into stickmen with glow sticks and taking part in some socially distanced challenges. But all too soon



we were back on Zoom. We made poppies for Remembrance and put them in the window. The unit took part in the County Christmas challenge making snowmen and cards, gingerbread and decorations. As part of this we had a virtual sleepover even zooming the next morning for breakfast together.

Guides took part in the Joint Children in Need and Guiding challenge "Act Your Age" where everyone was challenged to raise money using their age. After tremendous effort from everyone we smashed our target of £300 and managed to raise £560 for the cause. The guides and leaders cycled, walked, ran, sat in silence, baked, read, photographed, danced, undertook household tasks and walked up and down stairs all around their age. (The leaders obviously had a bit further to go!). Everyone is looking forward to being back together as soon as we can.

## **1<sup>st</sup> Teddington Scout Group**

### **Beavers Section: (6-8 yrs)**

*Martin Smith*

Beavers have been meeting via Zoom since May 2020 and - all being well - should re-start Face-to-Face meetings very soon. In that time, we've invested 12 new members; helped 13 others move on to Cubs and have 4 more ready to join us after the Easter break.

The Beavers have collectively earned nearly 200 badges including Navigator; Health & Fitness; Cook; Experiment; Emergency Aid and many more. Working within the Covid restrictions we've even been able to get the Beavers camping (in dens at home) and out in Bushy Park for orienteering (in family/support bubbles as daily exercise).

We're enjoying introducing new members to the global Scouting family and helping them have fun and learn new life skills. We've had examples where the Emergency Aid training was put into practice just days later when a sibling got a nose bleed.

Grateful thanks go to the brilliant team of parent leaders who've shared the preparation and delivery of meetings. We always welcome offers of help - whether it's each week or just 15mins one evening to share a skill or experience. Please do get in touch via [1stteddington@gmail.com](mailto:1stteddington@gmail.com)

### **Cubs Section: (8-10.5 yrs)**

*Ed Wilson*

This year has brought its challenges as we adapted to the new online format. Something that has gone well and opened up some really great opportunities. With the change in meeting, we have been exploring some of the badges that we wouldn't always have been able to do. Some of the highlights this year included undertaking the fire safety and virtual demonstration on how (not) to put a fire out. I do still have my eyebrows intact! We've also made lots of mess in being creative which was great fun, although some of the parents may disagree when we made yule logs. We've also had some very special guests including the former head of the British Space Agency and no less than two pilots; my highlight being a visit from Flt Lt David Simmonds (Simmo) who currently flies as part of the RAF display team the Red Arrows.

Maybe the most inspiring thing from the year though is seeing how the cubs have adapted in such challenging circumstances. Embracing the values of scouting and really making the most of our situation. However, none of it would have been possible without our dedicated group of leaders Justine, Miles, James and Izzy who have done an amazing job at creating a brilliant programme. I'm sure next year the cubs are going to go from strength to strength.

### **Scouts Section: (10.5 to 14yrs)**

**Alex Reynolds**

Scouts has continued almost exclusively online for the children for the best part of the past year. This has taken some getting used to but we have managed to retain most of our members. We have been running weekly meetings over Zoom and have been really impressed with the attendance and enthusiasm of all the Scouts - we've done Scavenger Hunts, car maintenance, an online Escape Room, a Q&A with our MP and many cook-along evenings. In the brief lockdown hiatus in Autumn we managed a day prowl in the Surrey Hills around Shere and an activity day just before Christmas at Walton Firs near Cobham where the scouts were taught climbing and we made camp fires. Of course, we've had almost all our main events cancelled – Night Hike, District Water Weekend, Summer Camp – but hopefully we'll be back to face to face meetings before too long and fit in more camps and outdoor activities in the coming year! Thanks to our Young Leaders, Hannah and Jess, and to the parents who have willingly come in to help when we've been short on leaders.

### **Activate**

**Sarah Hallett**

*Activate* is a pioneering sports ministry programme to enhance community, wellbeing and faith through sporting activity. It is a pilot project of the Hampton Deanery of the Diocese of London, with a long-term vision of replication and roll out across other Deaneries and Dioceses.

We seek to engage with all ages, abilities and people, to create fun, friendly (sometimes competitive) activity with a community focused approach to help people get or maintain being active, while creating local relationships that encourage inclusion and support. Working in collaboration with the wider community partners including our schools, community groups and parks, and taking an evidence-based and place-based approach, we aim to use our buildings, staff and volunteers to:

- Promote wellbeing for all.
- Connect communities – build partnerships, share resources, strengthen bonds.
- Provide Chaplaincy and support for sport club members, teams, and families.
- Enable faith 'where you are' and help people to grow fitter together physically and spiritually.

Activate began life in July 2020 with the appointment of Chris Kennedy as its Sports Minister and is based at St Peter and St Paul's church in Teddington, where the church building provides a facility for the indoor activities and a home for the ministry. Chris is supported by a small team, which consists of an Operations Manager and two Interns, and there are plans to appoint a Youth Worker in the coming months.

Of course, starting a sporting project during a pandemic has had its challenges. With initial activities severely curtailed, our programme has had to keep up with the changing tides and lockdowns that we have found ourselves in. However, we have been able to deliver the following:

- Online gentle chair-based exercises – before lockdown we had started to work with the local social prescribing teams in Teddington, and had devised a series of sessions for their clients. To continue these, and to ensure all members of the community could access them, we moved online, providing a mix of live Zoom classes, along with sessions on our YouTube channel that people could do in their own time. With lockdown easing we will run these sessions in person (Soup +

Stretch) as well as continuing to provide the sessions on Zoom and recorded versions on our YouTube channel.

- The Wellbeing Journey course - wellbeing has never been more relevant or important, so with this in mind Activate have started to run a course which helps to address the challenges of our times. It is a series based around seven key areas of wellbeing – the wellbeing mindset, physical, emotional, spiritual, relational, financial, and vocational – to help people to discover a balance in life. We have run these online but plan to continue running more of these courses in person when we are able to.
- Support of local charities including Surplus to Supper and Ruils, in the distribution of food for their food banks.

### **Post Lockdown Plans**

Now, with the successful vaccination rollout, we can begin to think about a programme of activities where people can come together and enjoy getting active. In the coming months, as well as continuing the work we started during the pandemic, we will be putting on the following activities:

- Running and cycling groups, to encourage people of all abilities to take up exercise.
- The creation of a Youth Hub at St Peter and St Paul's. More and more people are suffering with their mental health, and this includes many young people. We are well placed at Activate to support them and we have forged relationships with Richmond Borough's Achieving for Children team, who are very keen to work alongside us on this youth project.
- Sport based youth events, school sport and after-school and school holiday clubs.
- Chaplaincy to local sports clubs (rugby, football, cricket, and hockey), their families, volunteers, and staff.
- School PE assistance collaborating with Kick at St Mary and St Peter's in Teddington and St Richard's in Hanworth.

In the last few months Activate has become a CIO and we have been successful in gaining some funding from several funds, namely The National Lottery Community Fund, One Richmond, The National Lottery Local Connections Fund and Active Richmond Local Area Fund. This much need funding will primarily support us in our plans for youth provision and the creation of our Youth Hub. We hope to be able to support young people so that they are more comfortable talking about mental health and accessing support, have greater confidence in physical activity and as such experience improved physical as well as mental wellbeing.

Going forward, we do feel that we have a programme of activities which is robust and one that we will be able to continue to deliver, even if Covid restrictions change. It reaches more people than we had predicted in our first year due to the accelerated way we now use technology. Of course, physical activities are what we really want to provide, but the addition of online content is a valuable plus.

We will continue to promote what we are doing through our local and church communities, our social media channels, and our website, all the while not forgetting our core values - activating community through wellbeing that invigorates faith.

## **ALMA**

**Suzie Gordon**

Despite the difficulties produced by Covid a group of us have been able to meet on zoom and I am very grateful to everyone for their continued support with our link parish at Pemba in Mozambique. We have regularly prayed for them as they have been going through particularly hard times this year with the arrival of so many displaced people, who have had to flee from the insurgent affected areas and who have witnessed horrendous torture, suffering and loss of loved ones.

We were able to join a zoom meeting with Bishop Manuel in February, who was able to update us on the state of affairs in Pemba and how there is a lack of clean water and sanitization which is leading to illness and outbreaks of diarrhoea and cholera in the camps. Joe Moffatt wrote to our MP drawing her attention to the plight of these people and asking what aid the Government was providing. He has since had a reply from her with a letter from the UK Minister of Africa stating that the UK has so far provided £19m of humanitarian and development support to internally displaced people in north east Mozambique. In the middle of March this crisis has at last been reported in the national press and on the television and there has been an interview with Bishop Manuel, who confirmed that children and adults had been tortured and beheaded and villages burnt.

This is a real crisis as it has put tremendous pressure on the local people and they need all the bare essentials such as food, water and hygiene goods. Climate change has affected this area badly with tremendous storms and flooding then terrible droughts making it very difficult for the farmers. Added to all this like everywhere in the world there is the covid crisis which is affecting many people. I am very grateful to Joe for having made the Crisis in Mozambique our lent appeal this year and I hope that we will have managed to raise a good sum of money to give the people in our link parish some aid.

Bishop Manuel was also able to update us in February on the building of the new school at Chimoio which is largely being funded by the donations from the parish. The foundation stone was laid back in the autumn so we look forward to seeing the progress in months to come.

There was tremendous joy at the beginning of October when water was found when the drilling for the new well; this well is now up and running and is making a tremendous difference to so many people, who were having to walk so far each day to collect water. This well was also funded by the generosity of the parish.

## **Fairtrade**

**Susan Jacobs**

Covid restrictions seriously curtailed any opportunities for holding after-church Traidcraft stalls so not much Fairtrade business was possible. However, with some ingenuity about 45 “Real Easter Eggs” and about 55 “Real Advent Calendars” were sold at Easter and Christmas 2020 respectively. A few knowledgeable and regular customers contacted me directly and I was able to supply items like tea, coffee, loo paper, biscuits, chocolates, dried fruit, sugar, etc, remotely from my stock of Traidcraft goods. The company itself narrowly escaped falling prey to bankruptcy, but with a huge restructuring, a massive amount of hard work, prayers and goodwill, they survived and in fact somehow managed to return very good results by the end of 2020. Many folk

resorted to ordering directly online and the company was quick to organise itself most efficiently.

We are still listed as a Fairtrade church. I do encourage everyone to seek out and buy fairly traded goods whenever possible. It really does make a difference.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday group**

**Susan Jacobs**

During 2020 the First Wednesday Group only met 4 times. The February meeting was in person and held in the Mina Hogan Room and was very well supported, with about 40 people present. There were two guest speakers in February who came from the Wimbledon branch of the Council of Christians and Jews and made a big impression on all attending. Tragically we heard about a month later that James Leak, the acting chairman of the Wimbledon CCJ had died suddenly of Covid. There were no meetings in March (Lent course), April, May, June, July and August (Covid restrictions in place), or January and December, but we got going again in September and held 3 more meetings before the end of the year. These were held on Zoom and were also well supported although less satisfactory as regards discussion.

February: Christian Jewish Relations

March: Lent course

September: What good things have we found have come out of the Covid experience?

October: New Churchwarden, Carla Maroussas, talking about how she sees her role.

November: "Towards a more ethical Christmas".

December: Advent Course

### **Handbells**

**Sheila Insley**

2020 began with the expectations of continuing normally and by mid-March we had entertained at a hospice and a care home, had run weekly care home hand chime sessions, assisted with a school club and had attended three handbell rallies. Then everything stopped.

Initially we kept in touch by email, sharing pictures and memories of the team's past. By June we had found a website for tower bell ringers that had a handbell adaptation for simple tunes. Using this alongside Zoom we have learned to cope with the frustrations of playing from numbers with delayed sounds. Not all the team made this technical move. Then in September and October we were delighted to return to real handbells in the Mina Hogan Room albeit with Covid-19 restrictions. Not everyone was confident enough to take this risk. But it did enable us to make a small contribution to the Crib Service by having short recordings of Christmas carols made before the Tier system was imposed.

By the time of preparing this report in February 2021, our weekly sessions have continued with added quizzes and puzzles. Team numbers have remained the same and we have the hope of being able to return to the Mina Hogan room, perhaps with everyone being more confident now that vaccinations have been rolled out.

Our hope is that in due course we will be able to practise more complex music using tables and sharing bells. In time we will once again be able to entertain and brighten the lives of many.

We have appreciated very much the great efforts of Suzanne and the Hall Committee in establishing such sound Covid-19 protocols for the Hall that have enabled us to use it briefly and we look forward to returning there.

### **Parish Pub Lunch**

**Trish Raffetto**

At the beginning of 2020 the Parish Pub Group was meeting twice a month, once at the Teddington Arms for lunch and once for coffee at the Anglers. Our numbers would vary between 12 and 15. However, with the advent of Covid-19 and subsequent lockdown, we needed to re-think how we could continue to stay in touch and support each other.

We started out by communicating via email but, after a somewhat hesitant start, we also managed to meet up via Zoom. Both the emails and the Zoom sessions provided an important lifeline and much-needed support as we faced the challenging isolation caused by lockdown. We increased the Zoom sessions to once a week and most of the group have continued to attend ever since.

The function of these groups is purely social and it provides an opportunity for us to spend time together in a relaxed setting. All are welcome and we look forward to a time in 2021 when we will once again be able to gather in person.

### **Plain & Pearl**

**Josie Shantonas**

Plain and Pearl is a friendly social all-inclusive group of people drawn together through a love of knitting and crafting.

We meet bi-monthly on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, normally in person at St Mary's Parish Hall Teddington but due to government Covid19 regulation we continued our regular meeting either on Zoom technology when in lockdown or in person, socially distanced, of course only when allowed.

Despite the pandemic, 2020 proved to be a successful year for the group keeping social contact through knit and chat or show and tell sessions of people's lockdown creations via Zoom meetings or our WhatsApp messaging. The highlights of the year have been the development of our new website, [www.plainandpearl.co.uk](http://www.plainandpearl.co.uk), and subsequent online Christmas shop on Etsy, raising funds to support the Church and (chosen charity) in place of normal Christmas Bazaar. The high quality of the handcrafted gifts produced by the P&P contributors raised a stunning £1300.

Moving forward in 2021 there are variety of craft demonstrations on zoom such as paper patchwork, fancy felting and a dedicated series of sock knit-along tutorials. We are looking forward to meeting in person once again when it is safe to do so hopefully in the second half of the year.

We maintain our schedule of events on our new website, as well as blog about our activities among many other things. Anyone interested in joining, email: [plainandpearl@gmail.com](mailto:plainandpearl@gmail.com) or contact us via the website.

## **Traherne Reading Group**

**Gerry Gregory**

In the months leading up to the pandemic outbreak, we continued to study the poetry and prose of Thomas Traherne - particularly his writing relating to Biblical themes/narratives (eg *Abel's Lamb, Noah's Rainbow, Manna, Israel and Egypt, Elim, Moses Road, Moses Call...*). As previously, we often read such items alongside the work of other poets on related themes - this time including such 19th/20<sup>th</sup> century poets as Gerard Manley Hopkins and T. S. Eliot. Frustratingly, our meetings stopped with the outbreak of the pandemic. We look forward eagerly to re-starting as soon as possible. Much has been reported about people's increased appreciation of nature during lockdown - and it may well be that reflections on *our* experiences of the past year (including more walks than previously?) may have taken us closer to Traherne's especially powerful - and much noted - wonder/awe at the beauty of the natural world, conveyed in such lines as '*the world...being so beautiful that nothing visible is capable of more*' and '*how bright are all things here*'.

## **Welcare**

**Margaret Squire**

Welcare is a Christian charity dedicated to helping children and families in south and west London overcome challenges and build towards a better future. Many of the families are dealing with a legacy of domestic abuse, a situation that has increased during the Covid 19 pandemic.

During this time Welcare has adapted its services and found new ways of working. They have helped families by providing supermarket vouchers, and access to special local grants for school uniforms and IT equipment enabling children to do school work at home. One to one assistance has continued where possible on-line.

St Mary with St Alban Church has traditionally supported Welcare with two fundraising events, Carols at the Anglers at Christmas time and a Lent Lunch.

Unfortunately, last year the carols had to be cancelled last minute due to lockdown, but this year the Lent Lunch was able to go-ahead but on-line. Thirty-eight people received a lunch made and delivered by volunteers and then met together on Zoom to listen to a talk by Anna Khan the CEO of Welcare. This event raised £1,375. In addition, the Charity was introduced to the refurbished laptop scheme run by Richmond Rugby Club who supplied ten laptops, that Welcare was able to give to disadvantaged families.

For the future Welcare will need all the help it can get as the pandemic has increased both poverty and mental health problems for many families, and their services will be more vital than ever.