



StMARYwithStALBAN
PARISH CHURCH of TEDDINGTON

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

26 April 2022

Review of Year to 31 December 2021

St Mary's Parish Hall
&
Via Zoom.

CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL

Names added	25
Names removed	7
Net loss/gain	19
Total number on the revised roll	366

Of the 366 names on the Roll, 126 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 1 person who has died, 1 duplicate entry and 5 who have moved away.

Jennifer Paynter
Church Electoral Roll Officer
St Mary with St Alban
24 April 2022

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VICAR'S REPORT

The last twelve months have been largely focussed on 'getting back to normal', following the gradual lifting of covid restrictions. This has been a great relief and has rekindled our appreciation of what it means to come together for worship, fellowship and service of others. But I'm also pleased that our understanding of what is normal has expanded so that we now have hybrid forms of worship and fellowship. I've been greatly encouraged by the numbers of people returning to church (we're now back to our pre-covid attendance levels) but also by those watching online (we still have an average of 90 views for each Parish Communion service). In addition, we've had lots of new people join us which is always good to see.

Our overall mission has continued to develop. Here are a few notable examples:

Community Outreach

I'm delighted that the Monday afternoon Community Café was relaunched in May and has gone from strength to strength, now attracting 40-50 people each week. Likewise, the Memory Café has restarted. These are both St Mary with St Alban initiatives that are now run in-partnership with the *Activate Sports & Wellbeing Ministry*, forming part of a full weekday 'wellbeing' programme at St Peter & St Paul. It's good to see this fresh vision emerge for St Peter & St Paul, overseen by a new charity called *Teddington Mission Hub* which has a very competent group of trustees.

Growing Younger

Activate is also beginning to grow. In addition to the weekday wellbeing programme, a new Sunday afternoon *Active Church* is being launched at St Mark's and a Youth programme based on Streetdance (funded by our Lent Appeal) is planned. Both start in May 2022. It's been very energising to work with Rev Chris Kennedy, the Activate Pioneer Minister, and we've appreciated his regular involvement in our 9am Sunday service.

Caring for God's Creation

We have been well served by the efforts of our Sustainability Group who have organised special creation-themed services, provided a fortnightly 'green-feed' in our ebulletin and have led our successful bid for an *Eco-Church Bronze Award*. This has been augmented by our Holy Gardeners who are gradually increasing the biodiversity in our churchyard and are soon to create an exciting new Sensory Garden.

Diversity and Inclusion

We have looked at both race and sexuality with excellent Supper Talks and Courses organised by our D&I group. I was particularly pleased to run the *Living in Love and Faith* course which over 35 people attended. I look forward to more discussions and thinking about ways to put our values into practice.

Pastoral Care

An important aspect of our ministry continues to be with funerals and those who mourn. This has been particularly significant over the past two years with an increase in both the number of deaths and the complexity surrounding restricted funerals. Our services at both All Souls and on the National Day of Reflection in March (marking the anniversary of the first covid lockdown) have been particularly significant. So too was the Bereavement Journey Course that we've just run with over 20 people participating and finding it very helpful. In May we will launch a new Bereavement Café (to alternate

with the Memory Café on Tuesday afternoons) and we plan to repeat the Course in the autumn.

Improving our Facilities

Building Anew (our major building project) is still in the pipeline. We've been frustrated by long delays to receiving pre-application feedback from Richmond Council and further complications with technical elements in the design. But the plans are nearly complete and the Governance Group has continued to work tirelessly to produce the umpteen surveys and reports that need to accompany our application so we're hoping to finally submit by the end of May. We then wait for permission and start planning our fundraising appeal which will be launched as soon as we get that green light. I remain convinced that this is the best possible scheme and is vital for the future growth of our church.

On a personal note, I'd like to record my gratitude to my clergy colleagues, churchwardens and parish office team who enabled me to take a three-month sabbatical in the summer of 2021. The tranquillity of a month-long retreat, the beauty of Iona and the wisdom of the Ignation tradition all combined to reinvigorate my faith as well as revive my energies. I'm also grateful that they have kept apace with my renewed enthusiasm on return. I continue to think that I've been blessed with the best team in the deanery, if not the diocese!

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to either the writing or the content of the reports that follow. They really make you appreciate what a vibrant church we have.

2021 Proceedings of the PCC

Katherine Matthews

There have been 25 members on the PCC who have committed to 6 PCC meetings and 1 extraordinary meeting during the last 12 months. A number of meetings took place solely via Zoom due to the CV outbreak.

The first meeting, held on 12 May, opened with the PCC approving the appointment of the Secretary, Treasurer and the chairs of the various working groups. The PCC also ratified the church safeguarding policy following a presentation by Mary Field-Smith.

The PCC discussed the proposal put forward by Robin Field-Smith to instal a war memorial board in the North Aisle of the church. This proposal remains under review while we await a response from the DAC offering further guidance on how to proceed.

Steve Randall, chair of the Governance group for *Building Anew*, reported that written approval of the pre-app submission to LBRUT had been received with mainly favourable comments on our proposals although questions had been raised about the overall projection of the extension into the eastern side of the graveyard.

Finally, Carla Maroussas reflected on the Climate Sunday service which had taken place on 9 May and put forward the rationale and objectives of the recently formed sustainability working group. Carla has written an overview of the work undertaken by this group which can be found on page 21 of this report.

The second meeting in July (chaired by Caroline due to the vicar being away on sabbatical) opened with Robin's reflections on *Love Your Burial Ground* week. The week had been a great success with good attendance at all events. *Love Your Burial*

Ground week was a wonderful initiative which brought many people together to worship, pray, and celebrate the wonder and beauty of God's creation, and to help us maintain and develop this exceptional place for all to enjoy. Further, the *Adopt a Grave* scheme had attracted significant interest from many in the local community.

Robin also reported that plans for our five-year Churchyard Management Plan were being finalised and that discussions are taking place with the local council about making a bid on the Local Area Fund which would contribute to the costs of some of the development work identified in the plan.

Mary Field-Smith reported on the impact of recent changes in GDPR requirements to obtain written consent for live streaming of services and the release of captured images to the website, Zoom meetings, uploading to You Tube, etc and the steps taken to satisfy these.

Further progress with *Building Anew* was slow according to Steve Randall although the architects had been working on revised drawings to satisfy LBRUT's concerns regarding the size of the extension as noted above.

Finally, Rev Caroline Halmshaw reported on the work of the Diversity & Inclusion group which had been set up in response to the issues and challenges raised in Father Azariah France-William's book, *Ghost Ship*. A summary of the work undertaken by this group during the year is provided on page 20 of this report.

Carla Maroussas led the evening's reflections at the 3rd meeting on 16 September. She outlined her thoughts, fears and hopes on the issues of sustainability, the environment and in particular climate change bearing in mind the forthcoming COP26 summit in November. Carla encouraged all on the PCC to acknowledge the crisis, to start conversations and to recognise that small actions can lead to change which will inspire hope and optimism in everyone that the earth will be protected and nurtured.

Steve Randall reported on better progress with *Building Anew* following a meeting with LBRUT to address their comments & feedback on the pre-app submission. Revised drawings had been prepared by the architect to address concerns about the size of the extension. The PCC were to be asked to meet for an extraordinary meeting (see below) to review these drawings.

Ruth Chaperlin provided an update on Children's Ministry. *Church Mice* are now meeting regularly on Wednesday mornings in church. The 9am service continues to be well attended and *Coffee 'n' Craft* following the service enables conversation and fellowship. Unfortunately, difficulties remain in encouraging more families/children to attend the 10am service.

Clare Rider is overseeing the process with regard to the dissolution of the parish of St Peter & St Paul and the transfer of the PCC's responsibilities for the maintenance and management of the church building to the Teddington Mission Hub. She reported that further news is still awaited from the Diocese about when this transfer will take place, the delay being caused by the legal complexities of leasing the consecrated part of the building to TMH. No objections were received during the consultation process. In the meantime, the Board of Trustees of the Teddington Mission Hub and the PCC continue to work together to manage the building.

An extraordinary PCC meeting was held in October which focussed on 2 specific matters: to seek PCC approval of the revised plans and drawings for the Building Anew project and to seek PCC approval of the Churchyard Maintenance & Development 5-year action plan. Both plans were approved unanimously.

The 4th meeting in November marked the 1st time that the PCC met in person since the outbreak of the CV pandemic in March 2020. It also marked the 1st meeting since the vicar's return from his sabbatical on the island of Iona so he took the opportunity to reflect on his experiences and share some thoughts with the PCC. Joe focussed particularly on the quiet but regular routines over the 30-day period of his retreat. He also shared his appreciation of the doctrine of St Ignatius of Loyola, providing some context to his teachings by comparing him to Martin Luther who lived in the same period in the early 16th century who had instigated the Reformation.

The PCC reviewed the sustainability strategy of *Building Anew* following the Governance Group's request for further direction from the PCC regarding the choice of materials and heating arrangements to minimize our carbon footprint. A number of options were put forward with the decision being made to request the architect to include air or ground source heat pumps in the planning application for the new building, whilst concurrently conducting a cost/ benefit and technical analysis of the two varieties of pump.

The PCC approved the Common Fund offer for 2022. The amount paid by St Mary's will be the same as that paid in 2021 (£105,000) but we will also pay a further amount of £17,000 to compensate for the loss of income to the Diocese of the Common Fund offer made by SPSP.

The first meeting of 2022 took place on 18 January and the PCC put forward their ideas on how St Mary's might wish to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee over the extended bank holiday weekend in June. The outcome of these discussions was that we will mark this momentous occasion on Sunday 5 June with a special service at 10am, churchyard teas and Songs of Praise in the churchyard.

Caroline provided an outline of the forthcoming lent course, *Living in Love & Faith*. A review of this course is provided on page 17 of this report.

Steve Randall was pleased to report that written confirmation of approval of our pre-app submission had been received from LBRUT and that it was likely there would be no further objections to our proposed plans before they are put forward to planning permission. Also, the community consultation which took place during October & November raised no significant concerns.

The final meeting took place on 17 March and Robin was pleased to report that the application for Local Area funding for the sensory garden in the churchyard has been successful. The church will be offered £5,600 following completion of the required documentation.

Steve Randall reported on continued progress with *Building Anew* particularly with regard to the completion of all the documentation required for the submission for planning permission and also with decisions on the heating options for the extension. He did express however some concern about a potential delay as the governance group

assessed the appropriate steps to address new government guidelines on the installation of mechanical ventilation in all new buildings.

The vicar provided an update on *Activate*. The onset of the pandemic in 2020 meant that many of the ideas for *Activate* were put on hold or curtailed. However, following a recent meeting, the Activate team had put forward a number of new initiatives to be launched in May – a sports church, a street dance club and a health & wellbeing hub incorporating the Memory café & the Community café.

The PCC approved the 2021 Financial Statements & Annual Report and the proposed budget for 2022.

Fabric

Building Anew

Steve Randall

The ‘Building Anew’ project to equip our beautiful church with the facilities needed to flourish in the future continued to move forwards over the past year, although the rate of progress was inevitably hampered at times by the pandemic and recurring lockdowns.

As you will recall from last year’s report, twelve months ago the project was in its pre-application (‘pre-app’) consultation phase. We were awaiting written feedback on our proposed scheme from Richmond Council’s Planning Department, after submitting our pre-application documentation to them in December 2020.

Our pre-app submission to the Council followed the successful completion of a site visit and subsequent pre-app consultation with a delegation from the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) earlier that year. The delegation had included representatives from Historic England, The Church Buildings Council and the Georgian Group. Their feedback on the proposed scheme was largely very positive, with the DAC raising no objections to moving forwards.

An initial written response from Richmond Council’s Planning Department was finally received in May last year. This also expressed its support for the principle of the development but raised a concern about how far the Garden Room extension projected eastwards. It requested that the length of this projection should be reconsidered.

Following this, the project team and architect prepared two slightly revised options for the size and shape of the Garden Room extension, reducing the length of the eastwards projection. All the necessary documentation was submitted to the Council’s planning department in June with a request for a follow-up online meeting as soon as possible to run through the revised options.

Regrettably a further hiatus followed, with Council unable to offer a date for that follow-up meeting before September. Thankfully, when the time came, one of the revised options was positively received and the Planning Department’s written response in November confirmed that it no longer had any objection to the proposed scheme. Following PCC approval, the project was able to move forwards with the final, important step in the consultation process. This was to present the proposed scheme to the congregation, the Teddington Society and the local community to invite their feedback. The project team has been extremely grateful for all the comments received

from these groups which, I am glad to report, have been overwhelmingly positive. All the feedback has been thoroughly reviewed by the project team and taken on board in finalising the scheme.

While waiting for the Council's response, from June onwards the project team had focused on drafting and commissioning all the other documents needed for the full planning application. These include an open space assessment, transport statement, construction traffic management plan, preliminary ecological appraisal, bat survey, updated tree report with tree planting mitigation details, ecological enhancements plan, fire safety strategy, flood risk assessment and sustainable drainage systems assessment. Final drafts have been prepared for all these documents, ready to be included in the planning application package along with the planning, design and access, and heritage statements that will be completed by the architect and heritage consultant.

In October, the process to commission an artist to design an integrated coloured glass installation for the east wall of the Garden Room extension was launched. Following preparation of a brief and a rigorous tender process, 24 impressive applications were received from which the selection committee shortlisted four artists. After holding meetings with the shortlisted candidates to review their concepts, a unanimous decision was reached and the preferred candidate appointed in January. Since then, the artist has been working with the architect to develop the artwork concept further for inclusion in the planning application.

In light of the increasing emphasis on the importance of sustainability within the Church of England and community at large, the original decision to heat the extension using radiators linked to the existing church gas boiler was reviewed by the Governance Group in the autumn. Following consideration of various options offering lower carbon emissions, with the PCC's approval, the decision was taken to add the installation of a ground source heat pump into the scheme as the heat source for the extension.

In conjunction with this and given the latest advice on ventilating public spaces in light of the pandemic, the advice from the engineering consultants to include mechanical ventilation in the extension was also taken. Not only does this ensure circulation of the air inside when the windows and doors are closed, but also retains a significant proportion of the heat of the air being expelled and retains this in the building, thereby reducing the energy required to heat it.

In addition, opportunities to reduce the carbon footprint of the construction materials to be used were reviewed and the decision taken to increase the use of recycled materials in the foundation slab and to replace the structural steel frame originally proposed as much as possible with brick-block cavity walls and wooden joists.

The architect and engineering consultants are currently preparing options for minor revisions to the proposed scheme to accommodate the modifications for the mechanical ventilation unit. Once this work is concluded and a decision taken on the option to be pursued, everything will be in place to complete the documentation for the planning application.

Subject to this and barring any unforeseen circumstances, the current project time-plan envisages submitting the formal planning application in either May or June. Depending on the time taken to receive planning approval from Richmond Council and then to raise the funding required, construction will commence in 2023 or early 2024.

Extensive work has already gone into developing a fundraising plan and identifying the relevant grants available in preparation for this.

In any event, the Governance Group 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 Ramsay, the project manager, and all those involved for their commitment, expertise, stamina and unwavering good humour.

Church Building & Churchyard

Robin Field-Smith

Church

While a lot of attention in the last year has been focused on *Building Anew*, the existing building has continued safely and warmly to welcome both congregations for services and visitors every day to an open church.

The demands of COVID restrictions helpfully caused us to review how we used the church most effectively. We installed a new boiler thermostat to give us better control of temperatures, took back into use the south door in the chancel to give us better ventilation, and increased signage and notices or leaflets to help visitors feel better welcomed and informed. We also arranged for an important upgrade to the AVA system, installing a remotely controlled camera, additional microphones in the chancel, and an additional control deck to enable us to livestream services.

We have really come to understand the value of the building being open every day, and the increased use of the votive candle stand, measured not least by the contributions in the cash box!

The fact that the church always looks clean, and that people can visit it remotely, is a tribute to the weekly work of the Holy Dusters, and those who operate the live stream, both of which depend on a small team of volunteers. Thank you all!

Over Christmas, for the second year running, we set up a crib using the St Alban's altar and the figures inherited from the church whose patron saint we remember there. This has been very well received and will certainly be the pattern for future years, giving us both more space for the big services and being more flexible and easier to set up.

There were special arrangements to mark Prince Philip's death, including a memorial book, and ringing of the bell, which again were appreciated by the local population, and this has given us a good model to mark future national events. Sadly the 400th birthday of our bell, due to be celebrated in 2020, had to be postponed, and we hope to be able to mark this properly soon, in concert with St Peter's, Petersham, which houses a bell of the same date and provenance.

Plans to repair flaking plaster, remove the frog eye light fittings, and redecorate the church will be taken forward as part of *Building Anew*. But we have arranged for the exterior roof valley gutters to be re-surfaced to prevent leakage, and we are looking to replace the existing 40-year old gas boiler with a more efficient and effective version. Other measures to help us be a truly eco-friendly church are covered in another report.

We are looking to form a small fabric working group to take the pressure off the churchwardens, and hope to see some volunteers come forward.

Churchyard

Heritage experts tell us that our churchyard is a site of “exceptional significance”. In the last year we have been able to celebrate this fact, and look to develop the area, in a number of ways.

We now have a policy for the maintenance and development of the churchyard, agreed between the PCC and the local council, complemented by a 5-year action plan.

We have introduced an *Adopt a Grave* scheme which has attracted volunteers to care for about 100 of the 390 graves. We can already see the results in tidier graves, with planting of suitable flowers, and regular attention as the seasons turn over. More volunteers are always welcome.

Our dedicated team of Holy Gardeners, ably led by Tony Swan and Sally Stones, keep the churchyard trimmed, watered, weeded and continually improved. Thank you all!

The one bee hive is well established, and a second hive is being set up in the north west corner in the coming months.

During the last year we held a number of services outdoors, notably on Palm Sunday, Easter dawn, Pentecost, and notably during “*Loving Your Burial Ground Week*” in June, a week promoted by the charity *Caring for God’s Acre*. This also saw talks on bees, flowers and trees, visits by 15 classes from SMSP, a summer concert, churchyard teas, and a Songs of Praise.

On Good Friday, for the first time, we set up the 14 Stations of the Cross around the churchyard, supported by a prayer leaflet. We intend to repeat this again in future years.

The local charity RUILS has installed signs to create two “Chatty Benches” to encourage individuals to sit and talk with others in such a pleasant setting.

In the coming year, thanks to a grant from the Local Area fund of Richmond Council, we will be creating a sensory area at the east end of the churchyard.

Parish Hall

Jo O’Hagan

It may be hard for many of us to remember the details of the government regulations over the past two years but one look at the monthly income from the Parish Hall is a stark reminder of the ebbs and flows of enforced closures and gradual return to full activity. Whilst 2020 saw a drop of almost 50% in income over 2019, 2021 showed a significant increase over the previous year but still remained 25% lower than in 2019. We are hoping that it will be possible to achieve a better level of income by the end of 2022.

We are very fortunate that *Playwam* has been allowed to operate since September 2020 and, as and when regulations permitted, other users have gradually returned to a Hall that is once again buzzing with activity. The Hall section of the Parish website demonstrates that the hall has returned to almost constant use and that varied and

vibrant activities provided for all age groups by both professional and voluntary groups are once again on offer to the local community. We much appreciate the loyalty and support of many hall users including the Scouts and Guides who have paid hire fees even when they were unable to use the premises. Our special thanks go to Suzanne and Alex who have been steadfast in their dedication to keeping in contact with the regular users and maintaining the fabric of the building through such a challenging time.

There is little doubt that the lack of use and strict cleaning regimes have presented some unwanted challenges but I am happy to report that many of these problems have now been addressed. The upgrading of electrical work and lighting has continued and remedial work has been carried out on the fire doors throughout the building to bring them up to current regulatory levels. The long overdue resealing of the main hall floor is booked in for May half-term. We are also exploring the cost of upgrading the lighting system in the main hall so that we can continue to reduce the carbon footprint of the building.

The Hall continues to be a vital link between the church and the local community and the hall committee remain dedicated to continuing to maintain and improve this facility for all who enjoy the many benefits it has to offer.

Church Recording Project

Sue Stevens & Robin Field-Smith

Progress was slowed by the Covid restrictions, which prevented a number of our monthly meetings, as well as continued discovery of new items to be recorded, complex researches into dates, donors and people to be remembered. All information has now been collected, and is being collated.

Liz Chalmers, the Arts Society co-ordinator, had limited time to support us earlier on in the year, but is now very active. It therefore remains for final proof reading and checking to take place. This is important as the completed document will be filed in respected national academic archives for researchers of the future to use.

Estimates are being sought for the cost of printing and binding, which Arts Society Richmond have agreed to fund. We continue to be grateful to them for their ongoing support and interest.

We are grateful also to our volunteers, many of whom have devoted a considerable amount of their time to the project.

Worship & Nurture

Safeguarding

Mary Field-Smith

“The care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults who are involved in Church activities is the responsibility of the whole Church. Everyone who participates in the life of the Church has a role to play in promoting a Safer Church for all.”

Promoting a Safer Diocese, the Safeguarding Policy of the Diocese of London, with a foreword from Bishop Sarah, forms the cornerstone of our Parish safeguarding practice and can be accessed on the safeguarding pages of the Parish website.

Our PCC safeguarding policy was ratified after the APCM last year and we have recently completed a Self -Audit and Action Plan which will be submitted to the Diocese after it has been discussed at the next PCC.

As our church activities have resumed and some new ones have started, we have taken the opportunity to update our volunteer agreements to include the requirement for safeguarding training to be renewed every three years; these are gradually being completed. We are also using the new Code of Safer Working Practice which sets out the behaviour to which we expect all our volunteers to adhere. Although the form filling may seem a little tedious it is an important and necessary part of keeping safe all those we serve.

We are moving towards the new 3-year renewal period for DBS checks and will also be ensuring that all PCC members have a current DBS check.

The Diocese has recognised that while new policies and procedures are making churches safer, they have also significantly increased the amount of administration for church safeguarding officers. Therefore, it has invested in a new tool, The Safeguarding Dashboard, which has two primary aims: to measure and report parish data and to make safeguarding simpler for parishes. This is now available for our Parish to use.

Our local Diocesan adviser, Caryn Weber, recently visited the Parish and met the team. It is hoped to have the first face to face meeting of the Hampton Deanery SG Network soon so that local Church Safeguarding Officers have the opportunity to meet and share ideas.

Thanks are due to Kay Cassidy as Lead Recruiter, and to the other members of the Safeguarding Team, Ruth Chaperlin and Sarah Williams, for their invaluable support.

Children's Ministry

Ruth Chaperlin

Following a year that saw almost all our regular Children's Ministry activities suspended or severely curtailed, the last twelve months have, thankfully, seen the reintroduction of many of these, as we have emerged from lockdown.

Church Mice services for pre-school aged children and their parents and carers are back up and running on Wednesday mornings with two people leading each week from a rota of six volunteers, including members of the clergy. These services had to be suspended in March 2020, due to the national lockdown, and it was over a year before they could be safely restarted, in May 2021.

The services ran from May-July last year with a socially distanced format, and using the screen in church to aid with storytelling and singing. The reintroduction of this popular service was appreciated and reasonably well attended in the summer term. However, in the autumn, with the situation regarding Covid19 still uncertain, and the annual transfer of some children to school or nursery, numbers attending dropped significantly. We arranged a '*Church Mice and cake day*' on one Wednesday morning in November, which helped somewhat to boost attendance. However, it was not until the spring of 2022 that numbers started to really pick up again. The last few weeks have seen between six and eight families regularly attending on a Wednesday morning, and a sense of this service returning to normal.

The 9am family service on Sunday mornings was held at SPSP during the lockdowns to allow for social distancing, but last summer returned to SMWSA as before. It remains extremely popular with families who have young children.

The *Coffee and Craft* sessions, which had launched prior to the first lockdown in 2020, were re-launched in September 2021 and have become a firm fixture following the 9am family service. Those attending this service now have a space and opportunity for fellowship in the Parish Hall following the service. There is a small group of around 10 volunteers who, on a rota basis, set up the hall and provide a welcome and refreshments to the 9am congregation each week. Special mention must go to Sidonie Kennan who provides such wonderful craft activities each week for the children. My heartfelt thanks go to all the volunteers, who have worked so hard over the last six months to make these sessions such a success. Thanks also to Mary Field-Smith and Jo O'Hagan who have offered invaluable support in training us all up to use the kitchen in the Parish Hall.

In September 2021 we were able to start running a children's church group during the 10am Sunday service for the first time in eighteen months. There are around half a dozen children of primary school age who currently come regularly to this service, and a small group of volunteers, who have given generously of their time and creativity to keep this valuable part of our church community running.

Along with myself, Mary Hawes, Cathy Randall and Sophie Edginton have regularly led these sessions, and I would like to thank them all for their commitment, hard work and boundless creativity.

Interspersed with sessions using the more traditional format of hearing a Bible story followed by activities and craft, Mary and Cathy have introduced us to *Godly Play*, an open and reflective way of engaging children with Bible stories. Children hear a Bible story and then have the opportunity to explore a personal response to this, first in discussion, and then using a variety of creative materials.

Earlier this year, Cathy, Sophie and I, along with Sarah Williams, undertook an online introductory training course on *Godly Play*, which we hope to include as a valuable part of our Children's Ministry.

Maintaining provision for children within the 10am service remains a challenge, but it is important that we continue to meet that challenge, through running a children's group in the Parish Hall and by the regular inclusion of all-age services in church throughout the year. Including children in the service is also an important aspect and I would like to thank Mary Field-Smith for the valuable work she does with the older children in church who take on the role of servers.

Choir & Music

Derek Saunders

The Mass setting by Margaret Rizza, now familiar with the congregation, however it is felt that some variety would be welcome. We will be looking to introduce the Thorne Mass of St Thomas soon. We will also look at other possibilities.

Joe has taken over the mantle of selecting hymns.

With services that have taken place with singing the choir has been 4 or 6 in number at the start of the year. This was increased to 8 and then 10 as was seen fit. With reduced numbers the anthems have been less ambitious however the results have still been pleasing. As numbers increased the repertoire became more expansive.

Most rehearsals have taken place in the flesh 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 have now become both essential and regular.

An organ roster of some regularity and consistency has been established. 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. Naturally there has been an increase in uptake on music for these events.

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. We did look into helping the music for the Holst Singers but it was decided the space was not available. There is now scope for reducing some of the music we have

Looking ahead we are extremely grateful for the care and consideration given to music and the new extension. We can now see that there will be a larger space to rehearse in, more accessible music shelving and a larger robing wardrobe.

Last year Robin Field Smith and Dean Ryan looked into the prospect of a new digital organ and have made considerable progress in deciding on the make and type. This remains the case for this year.

DS has spoken with Joe regarding music to be used in reflective services. More to follow here.

We have had two significant new members become regulars – one soprano (Debra) and one alto (Heather)

Some members of the choir have been invited to join a group run by DS that promotes reflective Christian practices and has incorporated suitable music into their study weekends. This could be extended to tie in with the reflective services cited above. One such piece Be still and know that I am God has been used in services at SMwSA.

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.

Extra events: we have managed three or four in these difficult times. One in the summer in the churchyard - this proved very popular as did Songs of Praise that happened in the same place. The third was an evensong in October. Then on April 3rd 2022 we managed

a revival of the concerts given by Teddington Churches Choir and Teddington Consort led by Janet Smith. The theme was Passiontide and we performed admirably in the lovely space of St Marys University Chapel. Kay Cassidy was again instrumental in organising all this – huge thanks to her.

April 2020 – August 2020

Following the end of the second lockdown the choir met in very small numbers. However, those that did turn up worked wonders and we were able to support the worship with simpler anthems and hymn singing. There were a number of service outdoors where we were able to have larger numbers and lead the hymn singing.

September 2020 – December 2020

The choir numbered around 6 for most of this period. We also continued on with a number of outdoor services. We also managed an evensong to welcome back Joe from his Sabbatical. The Carol service was another tremendous success, though understandably without orchestra, numbers in the choir were allowed to increase as we got nearer to Christmas.

January 2022 – March 2022

The Choir gradually grew in number up to a natural number by March. Thanks to Robin for marshalling the situation throughout. With Holy week we were again able to return to more challenging material as numbers swelled alas apart from Easter Day. However, the telling renditions and full commitment of the choir shone forth in all of the services of that week.

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, Ed Buxton and Rachel have been tremendously reliable throughout the year.

Also, a huge vote of thanks for the efforts of the sound and recording team. The installation of mics and the careful consideration of sound quality reproduction has made a huge difference to the You Tube streaming. The work of the team has also helped with outside services and indoor recordings. Thank you to Fred Squire particularly, as well as James Ward and Mick Massey.

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 comradeship has helped us all get through another extraordinarily challenging year.

Churches Together

Malcolm Eady

For over 55 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 Revd. Karen Wellman from St Mark's Church up to September 2021, then Anne O'Neil.

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 2021/22 we were able to return to organising some of these events. We still met, initially via zoom, and from September in person.

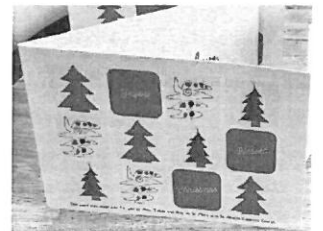
The main event each year is the **Christmas Day Lunch** at Ellera Hall. Because of the restrictions brought about by the prevalence of COVID 19 this annual lunch for the lonely, elderly and vulnerable was not able to be held in the normal way. It was our turn together with St Michael's Fullwell to organise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

All the preparations were done in the Ellera hall's kitchen under the supervision of John Mulcahy. 110 full Christmas Dinner meals with all the trimmings and including a generous dessert were supplied in a microwaveable trays or larger aluminium trays. Vegetarian and gluten free meals were provided as requested. Volunteers helped overall in the preparations and in the distribution on Christmas Day.



St Mary's with St Peter's school, local Church congregations and the Church's Guide company generously collected gifts to go with the food bags.

These were wrapped and the Children from St Mary with St Alban children's Church produced a design for a Christmas Card to go with the presents.



All this was enabled by a grant of £900 from the Hampton Fund plus donations of food and gifts by individuals and organisations.

This Easter (2022) the normal **Good Friday processions and Service** on the green by the Methodist church were able to take place. One procession started from St Marks's and was joined by our members at St Mary with St Alban to then walk down the High Street and Broad Street. The second procession came from St Francis de Sales, which joins that from St Michael to walk down Stanley Road. There was then a short service, which is followed a Vigil by the Cross, with each church taking a half hour period. The service and processions this year were well attended, the weather was fine, but as often the sounds system was not adequate. Compensation was made by having all the words for the service on the service sheet.

At the "**Teddington Lights Up**" evening members from various churches, plus brownies from our Church pack, joined the Salvation Army band outside the Park Hotel for carol singing. The new location was much less noisy than the High Street.

Christmas cards/leaflets. These are in the form of a good quality A6 colour Christmas card and provide information about the Christmas services at all the member churches. Over 10, 000 cards are delivered. The cards are distributed by most of the member Churches and there was very positive feedback from residents.

For the **week of Prayer for Church Unity** in January there were short services held each day at one of the member churches, and this year the main Sunday service was held at 23 January at Sacred Heart Church.

This year the **Christian Add week collection** was only partially back to normal. We did a “delivery only” collection. A few CTT churches helped with this effort and about 4000 envelopes were delivered to selected roads in Teddington and Hampton Wick. There were instructions on the envelopes about how to return them to the local church which had delivered them. The proportion of envelopes returned was low (about 3% overall). The total collected was £2916.33 of which over two-thirds was covered by Gift Aid forms: there will be an extra £422 tax recovery.

In February a CTT **quiet day on the theme of Christian Mindfulness & Meditation** was held in the Senior Common Room at St Mary’s University. It was well attended (25 to 30 people throughout the day.)

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

Nurture Courses

Advent

Rev Caroline Halmshaw

In December we held a four-week course during the season of Advent. The course drew on the themes explored by Paula Gooder in her book, *‘The Meaning is in the Waiting’*. The book re-engages us with the value of waiting and helps us to do this by looking at the lives of some of the biblical people who had to wait upon God. In our reflections, we accompanied Abraham and Sarah, the prophets, John the Baptist and Mary in their waiting.

The course enabled us to think more about waiting, why we do it, what it feels like to be someone who waits, what happens when we don’t wait and why God might want us to get better at it. We recognised that waiting isn’t a manifesto for doing nothing, waiting can be immensely active and can help us by changing the focus of our lives from ourselves to God and from the future to the present.

It was very good to meet together again, to learn from each other through reading scripture, discussing it and praying. We met in person and between 5-10 people attended the course. Our numbers fluctuated because as we were approaching Christmas, and we were cautious about a re-emergence of Covid at this time of year.

Lent

Rev Caroline Halmshaw

We held a six-week Lent course on Wednesday mornings, drawing on the ideas from the book, *‘The Illuminated Heart’* by Frederika Matthews-Green. She is an Orthodox theologian who challenges us to enter into some of the life choices and prayers of the Desert Mothers and Fathers. She believes that the western church is poorer for having lost touch with the practices and insights of this generation of Christians.

Her style and approach were not always straight forward, and in reading this book, we were at times stepping out of our recent comfort zone and coming into contact with different ways of thinking and seeing. Lent is hopefully a time which unsettles us and helps us to let go of the things that keep us apart from God. I hope the insights she brought, and the discussions we had enabled us to consider our approach to practising our faith in new ways. The time of silent prayer and praying the Jesus prayer together were welcomed parts of the course.

Between 14 and 18 people attended the course and we were delighted to meet face to face again.

The Offices of Morning & Evening Prayer

Rosamond McDowell

The letter to the Hebrews, at 7:25, tells us that Jesus *always lives to make intercession for us*. The Greek verb here translated as “to intercede” actually means not to make petitions or indeed to utter words at all, but to *meet*, to *encounter*, to *be with* someone on behalf of or in relation to others.... Jesus is *with* the Father, continually interceding with him as our high priest. And likewise, we, as his priestly people, are called to be near to Jesus, and with Jesus, and in Jesus, *to be with God with his people on our heart*. Those thoughts of the late Archbishop Michael Ramsay, published 50 years ago in 1972 (the year that I and many in our church community were born!) in his book *The Christian Priest Today*, certainly came to life in a new way as the COVID lockdown began in March 2020. Caroline introduced us all to zoom, and so many of us (particularly Jean Blanc, who has barely missed a single occasion) found a new way of being together, of carving out time for prayer, time for God, a new pattern for our days. We met in surprising numbers, morning and evening, to be with God, with his people on our hearts. We shared news, we shared sorrows, we shared joys, offering them all up into the hands and heart of the Almighty, using the framework of the Psalms, readings and canticles set out in the Daily Prayer app, occasionally (on a Thursday) pausing to reflect on the scriptures, beauty ever ancient and ever new. This was, and continues to be, a still point in a turning world. Join us. The intercession continues.

Christian Mysticism

Derek Saunders

DS has been facilitating groups on Christian Mysticism for two years now. It started when a small group of parishioners and a friend of DS began the online course entitled *The Roots of Christian Mysticism* put on by the WCCM – The World Community for Christian Meditation headed up by Laurence Freeman.

So, in all 6/7 of us met and we kept going through the 3 terms of courses (about 24 mystics in all) The course is well set up and each week is packed full of information, original text quotes, inspiration for practice and further study (You Tube talks, etc). We met very much as a book club meets and we would discuss our findings as well as hear readings from each week. The course also introduces you to meditation where you are encouraged to repeat a mantra for 20 minutes or so. Ros did a lovely sermon relating her experiences at the end of the course.

The course is very much geared around the idea that the kingdom of heaven is within. Or, as Evagrius puts it, “God made man so that man may become God”. It begins with the words of Christ and then looks at Paul, St John the Divine onto the Desert Fathers and women, Benedict, Hildegard, Julian of Norwich, Meister Eckhart, Loyola, our own

Thomas Traherne, John Donne and then finishing in the 20th C with John Main, Simone Weil, and more. Not all mystics are included in the list. Each week there seemed to be huge scope for further study as these mystics were so profound in their understanding. Often there was disagreement over the validity of what was being looked at but in it a way it didn't matter. The course kept coming back to the idea of divinity within. We wrote mystical poems and tried out some Loyola exercises and would reflect regularly on a quote or scriptural passage.

When we finished this we took up the book *The way of a Pilgrim* which looks at the idea of repeating the Jesus prayer. A number of additional people joined and we got up to 11/12 at times – probably about half were parishioners. This was largely enjoyed and appealed to many for its accessibility and good story telling.

We then moved on to *Pilgrim's Progress* – this proved more difficult as attendance waned. However, the study of mystics certainly helped to understand the allegory of life that the story portrays. In a way everyone meets the same challenges when undertaking the way of spiritual discovery.

At the same time DS started a second group to look at Term 1 of the Roots of Christian Mysticism. This started with around 9/10 (about half being parishioners). We are into the second term now and numbers have again fallen down to a faithful 5. However, the sessions are always fruitful and there is more interest in the meditation side of things with this group.

The study itself has been both refreshing and profound. It has focused the direction of reflection, prayer and meditation and increased the understanding of the Christian tradition. I would heartily recommend it.

DS has also been helping run some study courses set up elsewhere that have been on St John's Gospel and the *I am* statements of Jesus. DS has then provided music events for these study weekends. He has started an invitation choir which have included a number of parishioners. He has spoken with Joe and hopes to provide music for a similar event at St Mary's.

Gospel of St Mark

Clare Rider & Sarah Rae

In June/July 2021, we ran a six- week course exploring the first six chapters of the Gospel of Mark. We chose the Gospel of Mark because it was the first Gospel written and is a succinct account of Jesus' ministry. Its action packed, moving quickly from one episode to another; in fact the Greek word "euthus", often translated as "immediately", is used 41 times in this Gospel.

Taking a chapter each week, we read, digested and reflected on it. We reconvened in the Autumn for another five weeks exploring the next five chapters and have ended on something of a knife-edge with chapter 11 and Jesus' triumphal entry back into Jerusalem.

In most of the sessions, run on Wednesday evenings, we had at least fourteen of us joining and it was lovely to get to know one another better as we shared our thoughts and interpretations of what the Gospel was saying to us. Being on Zoom meant people could join the course from wherever they happened to be – one week we had someone

join from Anglesey and another member of the group joined from Nice, France, for most of the Autumn sessions.

We hope to be able to reconvene this Summer to study the remaining five chapters of the Gospel – watch this space!

Living in Love & Faith

Rev Caroline Halmshaw

In addition to the morning course, we also ran the Living in Love and Faith course on Tuesday evenings. The course has been developed by the Church of England to help us explore together the sensitive and complex questions of identity, relationships and sexuality. Its purpose is to help us become better listeners, especially when hearing from people who have a different perspective to our own.

The resources are excellent. The short films which capture personal stories enabled us to hear about people whose lives are different from our own. We recognised that we still have a lot to learn and that society has move quickly on this issue while our understandings and insights are still being developed.

Following the short film clips we met to discuss the issues raised in small groups. In total we had between 20-25 people participating. In our group there was a significant amount of consensus, which was good because it was a safe place to share ideas and experiences. What we weren't able to do, was hear from someone who disagreed with us. Together we tried to gain understanding of why people have different perspectives, but I believe we would benefit from hearing directly from those who see things differently.

Parish Quiet Day

Ann Dix

On 25 January a group of about 17 people from our church met at the House of Prayer for a Parish Quiet Day. The House of Prayer provided a lovely setting conducive to silent prayer and reflection. After coffee, we began by sitting in a wide circle in a beautiful, calm room to introduce ourselves. Joe provided an introduction to the Ignation Tradition of spiritual prayer and spoke about his personal experiences during his recent retreat. We received clear and practical guidance on how to pray and how to prepare for prayer including learning to pray with the expectation that God will speak to us. We were given a passage of scripture to read. Then each of us chose our own quiet comfortable place to pray silently following the guidance which included using our imaginations to enter the scene described in the passage, to become part of the action and fully engage our thoughts and emotions and notice our personal reactions and responses and to have a conversation with God about what was happening and ask for grace. We wrote notes about our experience but, importantly, only after the prayer had ended.

In the discussion which followed I was keen to share my experience with the group and also hear about their experiences. It was a supportive environment. The lunch break gave us a chance to relax and chat with friends. In the afternoon we read a different passage from scripture in preparation for a second period of silent prayer. I am glad to have received guidance on prayer and contemplation. It will make a real difference to my prayer life. Everyone I spoke to felt they had benefited. I am hoping that our church will be able to provide further Parish Quiet Days.

Servers

Mary Field-Smith

The small team of servers has coped magnificently with the challenges of Covid and the changes to our normal routines. It has been a pleasure to welcome some young servers who enjoy being able to participate in worship and are growing in confidence. As well as their serving duties, the team also work behind the scenes, taking it in turns on Saturdays to set up for Sunday, ensuring that everything is ready for worship the next day.

We would very much welcome some new people to join us so please get in touch if this is something that you feel you could offer.

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 link between the church and local community. The majority of the PVT work involves supporting the church's baptism ministry by making connections with our baptism families. We are also part of the church's longstanding connection with Teddington Memorial Hospital.

The work of the PVT was severely curtailed during the Covid pandemic but our support of baptism families in particular is now very much back up and running.

Baptisms

Due to Covid there were no baptisms at SMwSA from mid December 2020 until 23rd May 2021. Even when baptisms restarted, they were initially limited to one family per baptism service (pre-Covid there would usually have been two or more families). In September 2021, the number of families per service was increased to two although the number of guests was limited to 30 for each family. Nonetheless, between May - December 2021, there were 37 baptisms in the church.

So far in 2022, there have been 22 baptisms in the church with a further 22 already in the diary for later this year with regular requests coming in. This all indicates that the church's baptism ministry and the work of the PVT have picked up where we left off pre-Covid and are continuing to thrive. For each baptism, a member of the PVT contacts the family beforehand to offer them support in the lead up to the service as well as attending the baptism service to welcome the family and their guests. The feedback we receive is that families appreciate this personal connection with the church.

Work with the sick/lonely/vulnerable

As noted above, most of the work of the PVT consists of baptism related ministry but as a team, we do keep on our radar anyone who may require pastoral support due to illness or loneliness.

Teddington Memorial Hospital

We are very pleased to retain our links with Teddington Memorial Hospital through Sue Stevens, a member of the hospital's chaplaincy team, who provides regular updates on their work. Sue reports:

The Memorial Hospital Chaplaincy Visiting Team has continued to be very active in spite of Covid restrictions, including the closure of the hospital chapel. There are four team members, representing different faith backgrounds, three of whom have been able to continue supporting both patients and staff during a demanding year for the Health Service.

Community Café

Clare Rider & Sarah Rae

The café continues to open weekly on Monday afternoons at St Peter and St Paul's, on the corner of Church Road and Broad Street. It seeks to be a practical way to promote the mental health and well-being of local residents, working in partnership with NHS Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and two of our neighbouring charities, Ruils and Richmond Aid.

The café offers a welcoming space with a friendly, calm and positive atmosphere, and with many volunteers on hand to chat over coffee, tea and cake. It is a convenient venue for social prescribers to meet clients and to offer healthcare advice. There are many leaflets providing information about other events and activities in the area and, now COVID restrictions have lifted, we hope to be able to signpost these more effectively.

On Monday 4 October, we had a special 'Tea and Music' event, organised as an official opening ceremony for the café and a promotional event for Richmond's 'Full of Life Festival'. Munira Wilson MP opened the proceedings and we had over 70 people who came, all being treated to a cream tea, a chair-exercise session and quiz, whilst also enjoying live music from a jazz trio led by Alex Corlett, TMH's part-time caretaker. The jazz trio also played this Easter Monday, to the enjoyment of those who attended. Now COVID restrictions have been lifted, we hope to offer more live music sessions; have people from local organisations in to offer advice; and provide more activities, e.g. quizzes on a more regular basis.

Memory Café

Sarah Williams

We were delighted to be able to reopen the doors of the Memory Café in July 2021 after a long hiatus due to the Covid pandemic. It has taken some time to rebuild but we have welcomed back some of our former guests as well as welcoming new ones. The feedback we receive from guests is that the Café is appreciated as a friendly, informal space where people can come and enjoy a good chat, together with a cup of tea or coffee and some delicious cake. We have a light hearted quiz and, since the lifting of Covid restrictions, a singalong to some old favourites. Since January 2022, we have increased the frequency of the Café to twice per month on the first and third Tuesdays. This has been very well received by guests, most of whom attend every Café and are keen not to miss one. We continue to be well served by a dedicated group of volunteers from SMWSA, as well as other churches and the local community.

Diversity & Inclusion

Working group report

Cathy Randall

The Diversity and Inclusion Group has now been meeting regularly for just over a year, under the dedicated leadership of Chris Darling. Initially created as a response to *Ghost Ship*, the book written by Revd Azariah France-Williams about institutional racism and the Church of England, the Group has a brief to help our local church and community to respond actively to the issues of diversity, inclusion and equality with which the Church and society is currently grappling.

One of our first actions was to look at '*From Lament to Action*', the report of the Archbishops' Anti-Racism Taskforce, to see what steps the parish might take in response to this. We decided that one of the first things we should do was to try to educate and inform ourselves and the wider congregation. Our first major event was a Film and Supper Night in the church hall in October where we screened the Channel 4 programme '*The School That Tried to End Racism*' and facilitated a discussion about the issues raised. The evening was very well received, leading to some excellent discussions, and we hope to run another Film Night in the future.

We have now widened our remit to look at other kinds of diversity and inclusion issues, and members of the group were facilitators at the recent '*Living in Love and Faith*' (LLF) course run in Lent 2022. In addition, we have identified diversity-related public events across the year and have started to build awareness for these in the intercessions, pew-sheets and on the church noticeboard.

We have also been working on producing an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy document for adoption by the PCC.

We meet regularly on the last Thursday of the month and would be delighted to welcome new members. Future plans include another film night, a church outing to the theatre to celebrate Black History Month in October, and potentially a follow-up session on the questions raised by the LLF Course. This Group is still in its early days, so it is an exciting time to be part of it.

Sustainability

Working group report

Carla Maroussas

The Sustainable working group has had a very positive first year. We are now a group of 9 and aim to meet every 6 weeks.

Our initial focus was working towards an emergency declaration which was presented to the PCC early last year; its outline was to:

- Put our own houses in order with a focus on the Church buildings and their energy usage, the Churchyard and our personal and household responsibility
- Community outreach and engagement with COP26 – including our schools, local businesses & the wider community

In 2021 the group have aimed to meet every 6 weeks and events and achievements include:

- Two special Climate focused services including one on Climate Sunday
- A Supper Talk with guest speaker Helen Stephens from A Rocha - Eco Church
- Forming a Sustainability Book Club
- A COP26 education programme
- The formation of Greenfeed information on the Parish website
- And most recently we are delighted to have been awarded our Bronze award from Eco church

Our focus for 2022 will be to continue the work outlined in our Declaration and highlights include:

- Gaining Silver Award from Eco Church
- Running more regular Supper Talks
- A Sustainability Festival in September
- To continue our Greenfeeds and Book Club

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. 22 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 614 on the role. 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 (6.6%) 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, 95%. 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 web site:
<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 2021/22

1. New head teacher.

In January 2021 Mr Logan informed the governors that after 18 years at the school he would retire at the end of the summer term. We were extremely lucky to have been able to appoint Ms Helen Swain, who is an experienced and talented head teacher.

2. Response to the Covid pandemic.

The school has coped well with the upheavals caused by the Covid Pandemic. The school was open as normal since the Easter of 2021. The emphasis has been on catching

up and identifying those children requiring extra help. 153 children were supported by the national catch-up funding.

Because of the high levels of Covid in the community the “on-stage” Christmas productions were again cancelled.

3. 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 back to normal since November and throughout the year we have maintained our normal range of committee meetings.

4. 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 are among the lowest in grant funding, but when total income per pupil is considered, we are at an average level. We struggle every year to produce a balanced budget and with the recent increase in inflation and high fuel prices we now face some very difficult decisions over the next few months.

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.

Hampton Deanery Synod

Hilary Adamson

There have been 3 meetings of Deanery Synod since the last APCM

June 9th 2021 by Zoom

The Area Dean, Reverend Tim Garrett (Holy Trinity, Twickenham) led this meeting which began with brief news from around the Deanery related to the swearing in of Church Wardens, the easing of lockdown measures & National Churchyard Week.

Anne-Marie Philip explained the Deanery Synod Elections 2021 & the importance for all current members to cast their votes using the nomination papers issued via email. An update on the Common Fund was then presented by Tony Dixon (Kensington Area Finance Group) & reminding that this supports Clergy welfare, pastoral activities, management of reserves & last resort support for parishes.

There was a shared learning from the pandemic presented by Rev. Jeff Hopkin Williams, Rev. Ed Kendall & Rev. Jerry Field who highlighted that live streaming had been a massive learning curve & allowed worship to continue. Along with traditional forms of communication by telephone & email for keeping church members in touch with one another.

Creation Care in our Vision for 2030

There was then a presentation from Reverend Derek Winterburn (St. James, Hampton Hill) on the Diocesan Vision 2030 Creation Care which identified several areas of concern for London, the UK and indeed globally. The aim is to promote awareness and action to help reduce emissions by what we eat, what we wear & how we travel. This is a long-term project, making incremental changes year on year where can lead by example & also engage with the passion of young people

The Area Dean led the closing worship.

November 4th 2021. All Saints, Hampton & on Zoom

The opening worship was led by Rev. Donna Williams, who also gave an introduction to the changes since she moved to the parish of *All Saints* including the aim to be multi-generational, offering different types of worship plus live streaming. It has a Youth Pastor, but also focuses on community events plus engaging with social media & other organisations.

Other news from the Deanery was that St Michael & St George was currently worshipping at The Teddington Mission Hub

There were two Deanery Governor positions which were proposed & seconded Sarah Dyke for Archdeacon Cambridge School & Michael Wilson for St. Stephens.

It was confirmed that Deanery Synod Elections were completed in July 2021 with one vacancy for the House of Clergy & one for the House of Laity remaining for Hampton Deanery.

Tony Dixon (St. Stephen) reported that money pledged for 2021 was coming through & thanked everyone for this given the current circumstances.

Social Prescribing

The Rev. Chris Kennedy (Pioneer Minister, Activate Wellbeing & Sports Church, Teddington) opened the session by explaining the rationale of Social Prescribing whereby church communities work in partnership with local GPs & care organisations to allow those referred by their GP to access support & activities to improve health & wellbeing by using community-based activities rather than just prescribing medication.

Cathy Maker (Chief Executive of Ruils) explained that Ruils is a user led charity which supports disabled children & adults along with people with long term health conditions to live independently, be a part of the community & live life to the full. Ruils is working with local GPs to deliver Social Prescribing in Richmond.

St. Mary, Hampton. February 22nd 2022

Rev Ben Lovell of the host church led the opening worship & gave some background to the parish of St. Mary's, Hampton – reporting of particular success in the growth of the children & youth work throughout the pandemic, on Zoom.

The Area Dean announced that the Bishop of Kensington will step down this summer to lead the Centre for Cultural Witness with a new Bishop in post by January 2023.

Other Clergy updates were also noted. He highlighted an event at All Saints, Hampton on 24 March for all those involved in Funeral Services and Mental Health First Aid training in June 2022 for the Deanery with Diocesan funding for one person per Parish. Finally, there was an update from Ruils promoting 'chatty benches' on thoroughfares near churches, to get people talking. It was also noted that there has been a vacancy for a Hampton Deanery Governor outstanding since 2012 at Bishop Wand School.

National Trends in Youth

Jimmy Dale, the National Evangelism Officer at the Church of England for 6 years, explained that his role had arisen from the recognition that the church needed to do more with its young people.

He identified several issues which affect our engagement, including the lack of volunteers and the way youth culture and behaviours have changed. Mental health issues are growing and churches lack trained & paid youth workers who could focus solely on engaging the younger members of our congregations.

It was suggested that collaborative youth ministry between churches could be the way forward for growth with essential leadership from our vicars.

In response to the presentation, Rev. Garrett commented that it would be lovely to see some active collaborative ventures for children & youth work in the Deanery.

2nd A (St Mary with St Alban) Girlguiding

Kathy Gold

Rainbows

Having just been allowed to meet again for face-to-face meetings indoors at the end of 2020, we started the New Year with another lockdown.

We resumed rainbows virtually and throughout the term undertook a variety of different games and activities. We did baking, celebrated Chinese New Year, made hand scrubs for Mother's Day presents and decorated Easter trees.

We managed to meet face-to-face during the summer term and undertook most of our activities in the park. We played games, had nature hunts, went camping and made tents which created a lot of interest from passerbys!

In the autumn term, we were able to get back into the hall, start to increase our numbers and have promise ceremonies. We undertook our charity walk and raised a whopping £700 for Children in Need. A great end to 2021!

Brownies

The Brownies did not meet during the first term of 2021 but all our meetings in the summer term were held in Bushy Park.

Fortunately, good weather- and permission to use the outside tables at the Pheasantry- enabled us to enjoy a wide variety of activities. Including a treasure hunt, pebble painting and a teddy bears picnic.

In the autumn term, we moved back into the hall and worked on First Aid Skills builders, went on a night hike along the towpath, and took the brownies to see Disney's

Encanto at Kingston Oden. We also adopted four graves in the churchyard, which we cleared and then planted with violas and daffodils.

Guides

Back on zoom in January again we worked through our space related activities making planet models and earth truffles from Rolos. We had a keep fit evening and learnt how to tap dance. Cooking was popular and we made butter from cream to go with our scones. Lots of girls worked on badges at home.

During the summer we headed outside to Bushy Park for nature hunts and sports. We also met next to the hall and worked on camp skills and improved our map reading skills.

Autumn term saw us finally back in the hall but in masks, so we headed outside as much as possible. We made the most of the lifting of restrictions and went climbing at White Spider in Tolworth and to Go Ape at Chessington. We spent a day at Heyswood brushing up our outdoor cooking skills and mastering their low ropes challenge. It was great to see the flags flying again at Remembrance parade in November and we completed the term with a moonlight swim at Hampton Pool.

1st Teddington Scout Group

Beavers (6-8 years)

Martin Smith

Our 17 Beavers have enjoyed a return to face-to-face meetings. Whilst completing the Sports badge we had parents who shared experiences of competing in Iron Man competitions and cross-channel swimming. We also had our very own local Paralympian hero, Roy Smith MBE, join us to inspire young minds with what is possible for sportspeople regardless of apparent disabilities. The Beavers were also able to get a photo with his torch from the Olympic Torch Relay. We've been able to take part in District-wide Beaver events, earning their Experiment badge, Outdoor and Adventure Awards. We also explored the topic of sympathy and empathy for the plight of others in these challenging times. We finished last term with some marvellous junk modelling inventions and models of bridges, robots and windmills.

Cubs (8-10 ½ years)

Ed Wilson

As restrictions have become less strict, we have been able to run more varied activities and get out more enabling us to deliver more activities to our young people. Over the year we've had 20 young people and 6 leaders helping. We've been lucky to benefit from a number of young people aged 14 to 18 who have come to the group as young leaders and developed their leadership skills. This has not only meant that we can better support the young people we have but we've also seen the benefit to the young people. We've worked through a number of Challenge Awards throughout the year including My Personal Challenge, My Outdoor Challenge and My Adventure Challenge. This has allowed young people to develop whilst having a great time. The highlight of the year was our residential trip in which the Cubs were able to take part in abseiling, canoeing and survival activities and they loved every minute! A special thanks to everyone who has got involved to make it happen!

As Covid restrictions have eased significantly over the year we have been able to expand the programme for our 15 scouting boys and girls. As a highlight, some of our older fourteen-year-old scouts did an expedition challenge; by taking a train to Brighton, hiking 5 hours, camping overnight in the South Downs and hiking another 5 hours and returning the next day - all without adult supervision. This was that last step in earning their Chief Scout Gold awards, the highest in scouting. They did brilliantly and did not get lost (well, not that they told us!) The younger cohort learned about Bees at the Twickenham Apiary, Paddleboarded up the river to Twickenham, went climbing, ice skating, scuba diving, cooked Mexican food, learned some street dance, camped in the Surrey Hills and met their MP, we had a busy year and I must thank our amazing and lovely volunteers who have made all this possible.

Activate

Sarah Hallett

Activate has had a busy 12 months, one that has been relatively unaffected by any Covid restrictions. We have been working on the structure of our activity programme and we have organised our activities into three key areas of focus:

Activate Wellbeing Hubs

This area focuses on our continued work with the local social prescription teams and concentrates on supporting people with their wellbeing. We have plans to link the activities we are providing herewith a five day a week outreach programme that is anchored by a daily act of worship. Key activities that we have been running in this area this year and some of our plans for next year are:

Soup + Stretch: these sessions, which consist of gentle chair-based exercises followed by a soup lunch have continued to prove very popular.

Abide: we launched this half hour communion service of prayer and worship in June, and this takes place directly before *Soup + Stretch* every Thursday lunchtime.

The Wellbeing Journey course: wellbeing continues to be so important post Covid, so following on from the success of the launch of this course last year when we ran it online, we have run our first course in person at St John's Church Hampton Wick in January, with 29 people attending.

Psalms & Stretches: at the beginning of February, we started running these sessions on a Friday lunchtime. They start with prayer and reading passages from Psalms, and then move into gentle stretches and mobilisation exercises for the body, before learning a sequence of movement that is set to the section of verses. This initial pilot has been well received, and we have plans to also have a *Psalms & Stretches* session on a Sunday morning starting in September.

The Bereavement Journey: in collaboration with SMwSA we have run our first course of the Bereavement Journey, which has been designed to help people to work through the most common aspects of grief. We had over 20 people attend and following excellent feedback, we will be running another in the coming months. It is our hope that we can also follow on from this course, by running a bi-weekly Bereavement Café, to support those who are affected by the loss of someone close.

Movement & Mindfulness: we have been able to bring a lay pioneer into our team who has trained in dance movement therapy. She has been working very closely with the Social Prescribing team and has developed a series of exercises for people who feel unable to engage with more energetic or physically demanding exercise. The exercises

in the Movement & Mindfulness sessions, help people to connect with themselves and with others and this completely complements the overall work we are doing on wellbeing.

Activate Sporty Church

This is Activate's Sunday provision and we are on track to launch two new worshipping communities that will come together on a Sunday:

Active! Church: this is our first launch in this area. It is an afternoon church service focussed on families, activity, and worship and has been in development for the last few months. We are launching it on Sunday May 15th 2022, to coincide with Sports Chaplaincy UK's fifth National Sports Sunday, and it will run every Sunday at St Mark's Church in Teddington at 4pm. We feel this is a time that does not compete with current sporting provision in the area (such as football and rugby) and allows the whole family to engage in an act of worship as well as getting involved in fun inclusive activities.

Fit Church: our second launch in this area and this will consist of a high intensity interval training session (HIIT) lead by a Christian personal trainer, followed by an act of worship. Then straight after this, there will be a Psalms and Stretches session. Plans are to launch this in September at St Peter and St Paul Church.

Activate Youth

This area of our programme focusses specifically on young people. It is still very much in development, but we have been lucky enough to recruit a youth support worker on a part time basis. He has over 20 years teaching experience and will be helping us to shape our school outreach and developing our youth provision.

Mindful Ninja: these sessions are currently being delivered to children in the final years of primary school. They are a blend of martial arts designed specifically for children, to help them build their self-confidence and enhance their mental and physical wellbeing.

Summer Camp & Food Deliveries: during the summer holidays 2021 we ran a few summer camp days at St Mark's Church for children and supported their families with weekly food delivery parcels. This was very well received, and we have plans to do the same during the summer of 2022.

Football Tournament: in December we ran a very successful 5-a-side football tournament for children. We have future plans to run these 5-a-side tournaments engaging local churches in friendly competition.

Streetdance: we have plans to launch a Streetdance community during this summer, that primarily engages young women and creates a community that can reach out through social media. Aiming to collaborate with St Michael's Fulwell Youth Team, we hope to reach unchurched young people to engage them in activity and church, possibly leading some into Active! Church.

Youth Wellbeing Café – in June we are hoping to launch this wellbeing café for young people. It will be a place where they can come to engage with other people their age and enjoy music and activities.

Future Plans for Activate

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 are reintroduced in the Autumn/Winter months. As a deanery mission project, we will

continue to work with local churches, building relationships and collaboration, which we hope will lead to the recruitment of volunteers to help us to run our activities and spread the word about our project.

We will 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

The Alma Group has continued to meet from time to time and we have tried to keep up the contact with our link church in Pemba through Whats App with Father Bulaki.

We provided the Wednesday morning prayer service for Alma in June, which was led by Caroline Halmshaw and was live streamed on You tube.

Bridget Le Huray accompanied me to the annual Alma Sunday Service at St Paul's cathedral in July. This service was led by Bishop Rob as usual and in his sermon, he was in conversation with Rev Ben Lovell, the vicar of St Marys Hampton, which is linked to Mandimba in the diocese of Niassa.

In November we had a zoom meeting with Bishop Carlos Matsinha, who spoke mainly about the structure of his diocese and for the training and leadership groups which were taking place.

In January Mozambique was again hit by a powerful tropical storm Ana, some of the infrastructure that had been rebuilt after Cyclone Idai in 2019 was destroyed again.

In February we heard via the International Organization for Migration that 2,995 people had fled to Pemba from Melucco district - and the majority of these are children.....

The work on the new school at Chimoio was seriously disrupted by Covid but work has now resumed and I understand that they are about to finish all the walls.

We had hoped for a visit this year from Bishop Manuel if he comes to the Lambeth Conference but I understand that due to Covid, the bishops will not be visiting their link parishes.

Fairtrade

Susan Jacobs

For the second year running Covid restrictions seriously curtailed any opportunities for holding after-church *Traidcraft* stalls so not much fairtrade business was possible. However, with some ingenuity a good number of "Real Easter Eggs" and "Real Advent Calendars" were sold at Easter and Christmas 2021 respectively.

As lockdown restrictions were lifted and after church coffee restarted there was one sale in the Hall, on Stir-up Sunday. A few regular customers contacted me privately during the year and I was able to supply items like tea, coffee, loo paper, biscuits, chocolates, dried fruit, sugar, etc, from my stock of *Traidcraft* goods. Others resorted to ordering from *Traidcraft* 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.

First Wednesday Club

Susan Jacobs

The First Wednesday Discussion Group continued to meet during 2021 on the first Wednesday of most months. Covid restrictions meant that we gathered together via Zoom on an array of laptops, i-pads and mobile phones and became familiar with remarks such as “you need to unmute”, “please can someone message me the password”, “I can’t see you”, “try gallery view”. By the autumn some people restarted meeting in person with others logging on via Zoom, and while this enabled everyone to be “present” in some form, it wasn’t entirely satisfactory as it did not really enable proper discussions to take place. The highest number of attendees (in one form or another) was 17, the lowest was 8, with an average of 12. At least 25 people attended at least once.

In pre-Covid times the meetings took place in the Mina Hogan room at lunchtime. People brought their own sandwiches, while tea and coffee were provided, and a friendly atmosphere generated interesting and honest discussions on a variety of sometimes controversial subjects. The selected topic is always announced in advance via the parish website diary, newsletter, e-bulletin and pew sheet and everyone is encouraged to bring a friend with them who has not necessarily or hitherto been connected with St Mary’s. It would be nice to think that the next report, for the 2023 APM, will tell of Zoom being a thing of the past and “in person” meetings being the norm once again.

The topics discussed in 2021 were as follows:

January	<i>Morality in Public Life</i>
February	<i>How can we rebuild Resilience for ourselves and especially for our children, post-pandemic?</i>
May	<i>Coming Home: Report of the Archbishops on the Housing Crisis</i>
June	<i>The New Normal: How shall we be adapting to Covid?</i>
July	<i>How useful are Public Enquiries?</i>
September	<i>Godparenthood</i>
October	<i>Joe’s report with photos of his Sabbatical on Iona</i>
November	<i>Population: Control? (Referencing the Cop26 meeting in Glasgow).</i>

Handbells

Sheila Insley

For the first four months of the year the handbell team continued to keep in touch with each other via weekly Zoom chats and quizzes together with trying to use a tower bell website to produce simple tunes. Then on May 17th we all made our first return to the Mina Hogan Room, initially standing spaced out at music stands.

In September we restarted using tables and cushions for the bells which enabled us to practice more complex music. We were pleased to be able to ring carols at Twickenham Baptist Church, Hampton Townswomen’s Guild and Teddington Memory Cafe in December before we were forced to abandon a care home booking by the new omicron variant. However, we did pick up a booking for Christmas 2022 that we couldn’t fit into our diaries at short notice.

The handbell team is once again seeking new members who can read music and have a desire to learn a skill that makes music making fun for all. We need extra strength in numbers to give us more flexibility when going out to perform. We are grateful for the encouragement and expertise of our Musical Director, Grant O'Sullivan, as we once again build up a repertoire to take out to perform. We hope and trust that the coming year will be one in which we can entertain people of all ages and conditions in the local community.

We continue to be grateful to St Mary's for the use of the bells and the safe space in the Parish Hall for practice and storage.

Parish Pub Lunch

Trish Raffetto

Government advice to remain vigilant about the Covid situation during 2021 meant that many of the Parish Coffee/Lunch group were cautious about gathering in person. As a result, we continued to meet every week via zoom. However, as the year progressed, we gradually added in coffee and lunch meet-ups in person for those who felt comfortable about venturing outside. For the most part these in-person gatherings were held either at The Anglers or The Kings Head. During the summer months we enjoyed their garden spaces but, during the colder months, we gathered in their more sheltered areas dressed warmly against the elements and kept cosy by their welcome electric heaters!

Offering either a zoom or an in-person gathering once a week accommodated as many as possible and provided an enjoyable lifeline for many in our group who were still somewhat isolated. It was a good way for us all to stay in touch and support each other. We were also delighted to welcome some newcomers during the year.

The function of this group is purely social and provides an opportunity to spend time together in a relaxed setting. All are welcome and we look forward to continuing this fellowship in 2022.

Plain & Pearl

Suzanne Strachan

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 at St Mary's Parish Hall Teddington. When in 2021 Covid government regulations restricted social gatherings, we continued holding our meeting virtually via Zoom technology.

2021 marked our 10th year anniversary of Plain and Pearl. To celebrate the event, we held a dinner party on the terrace of St Mary's Parish Hall where everyone brought a plate of food.

During our regular meetings we had a number of interesting activities including socks knit-alongs, making felted flowers & wreath making. Additionally, we supported a local textile art student in his final year at Central Saint Martin's university of arts London by knitting a unique tennis outfit inspired by Arthur Ashe, a tennis champion of the 70s.

As in previous years we raised more than £800 for charity by selling our makes at the parish hall Xmas bazaar and our online Xmas Etsy shop. We have also added 10 new members to the group.

For the coming year, we plan to continue with our regular meetings and hold variety of craft activities. We maintain our schedule of events on our website, as well as blog about our activities among many other things.

Anyone interested in joining, please email: plainandpearl@gmail.com or contact us via the website

Traherne Group

Gerry Gregory

We have continued our study of the poems and prose of Thomas Traherne as well as those of other writers (especially near contemporaries) on church and religious themes. We have also read some Old English and Middle English items on similar themes. In addition to acknowledging very inspirational Traherne passages - especially those celebrating the beauty of the natural world, particularly as viewed in childhood - we have been struck by particular *patterns* in the work. Examples include frequently-encountered *difficult* sections in otherwise lucid items; recurring *FORM* patterns in his work - and dominant *inspirational* passages. In reading the work we have been struck particularly by the extent of *change* in the English language that has occurred over four centuries.

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.

Two courses were run during this year, Strengthening Families, and strengthening Communities, working with a group of 8 parents at the inner London Centre. These courses were aimed at families with children aged between 11 – 16 years old who have found dealing with pandemic restrictions particularly difficult.

During this time Welcare has launched the 2021 Families in Crisis Appeal. This year so many families have faced daunting challenges with soaring inflation across basic essentials, which looks to increase during the coming year.

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.

Last year *The Anglers* Carol Singing was cancelled last moment due to Covid restrictions. However, fortunately this year we were able to hold this popular event, albeit outside, as *The Anglers* have extended their seating arrangements to allow for social distancing, etc.

For those who were unable to attend this, the Church Choir sang and recorded some popular carols in church, with a talk by Anna Khan the CEO of Welcare which was put onto YouTube, so that people could sing along and donate to Welcare.

The work of Welcare will become more important than ever as refugees from so many places increase.

The Parish Plod Doggerel

By
Susan Jacobs

By Mary's original thought
Some thirty, game people were caught
By the bug to go monthly plodding.
Now we've tramped the signed sections
Despite confusing directions,
And completed our Capital's ring



In a clockwise rotation,
Via many a station,
From Wimbledon Common to Penge,
We've passed Streatham and Becton,
Greenford and Kenton,
Two palaces, Brent and Crouch End.

We've crossed rivers and parks,
Heard sirens and larks,
Climbed steps up to view-points galore;
In snow, rain, wind and sun,
Had a good deal of fun,
Leaving most of us hungry for more.



The Ring's now complete –
A remarkable feat –
So, thanks to our guides for each trip,
To the Matthews, the Raes,
The Field-Smiths, come, give praise,
And sing loudly "Hooray, and hip, hip".

