

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Review of Year to 31
December 2023



17 MARCH 2024

ST MARY WITH ST ALBAN
TEDDINGTON



StMARY *with* StALBAN
PARISH CHURCH *of* TEDDINGTON

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ELECTORAL ROLL

Jennifer Paynter –Church Electoral Roll Officer

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| Names added | 9 |
| Names removed | 6 |
| Net loss/gain | 3 |
| Total number on the revised roll | 367 |

Of the 367 names on the Roll, 123 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 4 people who have died and 2 who have moved away.

VICAR'S REPORT

As I approach this report, I seek ways to avoid referring to my own arrival as a significant event, so will instead look to what greeted my arrival in September.

Interregna (vacancies) are significant seasons in the life of any parish because they combine several corporate 'emotions': the loss of one (or several in this case), the anticipation of another and perhaps most importantly, 'who are we'? They are therefore times of potential creativity, lament mixed with hope, and a real sense that God always calls us forward into ministry while honouring the past that caused our arrival at this point.

We are a Christian organisation so I begin in thanks for the considerable blessing of our associate clergy who played such a huge role in maintaining the spiritual well-being of the parish. I record my deep gratitude to my beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, Mary Hawes, Rosamund McDowell, Caroline Halmshaw, +Martin, John Shepherd and David Bell who maintained a rare constancy throughout the interregnum, each bringing the gift of their own unique style and ministry. I must also pay tribute to the 'vacancy wardens', Carla Maroussas and Robin Field-Smith for overseeing the vacancy with the clear care and capability that was manifest to me upon my arrival (and to Robin's successor Adam for agreeing to the role without meeting the new bloke).

If these folk are the 'visible' presence of the Christian ministry of the parish, they are not the sum of the parts and I acknowledge with heartfelt thanks all those among you who simply 'kept going' in that calling upon us all which is God's. I arrived at a parish in very good health, where things did not fall in to the near inevitable disrepair that is often seen in interregna, where the flock was fed and nurtured in the many ways that we all seek sustenance. It is also worthy of note that the vacancy was, unusually, a time when a lay ministry was evolved into an ordained ministry and so it is that you bid farewell to Sarah Williams upon the commencement of her diaconate. That ministry thrived during the time of the vacancy is testimony to all of you who read this and so many more.

Then I pitched up! The warmth and love experienced by my family from you has been, frankly, overwhelming and by no means a 'given' for clergy families. For taking Joanna, Jess and Bekah into your heart, thank you. It means more to us than we can ever adequately express and tells me all I needed to know about who the people of the Parish of Teddington truly are.

I have existed among you for one quarter of one short year and within that time I have borne witness to the central place that our parish has in the life of our community. This centrality is a ‘built’ phenomenon and it would be right for me to acknowledge the ministry of my predecessor Joe Moffatt whose fine legacy I am now enjoying, and he will be a hard act to follow. With renewed relationships with groups including the RNLI, the Rotary Club, Teddington Society, the Royal British Legion, the uniformed youth organisations and several local schools (among others) I hope to do justice to Joe’s work. This ‘centrality’ was further demonstrated in the ‘peak’ services as we enjoyed Christmas – welcoming numbers of friends to our acts of worship that were simply staggering. We are a parish richly blessed by Our Lord.

I would be remiss to not mention the Operations Team who do vital work to sustain what we often only witness in snippets. It has been a genuine pleasure to begin walking alongside Suzanne, Nadia, Emma, Alex and Leonelle who go well above and considerably beyond the ‘hourly rate’ in the care of me in my personal ministry and us as a large parish institution – and I thank them for their own personal ministry (even if they would not use those terms of their own work among us).

So, to the future. I arrived to a remarkably well managed *Building Anew* project which, having reflected long and hard about it for months, feels like a real symbol of the vitality of our parish for future years. I am convinced of the rightness of it and that we must respond to God’s calling upon our generation to invest in those who seek us now and those who will follow. Ours is a noble past, and it can be used to bless the future. Beyond the bricks and mortar, the development of the church is indicative of the need that emerges for each generation of vicar to revitalise and feed existing ministries, culture new ones where there is God’s calling, to honour the past as we reflect it trajectory into our own future. I sought to join you based on a paper document, but it is in living among you and praising the Lord Jesus Christ with you that convinces me that I am in the right place at the perfect time, and for that I give eternal thanks to God.

Deo Gratias!

2023 Proceedings of the PCC

Katherine Matthews

There have been 24 members on the PCC who have committed to 6 PCC meetings over the last 12 months. We have continued to offer the option to join meetings via Zoom.

The first meeting, held on 11 May, opened with the PCC approving the appointment of the Secretary, Treasurer and the chairs of the various working groups. This meeting marked the final one for Rev Caroline Halmshaw, who was leaving the parish to become vicar of St Paul’s, Grove Park. She reflected on the people she had met and the support she had received as she started and completed her training, worked as a deacon at St Mary’s during her 1st year following ordination and was then offered the role of Associate Vicar by Rev Joe Moffatt.

The PCC ratified the church safeguarding policy following a presentation by Mary Field-Smith and approved the proposal that a faculty be sought for the loan of 2 Jerusalem lamps to St John the Baptist, Holland Park.

Steve Randall, chair of the *Building Anew* Governance Group, explained that, following the receipt of planning permission, the focus had moved towards the fund-raising strategy and assessing the research required to move forward with grant applications. The fundraising campaign was to be launched at

special Sunday services on 23 July at which the Archdeacon of Middlesex, Rev Richard Frank would be in attendance.

Carla Maroussas, churchwarden, updated the PCC on plans for the installation & collation service for our new vicar, Rev David Cloake.

This meeting also marked the final meeting for Robin Field-Smith in his capacity as churchwarden. The PCC was unanimous in offering their heartfelt appreciation and thanks to Robin for his dedication and hard work in this role over the past 5 years.

The second meeting in July opened with reflections from Rev Mary Hawes, followed by a further update on the church services to launch the fund-raising campaign for *Building Anew* from Steve Randall.

The quinquennial report (whereby the church building is inspected by a suitably experienced and qualified professional) had revealed only 1 matter of urgency to be resolved alongside a list of other tasks requiring work at different timescales ranging from within 12 months to within the next 5 years and beyond. The PCC approved the formation of an estate sub-committee, chaired by Nick Fenton, which will oversee all aspects of the maintenance and upkeep of the church building and churchyard.

The PCC approved the Common Fund offer for 2024.

Carla Maroussas expanded on further plans for the induction of our new vicar and the PCC discussed how it could express its appreciation and thanks to Rev Mary Hawes on behalf of the whole church community in recognition of the outstanding support she had offered to the church during the interregnum.

The meeting held on 21 September was the 1st meeting to be chaired Rev David Cloake following his induction earlier in the month. Following the PCC approval of the co-option of Robin Field-Smith to the PCC, the vicar offered his reflections on the 1st few days in his new role from the warm and generous welcome at the installation & collation service to the work carried out on repairs and decoration of the vicarage and he expressed his thanks to the PCC for accepting him as he takes on the ministry of our church.

Mary Field-Smith, safeguarding officer, informed the PCC that the church has now reached level 3 of the Diocesan safeguarding dashboard in its attempts to promote a safer church. This is testament to the priority given to safeguarding at St Mary's and the diligence shown by Mary and the safeguarding team in their aim to see the church achieve the highest possible standards in this important area. Level 3 means that the church no longer needs to complete a self-audit. The PCC also approved the list of non-church activities and the policy on the church use of social media.

The main news on *Building Anew* was confirmation that the PCC had given its full approval to the proposal from the governance group to apply to the DAC for the faculty to allow building work to commence. It is hoped that the faculty will be granted shortly. Funds donated since the launch service had been encouraging totalling £37,000 excluding gift aid.

The PCC approved the lone working policy and Carla Maroussas was elected as vice-chair following the vicar's induction which meant that he now automatically took over as chair of the PCC.

The 4th meeting in November opened with the vicar's reflections encouraging the PCC to consider what the PCC represents and what it hopes to achieve.

Mary Field-Smith was pleased to report that we had achieved 96% progress at Level 3 of the safeguarding action summary – something which is rarely achieved.

Steven Randall reported that following a direct appeal to the congregation, £130,000 has now been raised in either individual donations or via special events and sponsored activities for *Building Anew*. The PCC approved the proposal that Thomas Ford & Partners be engaged as the architect for the next stages of the project.

The vicar was pleased to note the increasing use of ChurchSuite by the PCC and members of the congregation. ChurchSuite use is proving effective for certain communications, setting rotas, devising contact lists, etc and he is keen to increase its usage since this will facilitate compliance with GDPR regulations.

It was announced that Sarah Rae would be retiring from her role as church accountant to allow her more time to dedicate to her ordination training, including taking on the role of sub-deacon at Sunday services. The PCC was unanimous in offering its immense appreciation and thanks to Sarah for her hard work and dedication in the role over several years.

The first meeting of 2024 took place on 18 January when Steve Randall reported that donations to *Building Anew* over Christmas had been very encouraging with the total given so far now amounting to over £170,000. Several other fund-raising events are in the pipeline and 2 grant applications had been submitted.

The vicar announced that one of his priorities during 2024 will be to review and improve our procedures to ensure compliance with GDPR regulations particularly regarding the work carried out by volunteers and the amount of information they hold on computers and other devices. He acknowledged that many of us now use ChurchSuite for communication and establishing rotas but we will be asked to conduct GDPR audits and delve more deeply into what information we are storing whether manually or electronically and take steps to delete or destroy unnecessary details. Examples are email addresses, telephone numbers, home addresses and photographs.

The vicar is hoping to appoint a GDPR coordinator to oversee the ongoing task of ensuring compliance.

The final meeting took place on 5 March. Jo O'Hagan, chair of the Hall committee updated the PCC on recent improvements to the hall including the installation of a defibrillator and Robin Field-Smith set out the proposals for the "*Love Your Burial Ground*" events in June.

Over £425,000 is now available from church funds and donations for *Building Anew* meaning that we have accumulated over 34% of the total required.

The PCC approved the 2023 Financial Statements & Annual Report.

Fabric

Building Anew

Steve Randall

Building Anew is the project to add vital new facilities to our historic parish church to make it accessible and truly welcoming to everyone in our community. These consist of accessible toilet and baby changing facilities, a kitchenette to serve drinks and simple refreshments, and a multi-purpose room for Children's Church, concerts, school visits, meetings and other community activities, with a new step-free entrance from the churchyard.

Having been granted planning permission for our proposed scheme by Richmond Council in December 2022, the project team's focus in 2023 was the launch of a fundraising campaign, the submission of an application to the Diocese of London for a faculty to undertake the work needed and the appointment of an architect and lead consultant team for the detailed design and construction phase.

After several months careful planning, the fundraising campaign was launched on 23 July. We were delighted to welcome the Venerable Richard Frank, Archdeacon of Middlesex, for the occasion. He delivered an inspiring sermon on the vital role the church building plays in our community and why adding these facilities is so important for the future.

The fundraising appeal is for £1 million. This is the amount needed to bridge the gap between the £1.25 million total cost of the project, which is based on the detailed cost estimates for the approved scheme provided by our Quantity Surveyor plus suitable contingencies, less £250,000 previously donated for the project in a legacy.

The fundraising campaign has been structured into three elements – donations from the congregation and local community (including events and other activities), grant applications and sponsorship from local businesses. The initial focus was on the first of these elements, as many trusts offering grants for this type of project require a significant proportion of the funds to have been raised from the community before they will accept applications.

By the end of 2023, the total funds accumulated had surpassed £420,000. The project team has been bowled over by the generosity of so many people and would like to take this opportunity to express its sincere gratitude to everyone who has donated or organised an event, or secured sponsorship, or given up their time to support the appeal in another way.

While this figure is extremely impressive and means that over a third of the total funds needed have been raised, there is clearly still a long way to go. The fundraising campaign will therefore be the main priority for the project in 2024. We are currently looking for somebody willing to lead and drive this campaign over the next 12 months – if you would be interested in this role, please contact the parish office.

There are already many fundraising activities in the pipeline for the coming year and we look forward to everyone's continuing support and generosity to help raise the rest of the money needed as quickly as possible. The first grant applications were submitted in December 2023 and many more will be submitted during 2024. The fundraising team will also begin approaching local businesses in 2024 to ask for their support.

In parallel, in September 2023 the team began the process of applying to the Diocese of London for a faculty to undertake the work. This is currently proceeding through its various stages and we expect to receive the necessary faculty in the spring of 2024.

Also, the church's Quintennial Inspection architect (Thomas Ford & Partners) was appointed late in 2023 to prepare the detailed design and oversee the construction phase of the project. The lead consultants (structural engineer, building services engineer and quantity surveyor) used for the concept design work were also re-appointed to work with the architect on this next phase. The detailed design work commenced at the beginning of 2024 and is expected to be completed in the spring. Following this, the project team will prepare and then undertake a tender process for appointing a main contractor. The aim is to begin construction in 2025.

Enormous thanks are once again due to everyone involved in the Project Team and Governance Group for the immense amount of time and work they have put in during the past year, especially to John Ramsay, the Project Manager. Without their commitment, expertise and incredible stamina, none of this would have been possible. In addition, on behalf of the Governance Group, I would like to thank the Churchwardens, PCC and congregation for their guidance and support.

The Project Team is excited to be moving forwards with the next contribution to the 800-year history of our church, which has been added to every century. It is now our generation's responsibility to ensure the building is fit-for-purpose today and into the future. The *Building Anew* project will be transformational for our church, not just for the vital facilities it will enable us to provide, but also in the way it will enable everyone in our community to connect with one another.

For more information on the proposed scheme and fundraising campaign, please visit the 'Building Project' pages on the parish website - www.teddingtonparish.org.

Church building & churchyard

Nick Fenton & Adam Woods

The church, as the Body of Christ of those living in and visiting Teddington, is centred around both a building and churchyard located in the heart of Teddington.

A much-valued feature is that the church remains open every day, welcoming people of all faiths and none to come in to pray, light a candle, sit, or enjoy its wonderful features. To enable this to happen, we are indebted to three groups of volunteers:

- The "Holy Bunch of Keys" - those who, in conjunction with the vicar, provide a rota to open and close the church each day and keep an eye out for any issues, as well as ensuring the votive candle stand is well stocked;
- The Holy Dusters, led by Ursula Midgley and Christine Casemore, continue to clean and care for the church on Thursday mornings (but who will welcome some new members); and
- The Church Maintenance group, run by Nick Fenton as a deputy warden, which has a rota to check the building every month. Minor faults are either dealt with by members of the group themselves or reported for professional advice or attention.

We also depend on the commitment and devotion of our server team, the members of which ensure the church is set up for services and that all necessary hangings, vestments, vessels and provisions are present and correct.

To all these contributing their talents in God's service we say a big thank you!

We continue to take care to minimise our energy use and costs. Lighting levels during the day are kept to low levels compatible with church usage but our principal cost is gas for the central heating boiler. To help conserve energy and reduce our CO2 footprint, when the church is used formally the set temperature is a modest 15C whilst outside these times, the heating is set to a about 7 C. A new programmable thermostat has been fitted which is more intuitive and should help ensure that these settings are maintained. . We will continue to rely on our elderly but dependable gas boiler for at least one more winter.

In March 2023, we received our Quinquennial Inspection Report from our Inspecting Architect, Thomas Ford and Partners.

The report classifies its recommendations as:

- Urgent requiring immediate attention;
- Requires attention within the next 12 months;
- Requires attention within the next 12-24 months;
- Requires attention within the quinquennial period; and
- Desirable improvements with no timescale; and
- Routine maintenance.

The only urgent recommendation was for an Electrical Test to be carried out. This was undertaken in November 2023 and advised that the outside power socket adjoining the vestry should be replaced as it was not water tight. A new socket was fitted in January this year.

The lower priority recommendations are predominantly associated with external decoration, particularly rain water goods, localised pointing, including gully kerbs, and checks on gutters and gulleys. It is recommended that a works programme with an appropriate budget should be initiated which will cover all the items recommended for completion within 12-24 months of receipt of the report.

Hundreds of people use the footpath through the churchyard everyday as an alternative to the narrow footway alongside the busy Ferry Road. Many comment favourably on the appearance of the churchyard, especially in the spring when there is an abundance of crocuses in flower. We are fortunate to have a good relationship with Richmond Council who maintain the fences and walls, cut the grass and remove vegetative waste. The main effort to maintain, develop and enhance our graveyard is down to two groups:

- The Holy Gardeners, who meet regularly twice a month, led by Tony Swan and Sally Stones, and some of whom bring their green fingers to bear more often.
- The Adopt A Grave volunteers, now led by Alex Ruffer, who are progressively making the graves more attractive by weeding and planting them with appropriate flowers and bulbs.

The Sensory Area, created in 2022, has matured and, with its adjoining seating, is appreciated by the many people who pass through or pause in the churchyard. During the year the churchyard continues to

be used for outdoor services, social events and school visits, as well as marking the annual *Love your Burial Ground* week.

During the year we received a generous annual financial bequest from a local family for the purposes of enhancing the churchyard. It has already been put to good use with the purchase of a large quantity of bulbs which will significantly add to the attractiveness of the churchyard during the spring and early summer.

On the basis of the Nov 2019 Access Audit Report and follow up work done as part of the 2022 Parish Visitation, we reviewed with Chris Darling the recommendations and dependencies for the Church Building in the light of the Building Anew programme and prioritised them for attention. We identified some urgent areas including those where there are "management" and maintenance related actions to improve disability access to the Church. An example is the path from Twickenham Road to the Church which is steep and at a gradient which exceeds recommended guidance. In the short term, we have asked the openers to check the condition of the surface each morning and, if slippery, put out grit and/or put in place a warning cone surmounted with a warning sign. As the footpath is the responsibility of the Council, we have begun discussions with them about mitigation measures

In addition, the regular monthly maintenance checks, done by our much-appreciated volunteer inspectors, help us ensure that more specific health and safety and repair issues related to the Church Building are identified early, so that remedial actions can be taken.

Parish Hall

Jo O'Hagan

The Hall Committee has met three times over the past year. These meetings ensure that any matters of interest or concern identified in the day to day running of the hall can be addressed in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Since the last APCM, the main hall lighting system has been upgraded and, we trust has proved a success with regular users, as well as helping to lower our carbon footprint with more eco-friendly LED lighting. Improvements have also been made to the parking area beside the hall, with allocated parking spaces marked out to allow easier and safer access to the fire exit on the side of the main hall.

The heating system has also been upgraded in part, to give greater control over the heating in both the Mina Hogan Room and the office. Further work is planned to add thermostats to all radiators to help keep heating costs in check whilst maintaining a reasonable ambient temperature throughout the building.

Hall bookings have been strong in the past year with an increase in the number of parties booked on an ad hoc basis. Thankfully most of our regular users are returning to pre-pandemic levels of attendance and so our annual income is still very healthy.

Thanks to contributions from the uniformed organisations and some other regular hirers, we have been able to arrange the fitting of a defibrillator in the entrance lobby. I am assured that the instructions are easy to follow should it prove necessary. We also have access to an on-line training link.

My thanks, as always, go to the rest of the committee, Terry Smith, Fred Squire, Nick Fenton, Liz Leydon and Will Powell and particularly to Suzanne Parker, Nadia Prince and Alex Corlett for taking such good care of the running and maintenance of the whole building on a day-to-day basis.

Recording St Mary's

Sue Stevens

Regrettably It has not been possible to complete the report this year as we are still waiting for final versions of the Textiles and Metalwork sections. Inserting the photographs, of which there are many, into the text has proved to be a detailed and time-consuming job, and one or two extra pieces of information have come to light.

However, progress has been made on finding a home for the seven Jerusalem lamps: they are now with the St. John the Baptist Church, Holland Park. Likewise, the Oberammergau crucifix, discovered at the back of the altar, and for which we have no appropriate home, is now on permanent display at the Roman Catholic Chapel at Pinner.

Robin has made arrangements with a local printer, so as soon as the ends are tidied up the document can be printed. We continue to be grateful to the Arts Society Richmond for their support, particularly Richard and Jenny Lebus.

Communications

Suzanne Parker

Comms continues to be increasingly important in promoting the Church's mission. Over the last 12 months we have:

- expanded our use of (GDPR compliant) ChurchSuite, by way of number of users and modules added. Fr David, upon his arrival, successfully integrated ChurchSuite with our website – this has joyfully streamlined much of the previous multiple calendar sharing/updating, made promoting events and signing-up to them easier, and offered another quick online payment option. Fr David is also personally using ChurchSuite to directly keep in touch with congregation-wide emails.
- updated the website weekly, with rotating news stories, new photos and other features, keeping it dynamic and current, plus Fr David adds a message to the landing page regularly.
- sent out an e-bulletin twice a month (via Mailchimp) to over 775 subscribers – this is a productive, visual route for us to share all that is going on in the parish, and it enjoys a committed, loyal readership which is double that of the industry standard.
- colour printed our monthly Parish Newsletter, which is edited, bundled and delivered by a tribe of wonderful volunteers, carrying our news to all 5,000 letterboxes within the parish. Additional flyers are included sometimes to further include items of interest to the readership.
- have pumped up our Socials. With Fr David posting regularly, he has revived our Facebook and Instagram pages. Also, thanks to the Livestreaming of Sunday's 10am service, as well as other special services throughout the year, our YouTube channel is growing; for example, our December '23 stats showed 9 new subscribers, 1,273 total views and 14.3K minutes watched.
- produced posters for all manner of existing regular events, as well as one-offs, ensuring lively, colourful and full noticeboards in church, the parish hall and down at the Peter & Paul Centre.

Lastly, we have embraced QR codes here there and everywhere, they have proved to be a concise, reliable and swift route to specific, as well as plentiful amounts of, information, a means of taking payment, and for booking onto events. They are brilliant.

Worship & Nurture

Safeguarding

Mary Field-Smith

Safeguarding continues to play an important part in the life of the Church and is always on the Agenda at every PCC, recognising that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. It is gratifying that our volunteers acknowledge the need for safeguarding and undertake training willingly, and I thank you all for that. We have many activities involving children and vulnerable adults, with wonderful leaders who accept that safeguarding is also part of their role.

The Diocese has encouraged all parishes to make use of The Parish Safeguarding Dashboard to record all Parish safeguarding requirements and this is a valuable (if rather time consuming!) tool. As we have now progressed to level three, it means that we no longer have to undertake an annual self-audit as the Dashboard continually monitors our activity.

The next stage is participation in the new Safeguarding Hub; this tool keeps track of all our volunteers via named roles and requires Safeguarding and DBS certificates to be recorded. Although again this needs time to be spent on data entry initially, it will be a valuable resource as a central record for the Parish, and will become easier to manage going forward as it will automatically trigger renewal reminders. This will help Kay Cassidy, our Lead Recruiter, who looks after all DBS checks and I thank her for her support in this role. I hope to get Stage 1 completed in the next few months.

The Deanery Safeguarding Network has had some useful meetings to allow local Church Safeguarding Officers to acquire and share knowledge - our Deanery Safeguarding Adviser values its role and is encouraging other Deaneries to form similar networks.

We have had no major safeguarding concerns raised during the year but we are not complacent and I am very grateful that volunteers are happy to share concerns with me. Please continue to do that and I thank you all for your vigilance - this is the way we make our Church a safe place for all.

Children's Ministry

Ruth Chaperlin

Children's activities have continued steadily and successfully over the last twelve months. We have welcomed Fr David, our new vicar, during this time and look forward to ways in which to develop our children's ministry with him over the coming months and years.

Our main, regular children's activities are still Church Mice (our mid-week service for pre-school aged children), the 9am family service on Sundays, followed by Coffee and Craft in the Parish Hall, and the children's group during the 10am service on Sundays.

The 9am service on Sunday mornings remains very popular with families with young children, offering all-age worship for families in a relaxed and inclusive service. The clergy do a wonderful job leading these services, and welcoming children and parents alike. Many of those attending this service regularly go across to the Parish Hall afterwards for Coffee and Craft, and this is a highly successful and much-appreciated feature of our fellowship on a Sunday morning. A big thank you to a small but faithful group of volunteers who turn up bright and early on a Sunday morning to set up the hall, get the coffee on and serve tea and coffee to an appreciative group of parents. During the last year, it has increasingly fallen

to just one volunteer each week to set up and lead this session. Various attempts to recruit more volunteers have proved slow and difficult and it would be great to have more people sharing the load on this really valued activity. Thank you to Robin Field-Smith for his valiant efforts in helping to recruit volunteers from among the 9am parents. Anyone wishing to join this rota as a way of connecting more with the 9am congregation would be very welcome. A very special thank you also to Sidonie Kennan for her remarkable creativity and dedication to providing the children with wonderful craft activities each week.

During the 10am service on Sundays, we continue to offer a Children's Church group in the Mina Hogan Room. Although numbers of children attending remain relatively low, we have a core group of around 10 children who attend either on a regular or an occasional basis. On an average Sunday, we usually have around 6 children in the group. As this time last year, regular leaders for this group comprise just me and Sophie Edginton, with clergy leading occasionally and parents and others supporting, as necessary. Overall, numbers of school-age children at the 10am service remain low. However, those that do attend are committed members of the children's group and participate enthusiastically each week, as we explore the Scriptures with stories, discussion, games and craft.

I would like once again to record my heartfelt thanks to Sophie Edginton who has been a driving force in the success of Children's Church over the last year. She has been instrumental in the planning and delivery of many Children's Church sessions, especially since my return to full-time work.

Thanks also go to the parents and others who have stepped in to support with these activities when we have needed additional adults to ensure the sessions can still go ahead. With so few volunteers, it is not easy to ensure that we can run a full programme in term time, but we are committed to doing our best to continue this, and thanks to all those who help us to ensure that happens.

It is the case with all of our Children's Ministry activities that we are running with a small, and seemingly ever-decreasing pool of volunteers. We are always looking for more people to contribute their time and talents to all our children's activities. The joy of these activities is that they offer valuable opportunities to connect with one other across the different age groups and congregations within our church community.

Church Mice

Cathy Randall

I am happy to say that our weekly Wednesday toddler service is going from strength to strength. We have a good core of regulars and are continually attracting new families who appreciate the chance to worship with their little ones, and then enjoy play and refreshments in the church afterwards.

We sadly lost some longstanding members of the leadership team – Caroline Halmshaw, Sarah Williams and Anthea Bryan all moved away, and Ruth Chaperlin now works full time – but we are delighted to welcome back Sarah Liquorish to the team, and Fr David, Sarah Rae, Mary Field-Smith and Carla Maroussas have all gamely stepped up to make sure that the leaders' rota remains very healthy. We are very grateful to all of them, past and present.

With the help of Revd Mary Hawes we have updated the service sheet, improved communication among the leaders and the families by the creation of two new WhatsApp groups, and established a rota of stories.

Cathy Randall was delighted to represent Church Mice at a Reception for Toddler Group Leaders at the Houses of Parliament in June, organised by the National Network of Church-based Toddler Groups. Mary Hawes was one of the speakers, and it was really inspiring to meet representatives of so many other toddler groups from across the country.

We love to welcome new families, so please do spread the word. We run all year, except for August, and our Mice range from newborns to preschoolers, with older siblings very welcome in the school holidays

Choir & Music

Derek Saunders

There is a lot to celebrate again this year with so much dedication and devotion given by the members of the choir. Numbers have increased further with the addition of 2 new basses. Generally, the average number is in the region of 12. The rep of the choir is increasing gradually and the interest in singing with the choir continues to grow.

Organists Rachel, Dean and Ed have been ever faithful and consistent with their support.

The many special services provide opportunities for irregular singers and more advanced music. In particular, the Induction service was a huge hit with plenty of David's favourite music including Parry's *I was Glad* and Palestrina's *Sicut Cervis*. We enjoyed the link with St Philip and St James who came and sang with us.

The Carol service was again very successful with the orchestra led by JS providing wonderful variety and support to the event. We were able to include 4 new younger members which worked well. Holy week services are approaching with plenty of appropriate music .

Coronation weekend was marked with significant and notable music with an enlarged choir.

Songs of Praise in the Churchyard again proved highly popular - thanks to RF-S.

Last year's Teddington Churches Concert was again successful in raising about £500 for Charity.

Huge thanks SJ and CM for their help with the Music library

Many in the choir enjoyed singing the Byrd 4-part Mass during a 10 am Eucharist late in November.

The Choir wishes to extend its thanks to the conductor.

Areas for development include

1. More Evensong /reflective services with music
2. Children's Choir for 9 o'clock/Young person's choir
3. Use of robes to be clarified

Churches Together

Malcolm Eady

For over 56 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 several 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 Alfie Evans from Teddington Methodist Church.

Activities:

Each year the council organises joint services at Easter and in the summer, at Christmas, Carol singing as part of the "Teddington Lights Up" event, a Christmas leaflet for the whole of Teddington, Lent courses, prayer walks and a street collection for Christian Aid.

The main event each year is the **Christmas Day Lunch** at Elleray Hall, which is the local elderly and those who would otherwise be alone on Christmas Day.

This year it was the responsibility of Teddington Baptist Church to organise the lunch. As well as our main funder, the Hampton Fund, who gave us a grant of £700 to cover costs, we also received a donation of £400 from the Waitrose Community Fund and £100 from individuals. There were, in addition, many in-kind donations of small gifts for the goodie bags, which were given to each guest as they left.

There were about 50 volunteers throughout the day, including those who drove the guests. Those helping in the hall arrived from 10.30 am. (Many volunteers would have qualified as guests but preferred to contribute by helping to run the event.)

Numbers were slightly down this year. 50 guests booked for lunch and including lunches for the volunteers, 77 meals were served. The MP Munira Wilson visited after lunch. The feedback from the guests was very positive.

At Easter 2023, the **Good Friday processions and the Service** on the green, by the Methodist church, were able to take place as normal. 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 was joined at Wilcox Road by those from St Michael's to walk down Stanley Road. There was then a short service, which was followed by a Vigil by the Cross, with each church taking a half hour period. The service and processions this year were well attended (about 160) and the weather was fine.

At the "**Teddington Lights Up**" evening members from various churches usually join the Salvation Army band for carol singing. This year the location of the SA band was not known till late and it had

again been scheduled to be on the periphery of the activity. They ended up playing opposite the end of Cambridge Rd for an hour and some members of local churches joined them for about half an hour.

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 21st of January at St Michael's Fulwell.

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. There was also a "Big Brekkie" on the Saturday morning at the Baptist Church to raise money for Christian Add. There were about 60 helpers and attendees. In total £1724.98 plus £350.45 tax reclaim was collected. This total takes no account of other giving prompted by the door-to-door envelope deliveries and new methods like online donations.

We are allocated 4 representatives on the council. Your current representatives are Fr David Cloake and Malcolm Eady

Nurture Courses

Advent course

Rev David Cloake

Shortly after I knew that I would become the new vicar, I tuned in to the YouTube stream of the 10am service greeted as I was by Caroline preaching God's word. She carefully explained how the matter of the Rule of Life would be a matter for the new vicar when he/she (she did not who I was yet) to attend to when they started. Homework was set!

In the brief Advent of 2023, we dutifully set aside time in person on Wednesday mornings to consider this factor of the Christian life, *A Rule of Life*, beginning with Jesus's own spiritual behaviours. The three-week course was built around three written reflections by the likes of Professor Martyn Percy and +Rachel Treweek. We examined our current Christian practices and approaches and listened to one another share their own experiences of life with God beyond Sundays.

This was my first 'close encounter' with members since arrival and it was a particular pleasure to learn of the profound depth of experience that accompanied each in their daily lives before the Lord. It is entirely likely that I learned more than they did!

Daily prayer

Margaret Squire

One of the very few good things that happened in Lockdown was that Morning and Evening Prayer moved onto Zoom. In the past both were just usually done by the clergy with few if any participants. Now despite no lockdown, Morning and Evening Prayer are still on Zoom and have become a very important part of the daily lives and prayers of quite a few people.

We have a WhatsApp group of 20 people but we are usually about 8 using the Daily Prayer App in the morning. The App is a very comprehensive one with services for morning ,evening and night in a choice of modern or traditional. It is also recorded if you just wish to listen

We meet on Zoom at 8.30am during the week and 9am on Saturday and 5pm in the evenings. The service takes half an hour and includes Psalms, Readings and Prayers and is usually lead by a member of the clergy, someone to respond and a couple of readers. There is an opportunity to pray for things and people that matter to us. It also gives a chance to bring before God people who are sick who do not want to be mentioned in church.

For all of us who participate in either Morning Evening Prayer, or both it is a valuable, informal but special time. We would very much welcome more people to join us

Parish Quiet Day/Lent course

Susan Wilmington

Our Lent course for 2023 was led by Sarah Williams with Caroline in support. It began with a successful Parish Quiet Day at the House of Prayer in East Molesey and continued in five well-attended further sessions in the hall or the church. The course was developed by Bishop Emma Ineson, our own bishop of Kensington, and was entitled *Dust and Glory* and was envisaged as a journey of faith, failure and love looking especially at failure and our Christian handling of it in our own lives. It was generally well received even if, as is often the case, our lively group wandered off into avenues rather broader than those conceived of by the author.

Servers

Mary Field-Smith

The Church is very fortunate to have a faithful team consisting of both adults and young people, providing a server at the 8 o'clock service on Sunday and the 9.30 service on Wednesday and three servers at the 10 o'clock on Sunday. In addition, three of the older servers also take it in turns to set up the church on Saturday afternoons ready for Sunday services. We are now using ChurchSuite which allows people to sign up for slots and, also, helpfully sends us reminders !

We would very much welcome new members (young or not so young!) to the team and if you feel that you would like to participate occasionally in Worship in this way, please speak to Jean or Mary Field-Smith.

Pastoral Care

Community Café

Clare Rider & Sarah Rae

The Teddington Community Café, held weekly on Monday afternoons at the Peter and Paul Centre, continues to flourish. Since its inception three years ago, it has been lovely to see an increasing number of people come, meet others and develop lasting friendships. Our customers range in age from nonagenarians to new-borns. It is also a popular venue for parents and carers to come with their children for refreshments after school.

The Café offers a welcoming space with a friendly, calm and positive atmosphere, with many volunteers on hand to chat over coffee, tea and homemade-cake. From the outset we wanted the Café to be more

than just another coffee shop, being there for anyone seeking warmth and company, particularly those feeling socially isolated and anxious. We continue to liaise with Ruils (Richmond-upon-Thames Independent Living Service) and RB Mind whose link workers can meet clients at the Café and, from January 2024, we have started providing a location for representatives from a local housing association to meet their residents. The Café also signposts local community services, provides information about events and activities in the area and hosts a book swap scheme.

In April 2023, the Community Café team was honoured to receive the ‘Communities Together Award’ for 2022 at the annual LBRUT Community Heroes Awards Ceremony at York House. These awards recognise outstanding contributions by local people in making Richmond Borough a better place to live, work and learn. The Café was among more than 140 heroes nominated across ten categories. We are immensely proud that our contribution to the community was recognised in this way and are extremely grateful to our volunteers and cake bakers for making the Café such a success.

Memory Café

Trish Raffetto

Established in 2017, the Memory Café is a social space for those living with dementia, their carers and those who enjoy companionship. We meet twice a month on the first and third Tuesdays at the Peter and Paul Centre. We have a light-hearted quiz at each café and, once a month, we alternate between a sing-a-long and Bingo. We have repeat guests at every Café who tell us they really appreciate the warm, relaxed and friendly atmosphere where they can enjoy a good chat and refreshments. We continue to be well-served by a very committed group of volunteers from SMwSA as well as other churches and the local community.

Diversity & Inclusion

Working group report

Chris Darling

The Diversity and Inclusion Group has continued to meet regularly under the leadership of Chris Darling. The Group has a brief to help our local Church and community to respond actively to issues of diversity, inclusion and equality. We said a fond farewell to Caroline Halmshaw in July 2023. Caroline was a great supporter and contributor to the Group.

In the past year, we have focused mainly on anti-racism and disability (visible and invisible). As Group members we have signed up for the Diocese level “Discussion on Racial Justice” and its prayer bulletin. We have reviewed the Racial justice 10-point action plan to check how we can best support it: <https://www.london.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/A-10-point-plan-for-churches-v3.pdf>

For general awareness-building, we have made good use of our noticeboard at the back of the Church. We also regularly provide input into the intercessions and ensure that all major public diversity and inclusion events are logged onto the Church’s electronic calendar. In the past year we have highlighted Autism, Steven Lawrence Day, and Dementia Awareness.

To mark Black History Month in October, we organised a theatre trip to the Exchange Theatre in Twickenham. A large group of us from Church enjoyed a great solo performance by Paterson Joseph of his play “Sancho and Me – For One Night Only. The show explored the contradictory themes of

exclusion and acceptance in the 18th century, and where these themes intersected with Paterson Joseph's own story of being Black and British. Westminster Abbey has announced a new memorial in the Abbey to Sancho and his wife Anne Osborne, so there is perhaps another interesting trip to come!

In the last few months, the Group has been considering how we as a Church could better support Dementia sufferers and their carers in our community. We have been investigating the Alzheimer's Society resources with videos about how to become a Dementia friend: <https://www.dementiafriends.org.uk/>.

We have also been discussing with Anne O'Neil and Fr David some of the services offered to local care homes and via the Peter & Paul Centre Cafes.

We are currently planning more events for the coming year, with the aim of holding at least one large event a year. Through discussion with others, we are looking for ways to make the website, Church and Church Hall more welcoming from a diversity and inclusion perspective. We are always seeking ways to engage our Church and congregation with issues of diversity and inclusion and would be delighted to welcome new members to the Diversity and Inclusion Group.

Sustainability

Working group report

James Morris

2023 was a quiet year for the Parish Sustainability Group. However, this has hardly been a quiet year for sustainability issues and the climate emergency and overall sustainability remains an important topic to this parish.

On a local level, Richmond Council continues to work on implementing its Climate Emergency Action Plan (read more at www.richmond.gov.uk). However, the community also suffers a range of environmental and sustainability challenges, from the resilience of the water supply and security, the growing threat of flooding, to the biodiversity impacts of the climate crisis. Balanced against this is the ongoing energy and cost of living crisis, which understandably makes many people concerned with the financial challenges of the day-to-day. Sadly, we have limited time to act on both climate and the risk to nature and we need everyone to do a little, while encouraging our political and business leaders to take bold steps.

While 2023 has been quiet for our group, we do have plans for 2024 and look forward to engaging through the community. We will be running our first Carbon Literacy training courses later in the year, and are planning more events including another Recycle and Reuse event. We are also hoping to achieve our Silver level Eco-church award this year.

More than anything else though, we need volunteers and ideas to support our ambition of delivering a regular programme of sustainability events throughout the Parish. If you are driven to volunteer your time, please do contact us.

Links

St Mary & St Peter's School

Steven Alford

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. 24 years ago, it expanded from a one to a two-form entry school and then in 2011 it expanded again to produce a three-form entry school. There are currently 616 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 (6.5%) as are the number of children requiring Special Educational Needs (8.13% compared to 13.2% nationally). The percentage of pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans is 2.44%, which is below the national average of 4.3%.

It was graded as "Outstanding" at its last Ofsted inspection (Dec '22) and by the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report (June '18). 87 children (14%) speak English as an additional language with 22 languages spoken in the school.

The Church and school are closely linked with the clergy regularly conducting Collective Worship, and the school visiting the church for Harvest, Christmas, and Pentecost services. Rev. David Cloake also leads Religious Education sessions in the school since his appointment to St Mary with St Alban's Church.

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 2023/24

1. Financially Stable

Between 2009-10 and 2021-22, capital spending on schools declined by 29% when adjusted for inflation. Almost all maintained schools in the UK face significant financial pressures alongside the challenges of delivering the standard of education within the budget provided.

SMSP has worked extremely hard to deliver its Ofsted-rated "Outstanding" standard of education within the parameters of its funding challenges and credit is due to school for this achievement. Continued focus from the school will be required to maintain this financial stability, especially whilst costs continue to rise in the operational running of the school.

2. Governor Roles

The Rev. Mary Hawes is the chair of Governors alongside Rev. David Cloake and Rev. Simon Pedley from St Michael's, Fulwell. The Governing Body is well represented by the church, teachers, parents of the school, and members of the local community.

Regular meetings take place with the Governing body with sub-committees overseeing important aspects with the school including the finances (resources), as well as curriculum and standards.

3. Absence Rates

Schools in the UK have reported an upward trend in persistent absenteeism over the last few years, since Covid-19, and this is an issue that the school monitors closely. SMSP has a higher than average attendance, currently tracking at 97.61% with efforts to maintain and improve attendance in the school.

Hampton Deanery Synod

Nicholas de Mattos

Hampton Deanery Synod comprises 16 churches in our local area. St Michael and St George, Fulwell; St Mary's, Hampton; All Saints, Hampton; St James, Hampton Hill; St John, Hampton Wick; St Richard, Hanworth; St Mary with St Alban, Teddington; St Mark, Teddington; Holy Trinity, Twickenham; St Mary, Twickenham, All Saints, Twickenham; St Stephen, Twickenham; All Hallows, Twickenham; St Augustine, Whitton; SS Philip and James, Whitton; SS Peter and Paul, Teddington (now Peter and Paul Centre).

Each meeting comprises an opening welcome by the Area Dean, in 2023 this was Reverend Ben Lovell from St Mary's, Hampton, worship and an introduction to the host church, usually led by a minister of that church. Apologies for absence are noted along with the approval of the minutes from the previous meeting with any matters arising dealt with. Every meeting has a theme, on which the guest speaker will make a presentation. The meeting concludes with prayer.

St Michael's Fulwell. May 10th 2023

Revd. Ben Lovell, Area Dean, and incumbent of St Mary's Hampton, led the meeting. He reported that Revd David Cloake had been appointed as the new incumbent of St Mary's with St Alban's, Teddington and this would create a vacancy at SS Philip and James, Whitton. The Revd Caroline Halmshaw was moving to St Paul's, Chiswick as its new incumbent. HDS lay members' 3-year term of appointment ends on 30th June 2023. Names of new appointees should be given to Anne-Marie Philp by the end of the month.

The invited speaker was The Reverend Jonathan Rust, Area Director of Mission Development, Diocese of London Kensington Area who gave a presentation on Creative Growth – reaching out to our neighbours.

St Richard's Hanworth November 8th 2023

Revd. Ben Lovell, Area Dean, and incumbent of St Mary's Hampton, led the meeting and introduced new members. He reported vacancies for incumbents at St Marks, Teddington and SS Philip and James, Whitton. He reminded members that terms of appointment on the London Diocesan Synod (LDS) were ending in Summer 2024 comprising one clergy member and three lay. The clergy at the meeting voted for James Bunyan. There had been no nominations for lay members and Ben Lovell made a request for people to offer. He also requested offers to fill the position of Lay Chair and outlined the role: the Lay Chair role involves working with the Area Dean and the Secretary to plan the Hampton Deanery meetings and to lead some items on the agenda. They would join the Kensington Area Bishops Council,

which had up to six meetings a year relating to business / administration in the Kensington area, with the majority of meetings being conducted via zoom.

The invited speakers were Jo Jones, Bishop's Youth and Schools Chaplain, Kensington Area & Jacob Holme, Administrator, The Spark Fund who gave a presentation on youth collaboration.

St Mary's Hampton February 21st 2024

Revd. Ben Lovell, Area Dean, and incumbent of St Mary's Hampton, led the meeting and the initial worship. He noted difficulty in getting people to look after children's church and youth work. He welcomed Libby Talbot as the new incumbent of St Stephen's Twickenham, mentioning also that advertisements for the post at SS Philip and James, Whitton would be appearing soon. He welcomed new activities taking place in the 'new' Peter and Paul Centre, Teddington as a community hub.

The invited Speaker was Oliver Home – General Secretary of the Diocese of London who gave a presentation on his background and the responsibilities of his current role.

2nd A Teddington Guides

Kathy Gold

Rainbows

As always, 2023 was a busy year for rainbows.

During the Spring term, we worked on our Innovate badge and had fun with science.

During the summer term we celebrated the King's coronation and worked on our Feel-Good badge; we learned about how to be kind to each other and how we can look after ourselves - both mentally and physically. During the autumn term, we worked on our Camping badge; building our indoor tents, learning to eat without an oven, how to keep safe and warm. We finished our term at a district campfire with brownies and guides both from our own unit as well as others in Teddington.

Throughout the year we undertook activities that helped us think about others such as our harvest festival; where we brought food and everyday items which were needed by others. We also completed our Children in Need riverside walk to raise money for those less fortunate than ourselves. We finished 2023 with a district Christmas craft evening which was loved by all.

Brownies

Over the last year we have continued to tend the four graves we adopted in the churchyard, weeding and planning spring bulbs. The brownies also helped to clear another area behind the vestry last summer. We celebrated the Coronation with a 'Street Party' behind the church hall and made cards for King Charles, receiving an appreciative acknowledgment from Buckingham Palace later in the summer.

Other activities during the year have included night hikes along the Thames, games in Bushy Park and finally a litter pick in the hall organised by Geoff Howland as part of our Zero Waste Challenge.

Guides and Rangers

The guides and rangers started the year with a 'Fun in the Dark' evening at Walton Firs in Cobham. Our spring term was full of activities around the theme of space. We made aliens from recycled materials,

space food and paper planes. For Mother's Day we learnt a new skill making light bottles. The spring term finished with a quiz against 5th Teddington Guides.

In the summer term we worked on our Navigator badge and activities such as making bug hotels linked to Save our Wild Isles. There were some amazing icing decorations made for our Coronation cupcake challenge. The girls worked hard producing more bottles and bug hotels for the Teddington Village Fair and worked behind the games stalls on the day. Supported by 2 girls' Jack Petchey Awards we had a brilliant evening at Sandown go-karting. In August we travelled to the New Forest for a 3 day Guiding Festival camp with activities from zip wire to crafting and evening music. Two of the guides achieved their Gold Award at the end of term.

September saw us taking part in paddle boarding at the Royal Canoe Club for a Girl Guiding photoshoot. Hopefully, we will see their photos in Guiding publicity material soon. Several girls spent a day at Heyswood cooking on a wood fire and achieving their Backwoods Cooking badge. October saw our first district event since Covid and all the Teddington Units joined us in our hall for an indoor campfire and singing. The Guides attended Remembrance Parade and took part in Parliament Week activities. They went on a penny hike ending up, as always requested, at the chip shop. They brought in donations and ran the chocolate tombola and games at the Church Bazaar. We had our usual trip to Hampton Court for some Christmas skating and took part in a District Christmas craft event, with the Rangers helping out with the younger members. We finished 2023 with a trip to see 'Wish' at the Rotunda and a pizza lunch.

ALMA

Suzie Gordon

The Alma Group has continued to meet a couple of times this year and we have kept up our whats app messages with the parish in Pemba and have had a couple of zoom calls.

At the end of May Bishop Manuel visited Pemba to ordain Andre Cheyo as a deacon. The churchwarden John Sululu sent us some photographs and a video of the actual ordination. Two priests and four deacons were ordained that day.

The highlight of the year was a visit in July by Bishop Manuel, who came to preach at St Pauls Cathedral on Alma Sunday. Sadly I was unable to attend the service but Robin and Mary Field-Smith kindly represented our parish. However, Robin and I enjoyed a delightful lunch at Sheenagh Burrells house in Ealing with the Bishop and Mary Hawes had lunch with him the following day. It was very good to get news first hand of the current situation in Mozambique.

In October there were celebrations for the twelfth anniversary of father Bulaki s ordination. We were sent lots of photographs of this joyous day with the youth group and mothers union attending a big service with Father Domingos from Murrupula joining the ceremony which was followed by a big lunch. As with everything we are always looking for new volunteers to join this group and hopefully we have found a couple but with all the fund raising needed for the Building Anew project it is going to be difficult to be able to give much financial support this year to our friends in Mozambique. However, we are still hoping to be able to send out the siborio, which we had hoped to send out with the team from Hampton, when somebody is visiting either from another local parish to see Bishop Manuel or if someone visits us.

Alma Sunday will be on 21st July this year with the annual evensong at St Paul's Cathedral and all are welcome.

Fairtrade

Susan Jacobs

With *Traidcraft* going into liquidation at the end of 2022 we were unable to continue holding regular Fairtrade stalls after Sunday worship during 2023 as there was no longer a “one-stop” supplier of fairtrade goods and those who acted as representatives for Fairtrade were effectively stood down. Advent Calendars with the Christmas story book included and “Real Easter Eggs” with the Christian story of the Passion and Eastertide were available however and several cases of each were sold to parishioners during the relevant season.

I do my best to seek out the Fairtrade logo whenever I am shopping for groceries myself. Most supermarkets supply some goods, the Co-op has a large range, and ethically fairly-traded goods of all kinds (not just foodstuffs) are available via mail order, on several sites, for example: ethicalsuperstore.com, wearefairtrade.com and jts.co.uk

Hall users are encouraged to use fairtrade tea, coffee and sugar if possible and so is the Parish Office.

First Wednesday group

Susan Jacobs

The First Wednesday group continued to meet during the interregnum on the first Wednesday of most months during 2023 at lunchtime in the Mina Hogan Room of the Parish Hall. Participants are encouraged to bring their own packed lunch and a friend. The topic to be discussed is chosen and advertised on the church website, e-bulletin, the weekly pew sheet and individual blind copy emails (where known) in advance to facilitate informed debate and questions. Numbers attending vary from between single figures to high teens with an average of 12 depending on the topic and people’s availability. The atmosphere is informal and open to all.

Topics discussed during 2023:

| | |
|-----------|---|
| January | Recent survey reveals that the number of people in England and Wales identifying themselves as Christian has dropped to below 50%. Is this a cause for concern? |
| February | Should our CofE clergy have freedom to bless and marry same-sex couples in Church? |
| March | Parish Quiet Day in House of Prayer, East Molesey |
| May | Music and Worship |
| June | Reflections on the Coronation. |
| July | Has Press Freedom gone too far? |
| September | Building Anew – Fundraising Appeal |
| October | Missionary Giving – our ALMA/Pemba link |
| November | Horses for Courses – How might the regular 8,9 and 10am congregations get to know one another (better)? |

Handbells

Sheila Insley

The Handbell Team continued to flourish during 2023 despite two ringers deciding to leave the team, but we had a secondary school pupil come to join us. It was an exciting year when we celebrated our 20th anniversary by hosting our own well-attended Anniversary Rally in September. There are still three founder members who were part of the original team back in 2003.

We also participated in two other day-long rallies in Sunningdale and Sanderstead, and in Weybridge's Soiree rally. It is always fun to be part of massed ringing with other teams, and it is a privilege to take part in the annual service at Guildford Cathedral with ringers from all over the SE Region. Twice during the year, we met up with the Weybridge and Barnes teams for a friendly evening of music making. Closer to home, we entertained in church for Teddington in Flower in April, and we entertained at other venues for the Hanworth Over 50's Club and Walton Blind Club.

The South East Region Handbell Orchestra (SERBO) put on a performance for the first time since Covid and three members of SMTB were part of it. It takes many rehearsals over a six-month period but the concert in May shows off handbell ringing on a grand scale. There will be two SMTB ringers in SERBO 2024.

As usual, we were busy at the end of the year ringing carols at Squires Garden Centre, the Church Bazaar, Teddington Memory Cafe and Fullerton Court.

The handbell team is always seeking new members who can read music and have a desire to learn a skill that is fun and gives pleasure in the community. We need extra strength in numbers to give us more flexibility when going out to perform. We benefit very much from the expertise and encouragement of our Musical Director, Grant O'Sullivan, and, as always, are grateful to St Mary's for the use of the bells and the safe space in the Parish Hall for practice and storage.

Plain & Pearl

Suzanne Strachan

Plain and Pearl is a friendly social all-inclusive group of people drawn together through love of knitting and crafting. We meet bi-monthly on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at St Mary's Parish Hall Teddington.

2023-2024 has been a busy year full of exciting workshops, some new ones like Japanese mending, glass bottle decoupage, and of course the popular regular seasonal ones like wreath making, craft material swap. Some new exciting workshops yet to come. In the last year we have welcomed some new members.

Back in November, our participation in 2023 pre Xmas bazaar in the parish hall was a sell-out. We raised around £1100 for charity including raffling off granny square blanket which our members had crocheted. Quite a few new people signed up to our mailing list.

January was our knitting month, our 2nd since we started having one a year ago. During the knitting month we meet weekly to progress with the knitting projects. This time we held a Knit-along (KAL) of a hat using colourwork technique called mosaic knitting. Also, we held master class on finishing techniques. KAL proved quite popular judging by the number of participants and the feedback received from them.

In February, we had a guest speaker, one of the founders of Wool Decanted. They are a new local yarn producer (since the pandemic) with emphasis on promoting British wool to support the British farmers, and UK craftsmanship and helping to save essential skills in the process of producing their yarn. They recognise the importance of provenance of wool and as such they have designed their labels emulating

good wine labels, giving lots of information about the wool's journey. We got to see and feel samples of their beautifully soft yarn.

Anyone interested in joining our group, please contact: mailplainandpearl@gmail.com

Traherne Reading group

Gerry Gregory

We continue to read/analyse/discuss the illuminating/powerful/moving poetry and prose of Thomas Traherne - and of such near contemporaries as George Herbert, Henry Vaughan, John Donne, John Milton -and of others (including Julian of Norwich, John Norris and John Betjeman) on church and religion themes.

This year is the 350th anniversary of Traherne's death (and burial at the church of St Mary with St Alban).

Welcare

Margaret Squire & Anna Khan

Welcare is a Christian family support charity, whose origins go back to 1894 and through various incarnations has provided homes and care for unmarried mothers and their babies and pioneered early social work. Today the charity provides child and family support services for families with children up to the age of 13 throughout south London and East Surrey. It continues to be inspired by Christian faith and Anglican heritage.

Welcare supports families of all faiths and none and work with each child and family individually by providing a range of social-worker managed practical and emotional support on an individual, one-to-one basis and a range of group work. Its mission is to provide practical and emotional support so that children and families can thrive.

The charity provides a range of family support services to those who are struggling with family life whether this is due to financial need, relationship breakdown, domestic abuse, mental health challenges or having a child with special needs.

St Mary's supports Welcare mainly through 2 annual events:

- (i) the Lent lunch, which made £700 this year including £150 spent on Margaret's preserves!
- (ii) Carols at the Anglers at Christmas which made £537 in 2023 which again was very good result

Both these events have been held for many years, including delivering a Lent Lunch during Lockdown.

Welcare relies on support and prayers to continue its work. If you would like to support the work of Welcare or would like further information, you can sign up to receive the newsletter at :

<https://www.welcare.org/newsletter-sign-up/>

Fellowship

Parish Plod 2023 – Thames Path (South Bank)

Katherine Matthews

This walk marked the 3rd successive plod for the Parish Plodders (following completion of the Capital Ring and the Jubilee Greenway). The group has maintained its enthusiasm to continue their ambles around London, its aim being to walk in faith and friendship as we enjoy familiar, and indeed not so familiar, sights and sounds in our capital city and beyond.

We started the walk in February from the familiar landmark of Hampton Court. Over successive months we moved along the Thames towards Putney, Vauxhall and then out to the East End to Rotherhithe, Greenwich, Woolwich and eventually stopping near Dartford. The walk covered some sections walked on both the Capital Ring and the Jubilee Greenway but we were still able to enjoy many new sights. We walked through all weathers!

The plodders comprise a core number of around 15 people but normally increased by friends and other family members on an ad hoc basis. There is no limit! Starting times and journeys to the start are notified in advance and each walk takes around 3-4 hours to complete with a lunch break. Please do join us – you will be most welcome.

Parish Pub Lunch

Trish Raffetto

The function of this coffee/ lunch group is purely social and provides an opportunity to enjoy spending time together. We continue to have three events a month - a **lunch** in a local restaurant, a coffee meet-up in a local café, and, for those who are home-bound and want to meet up with the group, we have a coffee zoom. The support and camaraderie of all these get-togethers are much appreciated and we have also been delighted to welcome newcomers during the past year. All are welcome and we look forward to continuing this fellowship during the coming year.

CHARITABLE GIVING 2023

| CHARITY | ACTIVITY | DATE | AMOUNT | | TOTAL |
|---------|----------|------|--------|--|-------|
|---------|----------|------|--------|--|-------|

LOCAL

| | | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|---|-------------------|
| Welcare | Lent Lunch | March | 650.00 | £ | 1187.00 |
| | Carol Singing at the Anglers | December | 537.00 | | |
| Embracing Age | Full of Life Fair | August | 25.00 | £ | 25.00 |
| London Diocese Bishop's Discretionary Fund | Fr David's Collation Service | September | 1229.57 | £ | 1,229.57 |
| Teddington Royal British Legion | Poppy Wreath | November | 15.00 | £ | 15.00 |
| RNLI | Church Stalls | November | 251.65 | £ | 251.65 |
| Building Anew | Passiontide Concert | March | 954.63 | £ | 170,244.52 |
| | Churchyard Teas | April | 920.00 | | |
| | Teddington Fair | June | 160.00 | | |
| | Art Venturers | October | 382.18 | | |
| | Christmas Stocking Appeal | December | 1180.91 | | |
| | Personal Donations | to Dec | 142248.30 | | |
| Local Charities Total | | | | £ | 172,952.74 |

NATIONAL

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------|--------|---|---------------|
| The Children's Society | Christingle | February | 169.20 | £ | 169.20 |
| Welcome Churches | Preserves sale | November | 150.00 | £ | 150.00 |
| National Charities Total | | | | £ | 319.20 |

INTERNATIONAL

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|---|-----------------|
| MANNA / ALMA | Lent Appeal | April | 2713.00 | £ | 3,467.81 |
| | Church Coffee and First Wednesday | Jan-Dec | 754.81 | | |
| Christian Aid | CA Week | May | 392.22 | £ | 492.22 |
| | One off donation | May | 100.00 | | |
| International Charities Total | | | | £ | 3,960.03 |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Combined Charities Total Given | £ | 176,694.97 |
|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------|