



St Mary's Church
Parish of Wimbledon

Annual Review of 2017



St Mary's Bell Ringers

Team Rector's Report

The past year at St Mary's has seen a lot of change, primarily in the staff team. We have said farewell to Caroline Revill in the Parish Office and have welcomed the arrival of Jane Johnston as our new Parish Operations Manager. Catherine Linsley, our Children and Families worker has been on maternity leave since the middle of September.

As well as missing some of our established members of staff we have also welcomed Yunghee as curate following her ordination in July and Nils as our Associate Vicar. Now that Nils has started I am already beginning to see the benefits both in terms

of his contributions to preaching and leading worship on Sunday and the work he is doing leading St Mary's Pastoral Ministry. My hope is that the coming year will be a period of stability and consolidation for St Mary's. One of the elements of this will be to develop our sense of ourselves as a community and to get to know one another better and to enjoy each other's company.

Last year, our Harvest Lunch had to relocate from the traditional venue of the Debentures Lounge at Wimbledon; as it was being refurbished. Instead we held a more informal and inclusive event; a hog roast with jazz band in Garden Hall. We had a lovely day together and a number of people commented on how much they enjoyed getting together with people who attended the different services and across the generations. While we will be returning to the Debentures Lounge for our Harvest Lunch this year, the success of last year's Harvest Festival has inspired a change to the format of our Patronal Festival. For the past few years we have celebrated our patron saint with a family fun day with the focus on activities for families with young children. This year we are planning a Patronal Feast for everyone, with a similar format to last year's Harvest Lunch. It will be a celebration of our life together as a church. We will have a hog roast again with entertainment where we can enjoy being with old friends and make new ones. If you have any ideas for the celebrations, please let me know. I am also beginning the process of inviting everyone on the Electoral Roll to lunch over the next year or so. A group of volunteers have offered to help me organise this and I am looking forward to spending time with you in a more informal setting.

The Church Committee has given time and attention over the past year to thinking about how we can make sure that St Mary's is an inclusive and accessible church for every member of the local community. It is not always easy to see who is missing from our congregation because they find it hard to come to church, or difficult to participate in our services. Hospitality is a core gospel value; making sure that people feel welcome when they come to worship is very important. While we all want to be hospitable, welcoming and including those who are different from us or who face particular challenges is not always easy. There may be sacrifices that we need to make to ensure that we are as welcoming as we can be.

Questions around how new people are welcomed into our life as a church lead naturally to broader questions around mission. In the coming year I am planning to begin a full revision of our Mission Action Plan.. St Mary's church committee and I will be looking at our context here in Wimbledon Village and trying to discern where God is calling us as a church. How is God asking us to serve him here? Ultimately this is a question not just for the Church Committee, but for the whole church and I will be asking the church committee to think about how the whole of St Mary's can come together to think about where God is calling us and what our vocation as a church is.

One dimension of this will be to look at our Stewardship. You will see from the accounts that we made a surplus last year. Thank you to all of you who give so generously to support the ministry of the church. However, this year we are anticipating a deficit of around £70,000. Although this is not an immediate threat to the church, it is a situation that needs to be addressed, so we will be holding a stewardship campaign in the autumn.

While I hope that this year will be one principally of consolidation and community building there are some big decisions that are appearing on the horizon. In light of this I wanted to share with you my approach to leading the church when we have significant and controversial decisions to make.

We do not always choose the questions we need to answer, but we can choose how we go about making those decisions. My principle goal whenever we face such a challenge will be to make sure that the process we use to make the decision is one that allows everyone to have their say, so that together we can discern what is the best way forward for the church. I would expect that in any major decision that we needed to make there would be wide and full consultation, during which everyone has the opportunity to find out what exactly was being proposed. Once that is clear, I would decide on what the appropriate form of consultation should be with Church Wardens and Church Committee. The practicalities of this would be guided by the following principles: that everyone on the Electoral Roll of St Mary's who wants to, has a chance to contribute to the discussion, that good notice is given of meetings and votes on decisions, that everyone feels that they have been listened to, that the process is fair, transparent and accountable. We cannot expect to agree on everything all the time, however we can all expect to be treated with respect, kindness and for our views to be heard.

What makes the church different from other institutions is that we are not here to serve our own ends, but to serve God. We all bring our own wisdom and experience to the conversation about how we do that and what that means here. My desire is that St Mary's is a place of good and Godly conversation. That the way we talk to and about each other demonstrates our love for God and one another. If this guides and inspires our conversations and our decision making things may not always be easy or comfortable, but I think it gives us the best chance of making wise and Godly decisions about the future of the church.

The Revd Mandy Hodgson
Team Rector

Church Committee Officer's Reports

Church Wardens' Report on Fabric and Property

Church

We are grateful to the many volunteers who give so much time to the church: the flower team, choir, organists and choirmasters, cleaners, sacristans, those who launder linen, prepare rotas, take the offertory, vergers, servers, readers, sides people..... The list is endless and all roles, 'front of house' or behind the scenes, contribute hugely to the life and ministry of St Marys.

The Quinquennial inspection was carried out in April. Overall the building is in good condition, but the report highlights a number of issues, mainly repairs to masonry and flashings. These link to the ongoing damp problems, which are particularly noticeable in the south west corner of the gallery and the south porch. The situation is currently being monitored and the architect is drawing up plans of action so that we can make most effective and economical use of scaffolding and labour. Some of the smaller tasks have already been completed by Ken Cooper.

Disability access: a ramp has been purchased to enable access to the chancel, chairs with arms placed at the front of church for those with limited mobility, and the sound system has been adjusted. A disability access audit is being undertaken and necessary actions will be undertaken through the church committee. The outcomes will be reported in next year's review.

We are grateful to Richard Poulter, who has spent time rebalancing the sound system and suggesting improvements. The general view is that the current system is excellent and that funds would be best directed to repairing one radio microphone and purchasing a fourth, together with a new freestanding microphone for use at the 11.15 service. Eventually we would like to relay the sound system to the two church halls.

The glass doors slipped once more and required repositioning, which has been undertaken.

The votive candle stand was removed from church in February, and the cash taken by forcing off the brass plate. Both stand and plate have been recovered from the churchyard and Ken will effect repairs. Regular emptying of the cash will now be undertaken on Sunday evenings, to reduce the temptation.

A Faculty application for permission to hang the print of HMS Inflexible by the entrance to the Warrior Chapel has been completed and is with the Chancellor for approval.

Parish Office

This continues to be a hub of activity. Caroline Revill moved to a new post in the summer, and we are grateful for the order and efficiency she brought to the role. We have been very fortunate in recruiting Jane Johnston to replace her, and to Lynn Coward for holding the fort during the recruitment period. Jane brings much experience to the post and has very quickly grasped the complexity of the role. Thank you to Sam Pedder and Lyndsey Duncan, and until the arrival of her new baby last autumn, Morag Crichton, who amongst others have given a great deal of their time to provide invaluable additional support.

We welcomed Ken Cooper to the post of part-time caretaker/handyman in the spring and he has proved to be an excellent addition to the team. He is able to turn his hand to a wide range of tasks, and having worked previously at the convent at Ham, is familiar with the working environment in which he finds himself.

Churchyard

The maintenance volunteers, under the leadership of Allan Duncan, continue to work tirelessly to maintain the churchyard as a place of quiet contemplation, and we are grateful for all they do. Their 'weather eye' frequently alerts us to the need for some immediate action to prevent dilapidations, and it would be difficult to manage this without them.

2017 will be remembered as the Year of the Badger – or in our case, a family of 5. They reoccupied an old sett on the neighbouring property and through tunnelling and searching for chafer grubs, wreaked significant damage to the churchyard between the east end and the wall. As they are a (very) protected species, a licence had to be obtained from Natural England to engage in 'badger mitigation works' – persuading them to move elsewhere – as well as a Faculty to undertake the work. The work seems to have been successful, and we must now take measures to dissuade them from returning. The considerable expenses of this have been met by the owners of the neighbouring property, and for this we are extremely grateful. The cost of restoring the leaning monuments will however fall to us.

A comprehensive survey of the churchyard monuments has been undertaken in conjunction with Keri Dearmer, the newly-appointed Diocesan Historic Churches Support Officer. There are 28 listed monuments in the churchyard, 5 of which are on the heritage 'at risk' register, requiring urgent attention to prevent further deterioration. Keri has provided a comprehensive list of potential funding streams, some of which could yield considerable sums of money providing certain criteria are met. These include education projects and raising public engagement and awareness, all of which are achievable with a working party. We would be delighted to hear from anyone interested in becoming involved in this.

The beehive project was finally completed last summer and the bees installed. It is good to have them.

Parking protocols for the churchyard have been reviewed and rewritten to ensure that those with greatest need continue to have access. These will be distributed at the ACM.

Some tree work was undertaken early in the year and as a result a full survey of churchyard trees was commissioned. Wimbledon Tree Surgeons identified some essential remedial work and this will be carried out as soon as estimates have been obtained and approved.

We have been approached by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission for permission to erect a sign alerting the public to the fact there are five war graves in the churchyard. The Chancellor to the Diocese has issued a Dispensation from Faculty for the erection of an approved sign – this is waiting for approval at the next PCC meeting.

Fellowship House

The meeting room has been completed, new furniture purchased, carpet laid, and soundproofing battens installed to reduce the daytime noise from the nursery.

Garden Hall



Bishop Richard, the ministry team and the Church Wardens at the Licensing of The Revd Nils Bersweden as Associate Vicar of St Mary's in February 2018

The hall continues to be popular with both regular and occasional bookings. During the course of the year, the boiler has been replaced, the kitchen overhauled with a new fridge freezer, additional crockery, new health and safety signage, a toddler safety gate for the doorway, new fly zapper and continuous paper roll dispenser. The path leading to the hall has been widened and the hall floor cleaned and re-oiled.

We are aware that the stacking chairs are coming to the end of their useful life, and much research has already been undertaken into finding a suitable replacement. The aim is to source something that is more comfortable and easily stored.

The large sliding door remains unusable and we are told that it would not be a permitted build under current regulations. We are advised that the insertion of top fixed panels with large bifold doors beneath would provide the best solution, but this is not a decision to be taken lightly and without further consideration.

3 Arthur Road

This was tenanted until the end of 2017. We are grateful to Ken Cooper and Graham Clark who worked long hours tirelessly to redecorate and prepare it for the arrival of Nils Bersweden, our new Associate Vicar, and his family.

Income and expenditure

We have been able to make significant savings on the cost of gas and electricity for the church and halls by switching to a new supplier. We have reviewed the hourly rates for the hire of the Garden Hall and Fellowship House and these have been increased in line with inflation.

Annual Inspection

The annual inspection was carried out on 20th March by Martin Osborn, Lay Chair of the Deanery Synod. All was found to be in good order.

Liz Broad and Alison Neilson

Treasurers Report

The year ended with a surplus on unrestricted funds of £23,147. This compares to a surplus in 2016 of £23,820. The unrestricted reserves balance at the year end is £324,820 and the development fund stands at £300,623.

Total unrestricted income was down by approximately £20,000 from the previous year. This is mainly due to a reduction in the planned giving.

Costs on unrestricted activities was approximately £20,000 less than 2016. This is a result of several factors which includes:

Large reduction in running costs in 2017. In 2016 we incurred additional costs because of the interregnum. This included additional administration costs in the parish office along with costs associated with visiting clergy and speakers.

There was minimal spend in 2017 in relation to the churchyard and major repairs to the church.

Appointment of a part time caretaker who carries out work around the church. This has reduced the burden of paying for external contractors.

2018

The budget for 2018 shows a deficit of £70,000. This is a result of several factors including increased costs associated with the appointment of the assistant priest, repairs that will be required to the Halls and for a reduction in planned giving.

During the first quarter of 2018, the tenants have vacated 3 Arthur Road and costs totalling £4,019 have been paid to decorate and repair the property.

All other activities are in line with budget.

Kezia York

Planned Giving Report

Our planned giving receipts – comprising donations under standing order, the weekly envelope scheme, Charities Aid Fund and Charities Trust, together, where relevant, with the related tax recoveries under Gift Aid were as follows:

	2017	2016
	£	£
Unrestricted donations—attracting Gift Aid	184,184	194,572
Unrestricted donations—no tax (mainly CAF and CT)	24,645	23,610
Gift Aid tax recoverable	45,561	48,653
Gift Aid recoverable on loose collections re2016		3,000
Gift Aid recoverable on loose collections re2017		5,000
Total Planned Giving	£262,310	£266,825

In addition £6,684 was received in relation to Baptisms and Weddings (2016: £7,786) and contributions to the Development Fund, which is restricted as to its use, amounted to £16,454 (2016: £15,069) inclusive of tax recoverable.

From now on our income will fall. The reason for the fall in unrestricted income in 2017 is that members of our congregation who contributed £15,660pa either died or moved away and we have similarly lost £6,250pa in the first 3 months of 2018. As I have said in previous years many of our most generous donors are aged over 75 so these losses are inevitable.

Given our commitment to the Diocese for 2018 of £235,000 and our successful and happy recruitment of Nils Bersweden as Assistant Priest, of whose employment and housing we will have to bear half the cost (the Diocese having agreed to bear half), **we will be launching an appeal for more regular giving within the next few months.**

This is my final report as Planned Giving Officer after 25 years in the role! I am delighted that **Jane Moss** agreed to take on this burden and she has been working alongside me for the past nine months – and has the task firmly under control.

I also want to thank Margaret Swain for her work as my Deputy; she has not had so much to do recently as Jane was learning the ropes. She and Jane and I alone are privy to the names of donors and the amounts they give.

Our thanks are due to Donald Broad, Peter Stevens, Margaret, and Una Whiche-
loe for carrying out the weekly banking of Sunday collections including the envelopes. They never fail!

Thank you all for your support. Keep the money rolling in!

Roger Chadder

Church Committee Secretary's Report

The Church Committee met six times during the year. The main matters discussed were:

Property issues, especially those related to the Quinquennial inspection, Badgers, Bazalgette Tomb, Sound System, Garden Hall and general maintenance issues

Parish Operations Manager

Tennis fortnight/Parking

Church Finances and 2018 budget

Parish Support fund pledge

Parish Away Day

Harvest Festival

Stewardship

Book of Remembrance

Annual Charitable giving

Music at St Mary's

Carols in the Field and the Family Fun Day

Safeguarding, in particular the audit of safeguarding practice, implementation of policies and training to ensure safeguarding best practice is followed

Recruitment of Assistant Priest/induction

Maternity Policy

Disabled Access issues and new policy

Bees

Silent Service

Communications and IT

Siobhan Holmes

Electoral Roll Report

The revision has now been completed and I am pleased to be able to report that:

The new total number of names on the Roll is 749 (which comes from the 2017 figure of 730 plus 27 additions less 8 deletions ie a net increase of 19).

Anthony Gubbins

Safeguarding Report

The Parish Safeguarding Self Audit 2016/17 was received from the Diocese early 2017 with a deadline to submit the online audit to the Diocese by the 31st March. The audit covered a variety of topics such as safeguarding awareness, training, risk assessments, church groups, insurance, record keeping and more. A copy of the audit is available from Pauline or in the Safeguarding Folder stored in the parish office.

Over 2017 I set up most crucial things such as a DBS checking procedure and register - including documenting most existing volunteers DBS checks since there was a lack of proper register. Training and recruitment of volunteers now has a format and general safeguarding awareness is certainly increasing. Risk Assessment policies are set up and more awareness for the need of risk assessments for church led activities is an ongoing process due to relatively rapid turnover of volunteers. Every 6 weeks I attend the Pastoral Team Meeting.

Our webdesigner assisted me in launching a page with safeguarding content on the St. Mary's website: <http://stmaryswimbledon.org/community/safeguarding/>

This was advertised in different media such as notice sheets, Grapevine and my safeguarding email footer. The website provides safeguarding information such as contact details, what to do in certain cases, links to the Diocese, and forms that can be downloaded to help with consent for activities, risk assessments etc.

A number of (confidential) safeguarding concerns were raised during the year in relation to new and ongoing cases. Those concerns have been appropriately addressed and documented. Due to the sensitivity of such documented information I have supplied a lockable safeguarding document box which I have stored in the large safe in the Vestry. There are two keys to the safeguarding box of which I will remain with me and I will be given to Mandy. The box also contains our volunteer applications; their confidentiality agreements and references that I take in relation to DBS applications.

Some of our paid, choir staff as well as Sunday school and creche rota volunteers were booked into safeguarding training in 2017.

DBS checks are an ongoing process especially with Sunday school, creche rota, choir and bell ringing volunteers changing often. We now have a total of 65 DBS applications on file.

Pauline Bakker

Deanery Synod Report

At our Annual Church meeting last year, John Bright and I were returned as Deanery Synod representatives for the next three years. Deanery Synods are strange beasts, but the diocese has been working hard on trying to give them an identity, and a purpose, as viable centres of mission and ministry, so this came at an important junction in the road.

Our first task was to attend the Synod meeting on the 17th June. This first meeting, elects the chair of the house of laity, and members of the steering committee, which sets the agenda and business for the synod. I was unfortunate to lose out on the chairmanship to Martin Osborne of Emanuel Wimbledon, but landed a seat on the steering committee. I also stood for one of the vacant seats on behalf of the deanery, on the Diocesan Synod. I have been, on and off, a member of Diocesan synod since 2011, a time which coincided with the debate on Women in the Episcopacy, so was pleased to be able to secure one of the two going, to resume business there on behalf of Saint Mary's. If that was not enough, I ended up as the deanery lay representative on the Archdeacons Mission and Pastoral Group, a body which focuses on the organisation of Parish ministry in the Lambeth archdeaconry. In the end, it's a lot of meetings, but curiously rewarding as a contribution to God's work in this place.

At that first meeting of the year, we were given a presentation on “Thy Kingdom Come”, a prayer initiative, instigated by the Archbishop of Canterbury, for the ten days between Ascension and Pentecost. Our next meeting on the 19th October, concentrated on the Mission and Ministry theme, with a presentation and discussion led by Anne Deering, who is the chair of the Lay Leadership and Lay Ministry Advisory Group for the diocese. Anne brought forward the “Setting God’s People Free” initiative, which emanates from the National Church, and overlaps with the diocesan “Breathing New Life into Deaneries”. We explored what were good examples of lay leadership, and what the deanery could do to affirm, and grow lay ministry and leadership. This was the first meeting chaired by Rev. Bruce Rickards of St John’s who had been appointed area dean, following Les Well’s departure to the southern most parts of Surrey.

For me the next meeting was the Diocesan Synod on 18th November. We discussed the budget with expenditure pegged to a realistic assessment of Parish giving, and received a presentation on Diocesan objectives. The budget presented includes resourcing to meet those objectives. We also heard from Captain Nicholas Lebey reporting on the proceedings of the July session of General Synod. This include the news that a motion to introduce appropriate liturgy for transgender members had been defeated. Inclusivity is one of my passions, and I am contemplating how to push that agenda in our church, the deanery and the diocese, but it is divisive, so care needed. We also agreed the scheme of seats for the 2018 elections to Diocesan Synod.

As Deanery Synod only meets twice a year, my next meeting was for the Diocesan Synod on 10th March. We received Dr Josiah Atkins Idowu-Fearon, the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, as an honorary Assistant Bishop. Bishop Christopher’s address anticipated the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse in the Church of England, led by Professor Alexis Jay, that has been a recent news item. Bishop Christopher stated that there was now a strong institutional commitment in the church to address the wrongs of the past, and to make the future different. He also emphasised his commitment to the development of Lay ministry and his desire for it to be held equal in worth and status with that of the clergy. To back that up we received a report from Anne Deering featuring “Setting God’s People Free”. The last item in this meeting was the final report form the Deanery Advisory Group. They made several recommendations for the reform of Deanery structures to enable the objective of turning deaneries into viable centres of mission and ministry. After group discussions, these proposals got a mixed reaction, and were referred back for revision and reformatting.

Our next Deanery meeting is on 1st May. The steering committee has meet to consider the agenda, which is not published yet so is not yet finalised, but Setting God’s People Free is on it. We will also take a little time to explain the election

process for Diocesan Synod which will be down to me. We are at the end of the three year cycle of the synod, so we must now seek re-election.

Why do Deanery Synod's matter? Well it is the Deanery Synod that elects representatives to the Diocesan Synod, so a strong voice is a must to allow St Mary's to have a representative on that body. As one of the biggest churches in the diocese, and the biggest contributor, it is what we should aspire to, but we are not entitled, and must prove our worth like anyone else. I intend to give it ago.

Neal Harvey

Pastoral Care

Report from The Team Curate (includes Youth and Families Report)

Having been an ordinand for 7 months at St Mary's before I got ordained as a deacon helped me immensely as I was taking up a new role as a team curate and becoming part of the parish. It was such an exciting experience to receive all the support, good wishes and love on my ordination day, and I am really grateful for the hospitality and welcome that people at St Mary's have given to my brother and his wife as well as my family.

Moving to Wimbledon in August was definitely a big 'new beginning' for myself and the family. The community of the area is close-knit, probably made closer by the fact that a lot of the local residents are parishioners of St Mary's and other team churches and recognise me by my clerical shirts. But it has also served as a con-



The Rector leading a communion service at Heathland Court

stant reminder of my role within the parish, and the significance of a thriving parish itself.

Being a team curate and working between four churches of the parish has been a challenge especially having to meet such a great number of people and getting to know them, but at the same time, it has been such a privilege to be part of them and learn each church's own unique culture to each congregation. Visiting and joining Sunday services of other team parish churches twice a month was one of the best involvements I have enjoyed during my nine months of curacy in Wimbledon. All team church clergy members have given me immense welcome, support and guidance throughout the year, and I would like to give my thanks to Mother Helen, Clive, Bruce and all other team church members.

One thing in particular that I have taken up is visiting people for home communion in their own homes and occasionally care homes, Lee House in particular. It has been again a good chance to get to know people on a more individual basis and build friendships through it. It made me see the importance of the church's support. I felt that home communion was not only a service of worship, but also a duty to include all its community. Tuesday Lunch club is also one of my favourite events at which I have met and got to know people. Taking services; funeral and interment of ashes; has been another connection to the wide community. They have given me an insight into the importance of pastoral care in ministry.

Toddler Praise, where Ali McGrath and I are leading as co-workers since Catherine left for her maternity leave, is steadily going well. A number of children left in Summer for their nursery school and again we sent three children, Mabel, Olly and Clara in December off to nursery, and we are trying to recruit more children to join the group. ,

Children's Activities We organised the Light party on 29th October and it was very successful with 48 children attending. It was the team work of Martine and Evie Clarke, Hilary and Dizzy Johnson, Alex Broad, Ben Little and Morgan Thorvaldsen-Brits. They organised crafts and refreshments. Carols in the field service was also successful even though we held it in the Garden Hall due to the weather. Once again, Martine and Dizzy as well as Ali McGrath and the Brass Band worked hard and kindly provided lovely music, mulled wine and mince pies. This year, the Good Friday children's service was held at 11.15 am in the Garden Hall and we moved to the church for a short service then moved back to the hall for refreshments. The event was very popular with around 60 children and 40 adults attending. Alex Broad and Dizzy Johnson provided craft activities and the Davies' family made a beautiful Easter Garden with the children. I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to all who were involved with the children's activities throughout the year.

Taking Collective Worships at Bishop Gilpin Primary school regularly was gave me the opportunity to engage with young people. I have learnt many things through the involvement and from the children while I was teaching Christianity to them. I enjoyed the Easter reflection that the children performed recently before Easter and visiting classes and talking to children and seeing what they were learning about Eater. In the meantime, I have also been involved with the Youth Group New Generation Disciples (NGD) at St Matthew's church and the group meets once a month on a Sunday evening from 6.00 pm to 8 pm. The group was set up in January this year and in March we enjoyed a Sushi session. We made Sushi ourselves and ate them. Each session is organised with some interesting event, discussing other religions and Christianity and a prayer time. The children's age group is from 9 to 15 years old.

Through out the year, Mandy, the Rector, has been teaching and guiding me immensely through the confirmation class, individual supervision meetings, administration and many other events and I really appreciate all the help and support she has given me. Many people from the congregation also helped me in various ways and I would particularly like to thank to Priscilla Chadwick and Anthea Richardson for their help.



The Revd Yunghee Koh deaconing for Bishop Christopher at the Cathedral Maundy Thursday Chrism Service

Outside of the parish:

I have been involved with the **Korean mission partnership group (KMP)** where the Bishop of Southwark is a co-president and Canon Mark Williams is the chairman. The members of this group are Peterborough, London and Southwark clergy and lay people who have had connections with Korean missionary work. Fr Mark, the chairman, visited South Korea last year for an inauguration service of Seoul Bishop and established a strong link with churches in Seoul and other dioceses in South Korea, and now hoping to extend the link towards North Korea. KMP, in the meantime, welcomed Bishops and church ministers from South Korea on several occasions who visited UK for their conferences and missionary work. KMP also made a generous donation of £5,000.00 to St Andrew's church in Po Hang in South Korea where the church was badly damaged by an earthquake and they needed to repair the building.

Chrism service: It has been a great honour to represent the Parish of Wimbledon as I was given an opportunity to be Deacon for Bishop Christopher at the Chrism Mass on Maundy Thursday where all the clergy of Southwark diocese renewed their vows and the oils of the sick, baptism and chrism were blessed. I am grateful to Canon Leanne Roberts, my DDO, for referring me to the role.

Yunghee Koh

Presiding, preaching, pastoral duties, pressure – A year in the life of a Retired priest ??

This last year has been much quieter than 2016/17 due to both our Rector Mandy Hodgson and our Curate Yunghee Koh getting well established in their respective roles. Latterly too of course with the welcome addition of the Rev'd. Nils Ber-sweden to St. Mary's clergy team to take over responsibility for Pastoral Work.

However pastoral care has been an important aspect of my ministry at St. Mary's and I have continued to co-ordinate the monthly Holy Communion services at Lee House Care Home in Lancaster Avenue. This service is valued by those who attend as for some residents this is their only Holy Communion service. The more able bodied residents do attend St. Mary's on a Sunday morning when they can.

I've continued to take Holy Communion to some of St. Mary's housebound members and again this is appreciated. However members of the congregation are reluctant to ask for communion at home when it is a very important aspect of our pastoral work at St. Mary's.

Another quieter aspect of ministry that I undertake is the ministry of Spiritual Direction or Spiritual accompaniment. I undertake this role via the Southwark Spiritual Direction network.

I am grateful to St. Mary's and the Parish supporting me financially in undertaking the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises in daily life.

Another quieter aspect of St. Mary's is the Julian Meeting, a silent contemplative prayer group, which meets monthly on a Thursday morning in different member's house. Julian meetings are based on the writings of Julian of Norwich. Each meeting is led by a member of the group. Not only members of St. Mary's attend but other churches in the Parish and surrounding district are represented.

Arising out of the Julian meeting came the idea for a day devoted to the writings of Julian of Norwich. In September last year the Merton Spiritual Formation Group in conjunction with the Parish of Wimbledon put on a Quiet Day at St. Matthew's to explore further the writings of Julian. This day was very well supported.

Since my 75th birthday in September last year I have cut back on the more public aspects of ministry so now I am at St. Mary's one Sunday a month and at St. Matthew's one Sunday a month. However it is good to be present at either church as a member of the congregation as it gives a priest a different perspective, sitting in the pews! Also it has given me an opportunity to be available just to speak to members of the congregation and to listen to their stories.

However due to a lot of problems with my health over the last year I have not been as active as I would have liked. But I am grateful for all the support and prayers I have received.

Cynthia Jackson

Fountain Group

This morning was as warm and welcoming as ever and particularly helpful in the way everyone participated in ideas for ways forward. Meeting in your home however provides a respectful space which is irreplaceable.

Thank you for a lovely meeting yesterday. Fiona inspired confidence and I am so pleased to have met her and heard her, I think she could be most helpful in future.

Through word of mouth and contact with Dementia Clinical Nurses and the Sacred Heart Memory Lane Club carers of the elderly and those with dementia hear about Fountain Group. Members say how much they enjoy the relaxed atmosphere and privacy of a home and the opportunity to be with others in similar situations to themselves. Some members like to continue coming when they're bereaved, there is a circle of care.

Some Fountain Group members are not on the Electoral Roll of this church. They live within the Wimbledon area, some are from other churches and some have no church affiliation. We have links with St Johns, St Marks, St Matthews and Christ Church and are grateful for the encouragement we receive from the Team clergy.

Fountain Group is in touch with a number of local charities, organisations and Sutton and Merton Community Services. We've been delighted to welcome a variety of guests including Fiona Hamilton, an Osteopath who also teaches at the London

School of Osteopathy; Amanda Cattini, an Alzheimer's Society Information Worker and Dementia Friendly Community Coordinator at Merton Dementia Hub and Kim Smith, an End of Life Care Nurse with the Central London Community Health Care Trust.

Shara Leonard

Tuesday Lunches

St Mary's Tuesday Lunch continues to be a core part of St Mary's social calendar. We meet each Tuesday during Term time and usually welcome 18-20 regular attendees. Our lovely hosts offer up their homes for a simple lunch of bread, cheese and fruit and a chat! Attendees contribute £4 per person and the money raised from lunches is donated to charitable causes.

This year we have donated to many charitable causes including the Bishops Lent cause, the Poppy appeal, St Mary's night shelter and Alzheimer's UK, raising almost £1000 from September 2017- January 2018.

We welcome all to our lunches, regardless of faith or church and the group has a real sense of family and community, with friendships spanning many years. We are able to arrange lifts for anyone wishing to attend with mobility issues. The group is run by Simone Tromans and transport is organised by our trusty transport co-ordination Lucy Ennis.

Simone Tromans

Sunday Worship

Music

2017/18 has been a good year for music at St Mary's, with new paths explored and the choir's regular contribution to worship effective.

The sense of community within the choir is stronger than ever, and can be experienced at first-hand at Friday evening rehearsals. This has been fostered through events both in St Mary's and further afield: liturgical highlights this year have been the Advent Carol Service, with a programme of St John the Baptist-related music superbly executed, enabled by an imaginative set of readings from the Rector. The Holy Week services, shaped musically by Frank Martin's *Agnus Dei*, were moving, including skilful renditions of the Evangelist and Jesus roles in Victoria's *St John Passion* by Emlyn Williams and Dan Whitehead, respectively. The choir gave two excellent performances of Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, at St Mary's and in St Katharine Cree, as part of the Brandenburg Choral Festival.

2017/18 has seen St Mary's Choir visit St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey both twice, and a memorable weekend in West Cork, organised by Adam and Sarah Gadd (effortlessly, it appeared, despite their hands being full with three

young boys!) The choir gave an excellent concert as part of the prestigious music festival at St Barrahane's Church, Castletownshend.

Andrew Lenon continues to be a wonderful lieutenant to me in musical and organisational terms. His ability to improvise and conjure last verse descants / reharmonisations is a unique gift, and enhances the congregational hymn-singing greatly. We are looking forward to him leading the choir's weekend in Salamanca and Madrid in late July.

Colette Boushell has continued her excellent work with the children, who now sing lots of challenging pieces from the Anglican choral tradition (including settings of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis) confidently, enthusiastically and accurately. Their performance of Reger's Maria Wiegenlied was a highlight of the Carol Service. The adult choir have also enjoyed Colette's direction. Some of them will be joining the Wimbledon Youth Choir and adult choir shortly. Gabriel Porter has been an outstanding Head Chorister.

Martin Neary and Ben Revill have provided inspiring direction to the adult choir at evensong.

Catherine Porter and Christina Naughton do a huge amount as Choir Chairmen, to organise logistics for concerts, and social events.

Sarah Colley is the unsung hero, her work as librarian amazingly dedicated and meticulous - without the many hours she gives, the DOM's life would be much harder!

In the last year, we have welcomed several new younger musicians to the St Mary's community: Hugo Williams, who has proved to be an excellent organ scholar and useful bass; Lizzie Robbins has continued to be a superb soprano choral scholar; Jad Grainger has displayed his great talent as an accompanist; Tom Ronayne finished a successful stint as a choral scholar. We said farewell to Bethy Reeves and Jason Ching, who were outstanding organ and choral scholars.

Our greatest challenge is maintaining the strength of the 9.30am choir, as the choristers (children) now take more part in the 11.15am and 6.30pm services, and evensong has proved popular with new adult choir members. I hope that in the next year the 9.30am congregation will witness more regularly the rich depth of choral talent at St Mary's

Max Barley

Chorister Annual Report

Towards the end of the spring term last year, Max and I discussed rotating the services in which the choristers would participate each month, in order to ensure high levels of attendance at each service. The reason for this is because of the many other commitments the choristers have over the weekend, such as hockey

matches, drama groups etc. This rotation began in September and I am pleased to say it has been a great success. We are fortunate to have a good number of choristers, and by rotating the services, at which they sing, there have been a consistent number at all services, be it even-song, the 9.30 or 11.15 services.

It has also been successful in addressing some of the other issues that have presented themselves over the years. The choristers are an unauditioned choir, so any child is welcome to join. This means we have a fantastic range of age, ability and experience within the choir. By rotating the services each month, the choristers learn some of the more challenging even-song repertoire, as well as the more popular and accessible music that is required for the 11.15 services. This means that there is music to appeal to all abilities and backgrounds and has been instrumental in bringing all choristers together.

In addition to the church services, we have had a busy year performing in other venues with different repertoire. We had our now annual summer concert last July which is a marvellous opportunity for choristers to perform on their many instruments and is a fun occasion for us all.

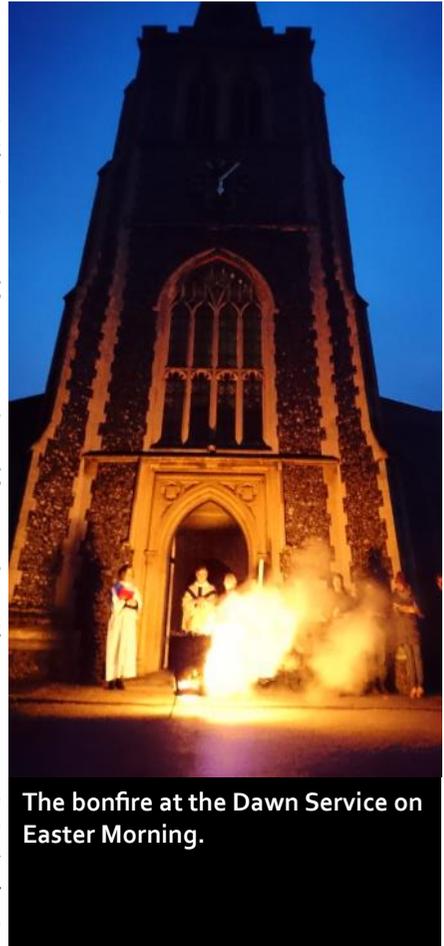
In September, I had the privilege of having the choristers sing at my own wedding. I was so proud of how well they sang. We also sang at the West Barnes Christmas concert in December and look forward to other occasions with them.

We have had a most successful year in terms of recruitment and I am glad to say that we are attracting new members all the time. We look forward to what the rest of 2018 brings, with more concerts and new repertoire in the pipeline!

Colette Boushell

Bell Ringing

Throughout 2017 we have rung regularly on six or eight bells for Sunday morning Eucharist and Wednesday evening practices. Adam, Ros and Susannah have all rung



The bonfire at the Dawn Service on Easter Morning.

quarter peals on the treble and continue to make good progress. We have welcomed two new recruits, Jackson and Wendy, but remain on the lookout for more. Special ringing has included a quarter peal for the baptism of Benjamin and Rosanna Rusby, children of our Deputy Ringing master Chris, and a quarter peal rung immediately after the two minute silence on Armistice Day. A new and successful innovation, though actually in 2018, was ringing during the Easter Day dawn service. We have not neglected the social side with a day outing to Berkshire, a weekend away to Ely, finishing with Communion at the cathedral, and a summer barbecue. In November we won the quiz held by the Northern District of the Surrey association of Church Bellringers. Handbells were again rung at the start of the Christmas carol service and change ringing on handbells is regularly practised on Sunday afternoons along with afternoon tea and cake.

Lawrence Davies

Flowers

It occurs to me that the St Mary's Flower Team is essentially a small non-profit making volunteer-staffed business contracted freely to the Church but commercially to occasional customers. It is entirely self-financing and managed and no provision is asked for, or made, for flowers' or necessary equipment, in the Church accounts.

To operate effectively the team requires many and diverse skills. The finances have to be carefully managed, interaction with "customers" requires marketing and pastoral skills, careful planning is necessary to ensure customers wishes are met and that waste throughout the year is kept to a minimum, transport is essential for the purchasing and collection of flowers and greenery, and for travels to the tip to dispose of used oasis etc. Strong arms for lifting endless buckets and cans of water; strong legs for jumping on sodden old oasis so it can be disposed of; strong backs for bending and stretching when both preparing and arranging flowers and importantly for sorting and managing "stores" of greenery. An alternative form of Pilates?

The team (14 strong, necessarily with varying levels of availability), provides flowers in the Church all year round, with the exception of Advent and Lent. In addition (helpfully augmented by several stalwarts) it decorates the whole Church for all significant festivals. The money to pay for the flowers and necessary equipment is earned by charging for decorating the Church for weddings, funerals, memorial services and any other non-routine events.

As it is impossible to know what our income is likely to be over any given period we work rather as Jacob did when he was Pharaoh's treasurer. In the fat years he stored grain to avoid starvation in the lean years. Our leader wisely manages in the same way and so far the Church has never been flower-less, although from

time to time subterfuge may have been employed to avoid congregational disappointment.

2017 was a very lean year. In spite of 9 weddings and 9 funerals etc, the store of grain from the fat years has been raided. For 2018 the immediate outlook is brighter as the number of already scheduled weddings has risen significantly, funerals and other events will come or not as the year develops,

Many flowers are imported and the falling pound has impacted on costs. Tight domestic budgets have impacted very considerably on how many arrangements etc our customers feel able to buy. We have to strike a fine balance between making charges manageable for customers while ensuring our books ultimately balance. So things have been difficult. But the team is determined that standards will be maintained and that we will continue to decorate our Church joyfully so that all those visiting or worshipping here may enjoy the beauty that God has provided for us.

Sonia Elkin

Linen 2017

With the many various services and home communions taking place, there are routinely 10-12 small items per week to be washed, ironed correctly, and returned ready for re-use.

As there were no last minute panics, it appears the 6 person linen team did their work efficiently and successfully throughout 2017.

Outside normal routine, the team also deals with cloths for the credence tables, towels used for baptisms and the fine linen for our three altars. The altar cloths are quite challenging, being vulnerable to wine, wax and oil. Replacement of one altar cloth enabled us to create a suite of new linen for the credence tables. Thanks to our able seamstress and the rest of the team.

Mary Ann Turnbull

Silver Cleaning

Thank you to the small team who look after the silver and brass which we use from week to week for services at St Mary's. In particular to Rebecca Mackenzie, Sonia Lodge, Laura Camerer Cuss, Mel Fripp and Denise Barnett. We keep the communion silver clean and set up all that is needed for the communion services, with wafers counted and clean linen. We also polish the brass alms dishes and book rest. One special task during the year was making sure that the churchwardens' wands were polished for the bishop's visits!

Alison Neilson

Church Cleaning

There are four volunteer teams and we are responsible for cleaning the church once a week on Fridays.

Ideally each group is made up of four volunteers and each group will clean once a month. The floors are cleaned professionally but all other cleaning/tidying is done by the volunteers. Normally the cleaning schedule is completed in about an hour by each volunteer. There are two lists of cleaning tasks – one lists the “must do’s” and the other is more extensive. If someone finds themselves alone or with one other then there is usually only time to complete the “must do” list.

I was told a while ago that I could claim for cleaning products (e.g. polish, dusters etc.) but I am very happy to supply these. Often another volunteer will buy cleaning items when they run out.

Cleaning times can be flexible to a point and there are times when someone cleans on a Thursday instead of a Friday. I urge people to try and swap their cleaning day if unable to do their assigned day. However, two cleaners are usually enough to do an efficient clean.

After cleaning, tasks completed are ticked off on a list posted on the back of the cleaning cupboard door in the west porch. The three month cleaning rota and task list is posted behind the cleaning cupboard door.

Naturally from time to time a volunteer leaves and then I post a recruitment advert in the weekly newsletter. Not always easy to find volunteers but I emphasise the social side (we are a friendly bunch) and the beauties of our church, not to mention a gentle workout for free!

I like to organise a get-together once a year and we usually gather early in the New Year for drinks

I have requested several times over the last few years that there be a professional “deep clean” of the church. This has not been possible due to various ongoing works i.e. organ, spire renovation, electrical works, new lights etc. There are obviously areas we cannot reach such as windows and high ledges. The other area which is in need of attention is the upstairs gallery. I realise that this not used very often and a serious make-over may be expensive. However, the flooring does need attention as the carpet is now very worn and is coming away in places.

If there is an opportunity to have a one off professional clean of the church and it can be included in the budget I feel it would be well worthwhile.

Anita Wilson

Churchyard Gardening

It has been a pleasure running the gardening team at St Mary's, the Church has a fantastic group of volunteers. There is a good feeling of community and everyone enjoys the time in the garden.

Highlights for 2017

- Simplified the garden sessions by meeting on the 1st Saturday of every month
- Publishing the upcoming gardening sessions in the news pamphlets (Thanks to Jane)
- 1st time in many years that we meet for 12 consecutive months
- The church's appointment of Ken as caretaker has helped organise the shed and replenish the tools and equipment needed to maintain the garden
- The overgrowth in North and West corners of the garden have been tackled; we have also taken measures to address some of the trees and roots pushing over graves and boundary walls.
- Angela, Carolyn and Jenny have done a splendid job keeping the Garden beds looking lovely (when attending a church service recently, it was great to hear some members of the congregation commenting on how beautiful the beds look)

There has been steady attendance in volunteers throughout the year, regular volunteers include the Long Family (Nick, Benedict and their 2 daughters), Alex, Barry, Larry, David, Thomas, Angela, Caroline, Rosie, Jenny, Richard and David.

Plans for 2018

- Restoration of the graves (Elizabeth Broad has the details on this)
- Cutback the overgrowth that is splitting stone work around the graves.
- Encourage the Badgers to move on
- Garden trimmers need adjusting (heads not holding the line)
- Monitor the levels of the garden waste.

Allan Duncan

Gardening around Garden Hall

This is a first giving an account of our gardening activities. I have been gardening at St Mary's since the year 2000. In the beginning I went up when ever I had a free moment. It did not seem as if it had been touched for a while although John Sweet gardened with the King's boys every Friday afternoon and did a sterling job.

When Garden Hall was built Christopher Davis asked if any one could plant up the beds around the hall. I said I would give it a go. Alison Nielson very kindly helped me buy the plants. We placed them in position and then two male members of the congregation actually did the digging in. The earth was very impacted. We badly needed their strength.

Then I began to tackle the big bed on the right of the drive as one enters, and gradually all the way along to the back shed. For the last few years Allan has done a brilliant job marshalling any church gardeners to gather for a few hours on the first Saturday morning of each month. Rosie Hughes tackles the Remembrance Garden and Nick and Benedicte Long are often on hand. I have a dear friend Carolyn Metaxa who also joins us each month and has made it her task to do the beds by your entrance to the garden. There was simply nothing there so she has done an incredible job. Jenny Baker planted the bed on the left. Carolyn and I usually work together either in her part of the garden or in mine.

Then I have a lovely neighbour, Patricia Dixon, who comes with me once or twice during the month. The porch was pretty weedy and Pat has helped enormously. She also helps Carolyn Ritchie with the church flowers, so she is a great bonus. I don't suppose you thought you were going to get this great epistle, when you gently asked for gardening news. Sadly no photos. Alison Nielson's son, Alistair took a few a while ago.

Angela Fox

Bee Keeping

It can't have escaped anyone's attention how cold, wet and generally grim the winter weather has been this year. Whilst most of us can retreat indoors to a warm and safe environment, St Mary's bees needed some support to ensure they survived the winter challenges.

Last summer, a nucleus of bees together with their queen was installed in a 'National' hive in St Mary's churchyard. The small colony thrived and increased in size despite having a somewhat shorter season (due to their late arrival) in which to build up their numbers.

Towards the end of the summer when food supplies are diminishing and the air temperature drops, the colony size reduces again. The bees cluster together to form a ball around the queen who, at the centre, is kept warm and dry by the group. The bees take it in turns to be close to her moving gradually to the cooler outside of the ball where everyone takes a 'turn'.

At the end of the season, a feeder of sugar solution was placed in the hive. This provided some insurance that the bees would have enough food to help them through the cold months. They had not been in the hive long enough to have built up enough honey stores of their own. In the new year during the very cold and

snow filled days a sugar fondant was added, a food source which is easily accessible for the colony. Bees can survive the low temperatures in the UK, however it is the damp that is often the problem so there were periodic inspections of the hive to check for signs of damp and or leakage.

With the recent (slight) improvement in the weather we were delighted to spot activity especially on a couple of sunny days. Closer inspection revealed the colony was well and the bees are looking fit and healthy. Forage is still scarce but buds are already appearing and we're hopeful the bad weather will be well and truly behind us soon so that St Mary's bees can get off to a flying start and build up those honey stocks.

Jane Bush and Colin Stacey

Social Responsibility

Merton Winter Night Shelter

“Every venue felt incredibly welcoming and well organized”. So said our guests this season, to which the night shelter gave a warm and safe night's sleep.

Between December 2017 and March 2018, the Merton Winter Night Shelter provided accommodation, hot meals, showers and a welcome respite for a total of 35 guests. Of these, 20 have now moved on into more permanent accommodation.

Much has been achieved this season, which was not without its challenges, not least of which was fielding ten languages.

Many of our guests (on occasion up to half in the shelter) were able to work. A few of the success stories:

One guest completed his first full week in his new job as a chef and loves it. He's very positive about his future with the company and is looking to rent locally.

A guest was assisted in securing an appointment at the Polish embassy. He was issued immediately with a temporary passport and so was able to start his full time work contract and be back on his feet in no time. He's absolutely delighted and extremely grateful.

One guest was successful in his application to Croydon Council for the deposit and rent in advance on a flat into which he will soon move.

After a two-year gap, one guest was accompanied to his GP for support with his problematic alcohol use. A really positive step!

The Green Light Medical Van (in regular weekly attendance) saw six of our guests for general health checks and advice.

Several of our current and past guests this season are back in contact with their children now that they are more stable and seen by their families as doing so much better.

Guests also spent time learning English and attending courses at Crisis Skylight in Croydon. This year, guests were invited by the Lantern Methodist Church in Raynes Park to attend their pantomime, an event some had not experienced for many years. The good spirits this engendered lasted well into the following day.

This season St Mary's volunteers contributed 79 evening shifts, 28 transport shifts and 19 catering shifts, a grand total of 126 across the seven weeks. In addition, volunteers donated goods such as radios, kettles, oyster cards as well as clothing, toiletries and slippers!

Expert guidance was provided by Nicki Zisman, project coordinator, and assistant, Krysia Kocia, whose work together with the generous support of all the volunteers has resulted in many positive outcomes for our guests.

This year the shelter benefitted from the fund raising efforts of the Tuesday Lunches and Garden Hall's Isobarre class. A huge thank you to all those involved.

The Merton Winter Night Shelter is also supported by the Wimbledon Foundation.

Jane Bush

The Environment

"To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth" is the 5th mark of the Anglican church's mission. St Mary's Church's efforts in this area have resulted in a bronze Eco Church award from the charity A Rocha UK. Clare Hall was involved the application. Her term on the church committee ended last April and Simon Harrop has taken over.

On Bank Holiday May 1st, we led a "green walk". Eleven people and a dog went by train to Hampton Court. We walked along the river



Palm Sunday in Garden Hall

Thames to Kingston, stopping en route for a picnic. We then used public transport to return to Wimbledon.

We are very grateful to Jane Bush and Colin Stacey for setting up a colony of bees in the churchyard. This is a very environmentally-friendly development.

We have re-started the Pray and Fast for the Climate initiative, meeting in St Mark's Church from 12:30-1pm on the 1st day of each month. The website provides topical prayer points.

New members would be most welcome to our small informal green group.

Juliet Boyd

Christian Aid Week

I am very pleased that I have been joined by Lizzie Farrow. In March 2017 we had an emergency collection in church for the East Africa crisis appeal which raised £788. In May we held the annual car boot sale which is a popular community event. It was well-supported by St Mary's congregation and raised £1331. The house-to-house collection during Christian Aid Week produced £4465.

Juliet Boyd

Wimbledon Foodbank Report

Wimbledon Foodbank works with families who are in crisis in the Merton area. For example, families who are coping with the day-to-day financial demands, until a crisis arises such as a broken boiler or a delay in benefits, could leave the family unable to feed themselves. The Foodbank will provide these families with three days of food and signpost them to the frontline professionals who can help solve the crisis.

Traidcraft

Traidcraft's mission is to fight poverty through trade, practising and promoting approaches to trade that help poor people in developing countries transform their lives. We support this mission by holding a regular stall at Sunday morning coffee selling a range of fairly traded items from Traidcraft. As well as the consumable items that we regularly stock Traidcraft sell a wide range of craft items such as handicrafts, clothes, bed linen and towels. Why not peruse one of the catalogues that are on the stall or visit the Traidcraft online shop(<https://www.traidcraftshop.co.uk/>). You might find some interesting presents. For more information please contact Lawrence Davies on 8947 5092

Lawrence Davies

Tennis parking 2017

St Mary's set up its usual car park operation during the Championships in 2017. This year, thanks to the work of Filomena Thong, we trialled a booking and pre-

payment system for a limited number of cars. It worked well and will be expanded next year.

Parking for congregations for all services and events on both Sundays was organised satisfactorily. Management of regular users of the churchyard (authorised and unauthorised) presented a challenge as always, and Ken Cooper's assistance in that aspect was invaluable.

Our clients, both new and regular, were pleased with the facility and the knowledge that funds raised are for charitable purpose. The price remained the same for the third year running. Managing the end of the day remained challenging as people did not leave directly play finished.

The weather was mostly good. There was some doubt about opening on one of the days following rain in the night, and another time when rain during the day gave some anxiety about whether cars would leave without making too much damage.

The volunteer effort was immense, over 500 hours during the fortnight itself and possibly about 1000 volunteering hours over the year. It would not be right to single out any names from the 120+ volunteers. 14 of those took on whole or part days "in charge". The remainder of the 190 shifts (2-3 hours) were filled. Many people did two two hour shifts, some three, and a few wonderful people did four. The average age of volunteers continued to increase and there were very few new people. Yet again, there were no-shows and last minute cancellations and not many people willing to be last minute replacements. There was a party for volunteers in our garden on 23rd July which about 90 people attended

We took £40,205. This includes the IMG (Live@Wimbledon) payment of £1,500, for its transmitter installed in the tower and 2 dedicated parking spots. This figure was yet again down on the previous year. This was due to a number of factors: more use of public transport, pre-booked parking facilities elsewhere and larger cars.

Last year I reported that there would be a change of management by 2019, and Richard Pelly has taken on the task. So from 2018 the administration and all the work during the fortnight will be done by him. I have agreed to try get the rota filled in the weeks before the 2018 Championships, involving him so he can take it over next year.

Mary Ann and Steven Turnbull

Communication

Grapevine

Grapevine magazine continues to be published four times a year. This year we changed the printing to printing in-house which had allowed us to print in colour throughout the magazine and be more cost-effective. The magazine continues to

cover all aspects of church life which this year has included introducing new staff, focusing on our volunteers, our charities and events throughout the year. This year we will be looking for a new Design Editor.

Melanie Fripp

Parish Office and Administration

The Parish Office has seen some major changes over the last year. Caroline Revill moved on from her post as Parish Operations Manager in August after doing sterling work for the parish and St Mary's. She was ably assisted by Lynn Coward who then stepped in to cover the role while a permanent replacement was recruited. In October Jane Johnston was appointed permanently to the role.

During the process of recruiting a new Parish Operations Manager the role was reviewed and it was clear that the current structures were making the role unmanageable. The main challenge was responding to general enquires to the office which were coming in through out the day as well as doing some of the complex management and administration tasks that are required. It was decided that the office opening hours would change to mornings from 9an -1pm so that the afternoons could used to focus on tasks that require more concentrated time and attention. This change has lead to a more manageable workload.

The office has also been well supported by volunteers who help with running the hall books, IT support and other necessary tasks. The halls continue to be well used and the booking process is moving online. We are hoping to increase the use of IT in managing the hall bookings to make it more efficient. We are also exploring using IT solutions for other areas of management and communication in the church and the parish.

Mandy Hodgson

www.stmaryswimbledon.org