

# St Mary the Virgin Twickenham

## Parish Reports

### 2019-2020



# Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2020

## Index of Reports

<b>Report</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Candler Almshouses</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Assistant Priest</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The Archives of St Mary's</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Bell Ringers</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Buildings Group</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Charitable Giving</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Children and Young People</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Cleaning Team</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Contemplation Group</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Discipleship Group</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Eco Group</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Ecumenical Group</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Finance Group</b> - report contained in annual accounts	
<b>Flower Team</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>St Mary's Group</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Lay Leadership; Morning and Evening Prayer</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Lent Course</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Mothers' Union</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Music at St Mary's</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PCC</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PCC Standing Committee</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Reordering Steering Group</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Sacristans</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Safeguarding</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>St Mary's School Trustees</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Social Events and St Mary's Response Team</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Hampton Deanery Synod</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Traidcraft Stall</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Parish Visitors</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Walsingham</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PCC membership</b>	<b>25</b>

## **The Candler Almshouses**

Our ten Almshouses in Twickenham, situated on the North side towards the West end of Amyand Park Road, were managed by local trustees in Twickenham until 2015. The funds were very limited and we could do little more than maintain the 1936 buildings in an adequate state of repair for the residents. These ‘Candler’ almshouses are named after a Twickenham grocer, William Candler (1826-1907), who left money for their construction.

Since 2015 the Twickenham almshouses (Candler) have been managed and run by ‘The Richmond Charities Trust’ (RCT). This is a superbly organised charity run by CEO Juliet Ames-Lewis, three headquarters staff and twelve trustees. Juliet Ames-Lewis is the acme of efficiency, dedication and humanity. In all RCT has about 117 almshouses spread over ten different sites. The charity has a small number of investment properties through which, through careful financial management, helps to balance the charity’s books. The prime purpose of the organisation is to provide housing for elderly people who are in housing need and are in financial hardship or distress. They must be over 65 years of age and have lived in the borough of Richmond for 5 years or, exceptionally, have very close associations with the borough.

As the trustee nominated by the Vicar of St Mary’s, Rev. Jeff Hopkin-Williams, (and accepted by RCT!), I attended my first trustees meeting on 20th March 2019. I was immediately impressed by the great deal of pastoral care afforded to the residents. ‘Scheme Managers’ ensure that the residents’ needs or concerns are properly and regularly addressed. There are parties and get-togethers for the residents. In 2019 there were several garden parties, a ukulele concert, evening of Shakespeare, quiz nights, a trustee and residents get-together, a trip to the seaside and a wonderful Christmas lunch.

In order to be able to help more elderly people who are in housing need, RCT is currently pursuing a new development of 9 almshouses in Twickenham. These are due to be completed later this year and, with Candler, will bring the total number of almshouses in Twickenham to 19.

Dr. Alex Hall, Trustee.

## **Assistant Priest**

I would like to offer my short report on both aspects of my ministry as half-time Assistant Priest:

- (1) at St Mary’s Church/parish and
- (2) St Mary’s school.

### St Mary’s Church/parish

During the last year I was regularly engaged in various groups such as the Adventurers (8-11 Sunday School), SMG and leading the pre-school Minnows (Tuesdays). However, I wish to highlight other aspects of my ministry.

1. On regular basis I offered support to all groups in Sunday School working with children and the 3rd Sunday of the month has been the centre of that attention. In a similar way I enjoyed preparing and leading various services for parents and children (e.g. Christingle, Crib services).
2. I continued to endorse the link between the School and the parish by coordination of children's participation in Messy Church.
3. I continue to organise regular school visits in our church, for instance, just in early March 2020 we welcomed Year 4 and I introduced children to the symbolism of the Eucharist, while later in March Year 3 came to learn about the meaning of Easter.
4. My current new project in our parish is to offer my support to parents. I have given a talk in January 2020 on "Reading secular books in a Christian/spiritual context". I will give another talk in May 2020 to parents.
5. I am very happy to offer talks during the Lent, this year on two occasions I will explore the meaning of two Scriptural events.
6. I visit some parishioners on Sunday afternoon and give them either pastoral support or we have conversation about important for them religious concerns.
7. Three times a month the Eucharist celebrated by me at 8am explores different aspects of the Gospel and links them with the experience of life of those who attend it. This is very valued by parishioners. Similarly, on the rota basis with Jeff, I celebrate 11.30am Eucharist.
8. I am very keen on attending the Children and Young People's group at Judy's house to plan, help to organise and deliver various forms of ministry to our children.
9. I have agreed with Jeff and Francis Drasar to offer twice a year on Saturday my support to biblical/discipleship group in our church.
10. Finally, I have managed to respond to other pastoral needs and give Jeff support when he is away throughout the year.

### St Mary's School

Again, in my capacity as half-time Assistant Priest I have been supporting teachers, parents and children in many effective ways. In more details:

1. I am delighted to lead regular Collective Worship (CW) on all three sites. Looking at my records, since September 2019 I have prepared around 40 individual themes with stories for CW each one with Power-Point illustrations.
2. I took part in a welcoming event at St Mary's school in September (FoSM AGM), which allowed me to introduce my ministry to a new group of parents.

3. On a regular basis I have answered children's questions on Junior and Middle site. I have given personal support to teachers in relation to RE.
4. I have created "Diaries of our questions" on the Middle and Junior Site so that we have evidence of pastoral care over children.
5. I have coordinated a number of services (Harvest, St Mary's Carol Service, Nativity Services, Bible service, soon Easter service, Celebration of life and Leavers service).
6. I offer my pastoral support to children, parents and teachers who are going through more difficult experiences with either illness of loved ones or death in the family.
7. I took part in both Summer and Christmas Fairs organised by the school which provided me with informal opportunities to talk with parents who do not worship in our church.
8. I am a member of SIAMs group, which prepares the school for next year inspection. I provide the group with theological support and some practical help.

Again, as in the case of the parish, I would take this opportunity to say my words of thank you to all colleagues from St Mary's School for your support.

Revd Dr Piotr Ashwin-Siejkowski

### **The Archives of St Mary's**

Many queries from all over the world have reached me during the year, often people asking about an ancestor's grave. Articles in the Sunday newssheet have continued to raise awareness of the history of St Mary's at the heart of Twickenham over the centuries: the two vicars at the time of the English Civil War and Commonwealth; a query about the correct title of the Vicar of Twickenham; and a letter complaining about the proposal to replace the Queen Anne pews of 1713 with the Victorian ones in 1859. There continue to be strong links with the Twickenham Museum and the researches of the Borough of Twickenham Local History Society.

Various visiting groups have been welcomed, such as the London "Culture-Seekers", St Mary's Scouts and Ham and Petersham Sea Scouts, and a student researching John Donne who wrote the text of Lady Markham's memorial. Many visitors are pleased that we can open the church on summer Sunday afternoons. Bible Sunday in October provided the occasion to open the complicated lock of the Nuremberg Chest and display the old bibles and prayer books stored inside.

The Archives are now housed in the north gallery and the tower where storage space and access are an issue. There is more work to do on the Catalogue, begun by my two predecessors, which is in need of careful checking. Offers of items for the Archives such as old pictures, books and photographs would be most welcome: in these digital times these still provide a vivid and enduring record of the church's events and worship. I am very grateful for the help of members of the congregation during the year.

Diana Wells, Hon. Archivist

## **Bell Ringers Report**

The improvements shown last year have continued so that we are now concentrating on learning Change Ringing. Progress is slow but we are getting there. Attendance both at practice and on Sundays has improved so that we now have on average 5 or 6 ringers and are able to do easy changes with call changes being available if we are short.

On a few occasions we have welcomed visitors which has enabled us to try something different. We have not managed to use the hand bells very much but did manage to get a band to ring our usual Christmas carols before the Carol service.

We have also hosted two Scout Groups to the tower when we have laid on 4 or 5 activities for them to try and also learn a bit about the Church.

We can still do with a few more ringers so if you are interested please talk to one of the ringers.

Norman Edwards (tower captain)

## **Buildings Group**

The Group reports to the PCC on the care of the church fabric. We met six times last year and undertook or planned a number of repair projects. We work closely with the Church Wardens, the Re-ordering Group and our Buildings Manager, Katie Kean.

At the start of the year we found that part of the underfloor heating in the chancel was out of action. After detailed investigations the problem was identified and remedied.

We have been steadily working through the recommendations of our Inspecting Architect, following his report in November 2018. The vestry roof was re-examined and it was confirmed to be in poor condition. A programme of renewal was drawn up and the work is currently underway.

The scaffolding is due to go up again shortly, this time to repair brickwork and metal grilles in the in the pediments of the north and south transepts. This work will also enable the roofspace to be insulated for the first time.

Work slowly continues on the handmade louvres for the bell chamber and we hope that they will be all be installed this year.

The Church building will always be our main responsibility, but last year much of our efforts were concentrated on the Hall. In August the courtyard was relaid, with work carried out by and under the direction of Richard Mellor. The former drainage problems have been resolved and the appearance of the space has been greatly improved.

There have been continuing concerns about the inadequacy of the hall water system, which is outdated and no longer fit for purpose. Deon Lombard has worked closely with Richmond Council to agree a suitable new scheme, which will be carried out over the Easter school holidays.

Temporary audio-visual equipment was hired again at Christmas, but we are finalising our proposals for a permanent installation. As we have previously observed, this will greatly improve the experience of people sitting in the galleries and enable them to participate fully in our services.

In conjunction with the Re-ordering Group we are looking at possibilities for improving the lighting in the church, both for services and for special events.

My thanks to all members of the Group, the Wardens and others in the congregation who have again so generously of their time and skills. We always welcome more helpers so if you have particular skills, or simply a bit of time to assist with our DIY projects, do get in touch.

Geoff Noble  
Buildings Group Chair

## **Charitable Giving**

At the PCC meeting held on 16th. September our charitable giving policy was reviewed and a decision was taken to continue with the current formula whereby 50% of most of the Christmas collections and of the proceeds of the Summer Fair are given to our chosen charities in addition to the money raised by the retiring collections from the Charity Sundays, when we have invited speakers from these charities. The congregation has been most generous in responding to these appeals.

In November 2019 from a total of £9,443, this magnificent sum being due in part to the success of the Summer Fair, £750 was allotted to each of the following charities:

### *Home Charities:*

Age UK  
Challengers  
Embracing Age  
Growbaby  
HANDS  
Intergenerational Music Making  
Kingston Samaritans

### *Overseas Charities:*

Friends of Mengo Hospital Uganda  
Friends of Vellore Hospital India  
Mission Aviation Fellowship  
Mission for Vision  
Mothers' Union Overseas Development Fund

It was decided to allot the remaining £443 to Off the Record, which had not been nominated this year but which we had supported in the past.

During the course of the year we heard talks from representatives of Friends of Vellore Hospital, Growbaby, Friends of Mengo Hospital and, most recently, from a member of our own congregation on the work of HANDS.

In May we welcomed a speaker from Christian Aid, organised street collections as part of this charity's annual national campaign, offered pastries for a suggested donation after one 9.30 service and held a retiring collection, all of which realised £1,423.

The collection from the Christingle Service was given, as customary, to the Children's Society and monthly collections were made in the Hall after the 9.30 service for Mengo Hospital, Uganda.

Members of the congregation will have the opportunity in the summer to put forward any suggestions as to which charities we should support in 2020/2021.

Sophy Fisher

## **St Mary's Children and Young People**

Our Church Vision is to seek to nurture our children and young people with a sense of God. We want them to develop their spiritual lives, opening themselves to God's love, and welcome within our church community. We aim to do this through a wide range activities which engage their interest, curiosity and enthusiasm and, as help them realise the relevance of faith and Jesus's teaching in the way they live their daily lives. The children's groups and activities are now well established, and we continue to look to improve them to attract and engage as many children as possible.

Father Piotr continues to offer valuable leadership and support. *His focus in Sunday School has been with Adventurers and SMG. He leads Minnows*, our pre-school Tuesday Group. He continues to lead and guide our third Sunday Eucharist where the children and young people are in church for the shorter and simpler service we offer once a month, so the children can feel fully part of our worship and become familiar with the Eucharist. The message from these services may be simpler, but they are relevant to us all! Father Piotr also led Confirmation classes, leading up to 10 of our young people being Confirmed in their faith on 12 May with Bishop + Martin Wharton presiding at the wonderful service. He also gave a much appreciated workshop for parents on using popular secular children's stories to illustrate Christian values, and we look forward to further talks after Easter. Father Piotr as school chaplain also helps bring the school and church closer together. For more on this see his own report.

Sunday School has continued to thrive on Sundays during school term time in the Church Hall. We love having both regular and occasional attendees. New members are of course very welcome. We come together for joint worship, led by Julie Hall with songs, a short talk and prayers, before separating into our groups - Scramblers (3-5), Explorers (5-8), and Adventurers (8-11). On most Sundays, Fathers Jeff and Piotr have invited the children to 'show and tell' at the end of the 9.30 services where their enthusiasm shines through! The Sunday school has a weekly collection and last year we raised £110 for the 'Shooting Star Hospice' supporting terminally ill children and their families. This year we are supporting the work of 'Mary's Meals' which is a charity working around the world to provide a lunchtime meal for children at school – this helps in 2 ways – by giving them food and ensuring they attend school. We always welcome volunteers to help with Sunday School, and for Adventurers and Scramblers, we are looking for one or two people who can run the small group on a rota, as Lacy Chapman (Adventurers), and Katie Kean and Charity Witt (Scramblers) cannot always be available. If we cannot find enough volunteers we may have to consider cutting down the Sunday school provision. This would be a great shame as the children get so much out of it. Please consider offering to help.

SMG, led by Katherine Cox, has had a productive year this year. Whilst SMG is a small group in terms of numbers, the quality of the discussion is always extremely rich. SMG members are thoughtful, curious and apply their faith to the everyday situations in which they find themselves. Our sessions always start with a quiet time of silent prayer and then we usually take the Gospel of the day as the springboard for our discussion or activity. We have also had some very engaged and engaging joint sessions with Adventurers. Huge gratitude to the young people who continue to attend amongst the competing demands of friends, sport, homework and, of course, a lie-in on a Sunday morning; their presence is a real testimony to their faith.

Little Fish has continued to provide for the under-3s during the 9.30 service in term time, meeting for a story and singing in the Vestry, led by Steph Bowden, Esther Reeve and Sarah Wilson, and is very much enjoyed by the young ones and their families.

In Church, Sunday school groups, and particularly SMG, have contributed to third Sunday family communion services through active and thoughtful telling of the Gospel, prayers and music. As mentioned above, Father Piotr is always supportive of the groups in their preparation for the services – from Minnows through to SMG and the uniformed groups. Rachel Smith has continued to lead the third Sunday music group with well-chosen music to support this simpler inclusive service. Many thanks to her and the supporting singers and musicians. Our lovely outdoor Celebration Sunday service, with SMG leading, took the theme of Creation this year.

The Christingle service, in support of the work of the Children's Society and led by Father Piotr, was well attended and much enjoyed. Many thanks to St Mary's families who made the Christingles, and to the Scouts for their help during the service and with refreshments afterwards. The lovely Sunday school Nativity crib again circulated round families in December, helping children focus on the real message of Christmas. The Sunday school Nativity – 'The Christmas Creatures' – was a powerful message of the Christmas story, wonderful participation from the full Sunday School and SMG. Many thanks to all the children and young people who took part with such enthusiasm, from the smallest sheep to kings, archangels, Holy Family and narrators. We are really grateful to Julie Hall who continues to lead and organise the Nativity. There is an enormous amount of planning and work involved, and we thank Julie and all her helpers. Whilst Robina Beccles-Willson could not be here through illness, we were still able to enjoy one of her wonderful scripts.

The Crib services are also a vital part of our Christmas celebrations, with Katherine Cox and SMG (current and former members) playing key roles, and bringing in many local people and visitors with their young families who would otherwise not attend church. As ever, the church was filled to capacity; those without a direct view of the service in the galleries could participate by looking at the TV screens we installed for the Christmas services.

Minnows, our Tuesday morning club for 0-4s with their parents/carers had a fall off in numbers during 2019 but has enjoyed a new lease of life in 2020, with new families joining. Father Piotr attends every week and Audrey Thomas and Jean Austin continue to provide welcome refreshments. As well as a sing-song and a story weaving in Christian themes for the children, it is also an opportunity for Mums and carers to meet and chat in a supportive way. Minnows joyfully participated in the January third Sunday service.

The St Mary's Families network, founded by Lizzie Wilkinson, is now in the capable hands of Clarinda Chan and Natalie Burkitt, and enables everyone to keep in touch, and also provides opportunities to meet up socially, often in member's homes. Clarinda and Natalie also organised a St Mary's Families children's Christmas party, much enjoyed by those attending. There are now over 100 on the email list and 40 on the WhatsApp Group. Through regular monthly emails, ad hoc WhatsApp reminders and regular social events for parents and children, the network aims to make St Mary's a friendly and welcoming community for families. Members of St Mary's

Families also visit the families of the children going to be baptised. They talk about how the family participate in the service, giving practical information they and those they invite might like to know, and also let them know of ways to get involved with families at church. Also having St Mary's Families members do the visits means the baptism family has a friend / link at church if they are new to St Mary's.

Messy Church has continued to be a very popular activity, with over 100 children attending! On a Friday afternoon, once a term, Messy Church is open to all children, with craft activities geared

for Reception to Year 3 children (plus younger and older siblings). They mainly come from St Mary's school, with many children coming who do not regularly attend the church, so it provides a wonderful way to further links between the church and the school. The children enjoy worship, chatting with Father Piotr, singing, a wide variety of creative crafts themed to a Bible message, and refreshments. Many thanks to Father Piotr who leads on the day and offers leadership and support to the planning process, to Charity Witts and Katherine Kean for organising each event, and to the Mothers Union and other volunteers for the refreshments. The enabling funding mainly comes from a suggested donation of £2.50 a child, which is willingly given. We are always looking for volunteers to help look after the craft stalls, provide refreshments and clear up afterwards. Commitment to a single session is all that is needed. All crafts prepared in advance and instructions and guidance provided. We would like to thank those from the congregation who have contributed in the last year. Messy Church would not be possible without this help. We give thanks to God for bringing so many children and young people to St Mary's to help them learn of his unfailing love.

Judy Britton

### **Cleaning Team**

The cleaning team had a wobbly time during last year but thanks to David Wardrop asking a few members from the 8 o'clock service if they could help we are now back on track. So much gratitude to them. We don't always have a full team each week but somehow manage to get the important jobs done. We look forward to when the re-ordering starts as that means we will not be needed for a while and then will have a completely flat floor to deal with! Many thanks to those who help week after week.

Jenny Kelly

### **Contemplation Group**

The Contemplation Group is held fortnightly on a Friday evening and if anyone would like to come along and try it, they would be most welcome. We start off with a reading that is relevant to contemplation and then go into a 20 minutes silence relaxing our bodies and clearing our thoughts. We end up with a short sentence and say the Lord's prayer and the Grace. There is something amazing being with a group of people sharing this experience and I think we value the time away from the rush of life.

Jenny Kelly

### **Discipleship Group**

The Discipleship Group continues to seek ways to help deepen discipleship and develop spirituality.

During the year a mediation on the Beatitudes was held which was very thought provoking. This was on a Saturday morning and in view of its success further Saturday morning events will be planned.

The lending library, on the first Sunday of the month, continues to provide a wealth of resources. A quiet day, around the subjects of mindfulness, questioning and prayer will be held at St Katherine's Parmoor on 25<sup>th</sup> April. This will be led by Adrian Samuel, our former curate.

The possibility of setting up a contemplation walk, with stepping stones, in the parish garden is being considered.

The Group is very excited by the lent course based on the theme of mountain top experiences.

Francis Drasar

## **The Eco Group**

St Mary's is a *fair-trade church* within the fair-trade London Diocese, so our groups are encouraged to use fair-trade tea, coffee and biscuits at events; the hall and church have low-energy light-bulbs; gas and electricity are sourced as sustainably as possible; with the practicalities of the Diocese's aim to become carbon-neutral as a topic for further research. The refurbished Vestry now has up-to-date heating and lighting, toilets and storage, and the proposed work in the church will take these improvements further.

Members of the Eco Group have supported the PCC in overseeing the contracted gardening work in the churchyard and gardens. We have continued to care for the Oak Lane Cemetery, a peaceful nature reserve in the centre of Twickenham which is open to all and is much appreciated by local residents. In the summer we had visits by the St Mary's Beavers and Cubs, who litter-picked enthusiastically and enjoyed drawing, while possible visits by children from St Mary's Schools are being discussed. Pruning, path-clearing and shredding the prunings have been carried out by the Trust for Conservation Volunteers' working parties. The successful Quiz evening in February combined an enjoyable social occasion with raising funds for top-dressing the central path, last done many years ago.

The Eco Group would like to gather a wide range of views and is happy to attract more members interested in discussing environmental issues relating to the church and its surroundings, in the current urgent context of climate change and low-carbon emissions.

Diana Wells

## **Ecumenical Group**

We are sorry to have lost David Williams from our group, particularly notable for his contribution in laying out pastries for the Christian Aid breakfast early in the morning and from whose wisdom we benefitted throughout the years. He is now in a nursing home, missing his former activities. We should welcome anyone who would take on his position. We normally meet four times a year.

Our first major event of 2019/20 was the Good Friday Walk of Christian Witness, for which we were joined by a large number of Christians coming from different places of worship. The walk ended at the Diamond Jubilee Gardens, where a brief service was held, led by Piotr. We were pleased to have the presence of Bishop Graham, who delivered the address, which was a call to unity following the bruising Brexit debate. Prayers were led by Father Ulick of St. James's R.C. Church.

In May, with the help of some dedicated street collectors, organised by Peter Mence, and thanks to the generosity of St. Mary's congregation, we raised over £1,400 for Christian Aid, offering pastries for a suggested donation after the 9.30 service. Ms. Shenali Tissaaratchi was our speaker and she was able to give us some examples of the outstanding work done by this charity in areas of the greatest need.

Some of us participated in the Hounslow Friends of Faith Walk of Peace and Friendship on a beautifully sunny 22nd June. At the World Zoroastrian Centre in Feltham we witnessed an impressive act of worship, which involved the lighting of a fire in a vast cauldron and we learnt about the tenets of this faith. We then went to the Sikh Gurdwara in Hounslow, where we were served lunch and heard an introductory talk on the Sikh religion. From there we walked to the Islamic Integration Centre, where we were welcomed, before proceeding to the delightful 12th. century church of St. Mary's at East Bedfont, complete with mediaeval wall paintings. In July we helped Jeff host Hymns and Pimms, always an enjoyable occasion, for which we were joined by members of the United Reformed Church and some Roman Catholics. Adrian played for us with his accustomed expertise and Barbara Williams had the perfect recipe for the Pimms.

In November for Interfaith Week some of us attended a Hounslow Friends of Faith session on Life after Death, where we heard some fascinating talks from the Mosque Imam, the Priest of the Heston Coptic Church and members of the West London Humanists and the Hounslow Brahma Kumaris.

In addition, committee members, with the help of Jenny Kelly, have been responsible for carrying out the monthly collections for Mengo Hospital and have assisted with the retiring collections held after charity talks throughout the year. My warmest thanks go to them all.

Sophy Fisher

## **Flower Team**

The highlight of the year was, as usual, the summer fair. The theme, Our Natural World, enabled lots of creative ideas to flow. Squires Garden Centre kindly lent us two trees which were placed either side of the Chancel, flanked by an arrangement representing water meadows on one side and on the other woodlands. The window cills were decorated with flowers referencing natural materials, including silk, clay, cotton, grasses and hemp. The corners demonstrated natural environments; coast, desert, tropical areas and the porch had a collection of growing herbs and food plants. Thanks to Caroline for sharing the leadership of this festival.

Harvest Festival was led by Joy with colourful arrangements of fruit, vegetables and flowers filling the church with scent and brightness. White and yellow lilies, roses, pinks, chrysanthemums and variegated foliage heralded Easter with a blast of colour after the lack of flowers during Lent. Thank you to Liz Herbert and Elisabeth Reynold for leading on Easter and Jan Nacmanson for her help with Christmas, which was white with hints of silver in among the greenery, berries and cones.

Apart from the festivals every week a group of three makes arrangements, decorates the Advent and Paschal candles, puts in palm fronds for Palm Sunday and poppies for remembrance, and makes the larger, more elaborate arrangements for weddings, which enhance and grace worship in our beautiful church. We are very fortunate to have a friendly, supportive team who are creative and reliable. Thanks to you all.

The annual Christmas party was an opportunity for everyone to get together, enjoy a delicious meal and a chat. Joy demonstrated the use of wire as a support instead of Oasis which is so environmentally harmful.

We would like to thank everyone who contributes towards the flower collections.

Celia Goodman, Amanda Boardman

## **St. Mary's Group**

In March 2019 we were lucky to have Margaret Mence lead us together with members of the Mothers' Union in Lenten reflections inspired by Psalm 22 and by Margaret's love of music. In April we were guided by a member of the Eel Pie Island Museum staff in a walk along the Embankment, from which we had a good view of the boatyards on the island and also heard about celebrities who had lived in the area.

Our AGM on 20th May was kindly chaired by Jeff, who asked members what they particularly valued about the group. Most replied that it was the friendships which they had formed while some also mentioned the variety of topics covered in the talks we had. Our Treasurer, Jennifer Malcolm, presented her accounts, laid out as meticulously as ever, but suffered a stroke the next day, from which she never fully recovered, and, after struggling with health issues throughout the summer she sadly died on 2nd. September, a great loss to us all. She was already a member of the group when I joined it in 1979 and served it devotedly, taking over the post of treasurer from Ann Ridge, another sadly missed member, and always organised the raffle we hold at our summer party.

On 10th June, as close as we could manage to its anniversary on the 18th., with Norman's help I gave an illustrated talk on the Battle of Waterloo, as for some years I had lived not far from the site, and the following day, at their invitation, we joined the Mothers' Union for tea at the Pheasantry Cafe in Bushy Park. On 9th. July the summer party was held at my house in Hampton, members making their usual delicious culinary contributions.

We began our new session in September with questions to and answers provided by our local celebrity, Jane Horrocks, whom some of us had seen in a variety of acting roles thanks to the organisation of the Social Group. She taught us that being famous didn't have to interfere with your private life if you chose not to court publicity. As our scheduled speaker was unable to join us in October, we had fun playing Monopoly and in November the Ealing Questors' Group gave a lively presentation of what it was like to be a child growing up in the war, covering both the sad and comical sides of the experience in their Reminiscence Roadshow. The Mary Wallace actors maintained the high standards we have come to expect from them with their performance in December of A Christmas Carol, which we attended.

At our New Year party members were subjected to an ecclesiastical quiz with places of worship to identify and questions to answer. They then enjoyed the refreshments which they had kindly brought and played a game of Beetle.

In February Margaret Dangoor gave us a talk on caring for those with dementia, which showed that this didn't have to be unremitting gloom, and in March we joined the Mothers' Union to hear Jeff give a Lent talk, in which he asked us to cast our imaginations back to the moment when a woman was healed merely by touching Jesus' robe and to use this as an anchor to which we could attach our prayers for anyone today whom we might know in need of healing.

As in previous years, we have continued to serve refreshments after the 9.30 service on the first Sunday in the month and my warmest thanks go to the committee members, without whom the group could not operate, namely Norman Edwards, Heather Gibbs, Jane Waterston, Betty Thornton, who is stepping down, and Ann Muir, who has joined us, also to others who so loyally help with the teas and coffees on first Sundays.

Sophy Fisher

### **Morning and Evening Prayer**

Morning prayer continued on a monthly basis throughout 2019, but given the falling numbers it became necessary to cease offering morning prayer. The third Sunday Eucharist at 11.30 has continued regularly and has remained unaffected by the changes to morning prayer.

Evening prayer is held at 6pm on Sunday evenings, unless it is the first Sunday of the month when a Eucharist with the ministry of healing is held or unless there is a concert in church. Those who attend welcome the quiet reflective nature of evening prayer. Music and meditation has been offered on five Sunday evenings over the course of the year. Again this has been valued as a prayerful and inspiring way to start the week. Grateful thanks are offered to the team of six people who lead these services with such dedication and prayerful generosity of spirit.

Charlotte West

### **Lent Course**

Hilltop Experiences is the title of this year's Lent course. Over the course of five weeks participants have been looking at significant moments in the Bible that happened on hilltops, mountains and hills being having been regarded in Biblical times as places where we are closer to God, seen as dwelling in the heavens. Sessions started with an outline of each week's theme from Jeff or Piotr and were followed by small group discussions around a series of questions. After some general feedback on the discussion the evening concluded with compline.

The sessions focused on the ten commandments given by Moses on Mount Sinai, the Beatitudes given by Jesus and forming part of the Sermon on the Mount, the transfiguration on an unidentified mountain top, in week 4 the crucifixion on Calvary and in the final week the ascension of Jesus from the Mount of Olives.

Those who attended have welcomed the opportunity to reflect on questions relating to our faith and shared experience of God at St Mary's. As with last year's course it has worked well being in the church and the vestry facilities enabled welcoming refreshments.

Charlotte West

## Mothers Union

Mothers Union (MU) is an International Charity encouraging service, globally. It could not survive however, without the support of local branches such as ours. We in our branch continue to raise funds for the overseas work of MU and its Emergency Relief Fund. In addition this year, we raised money at our Pancake Party on Shrove Tuesday for 'Away From It All' holidays for needy families in the UK.

In our Parish, we are a lively Group undertaking lots of duties, mindful of the commitment to service of our founder Mary Sumner. These duties include being Chalice Assistants, Sacristans, Sidespeople, Parish Visitors and helping with Minnows, Messy Church etc. In particular, one of our number, Audrey Thomas serves as Verger, giving hours of her time. We host refreshments after the main Service on Sundays once a month. Members clean the brass artefacts in our lovely Church once a fortnight. We also send cards of good wishes to those married and to those Baptised here.

We meet on the 2nd Tuesday of every month in the afternoon, with prayers, a Hymn and a short talk. Last year, we had a lovely Lent Talk with additional musical Inspiration, given by Margaret Mence. We all attended the Holy Week Services and in May, learnt about the Vineyard Project from their enthusiastic leader. In June we had an afternoon in Bushy Park and members attended the Diocesan Festival at St. Paul's Cathedral. In July we took part in the MU Global Wave of Prayer and had our Summer Party. In the Autumn, Frances Squire recounted her memories of life with Clenyg as a Missionary in Uganda. Barbara Thompson who is a frequent Pilgrim to St. Iago da Compostela showed us a beautiful film about it. In January, Betty Miller told us about the plans for Marble Hill House and on Shrove Tuesday, we hosted a Pancake Party with homemade pancakes. We are ever grateful to our Vicar for continuing to offer our monthly Corporate Communion.

MU is open to all whether men or women, parents or not, married or single. All are welcome. Please do join us ...

Barbara Williams

## Music at St. Mary's

### Parish Choir

The choir continues to take a leading role in the life and worship at St Mary's. It aims to provide music of a high quality, contributing to and enhancing the liturgy by performing anthems during the communion and leading the congregation both hymns and service music. We are together mainly for the 9.30 service on Sundays, but also for other events such as weddings and the Christmas Carol Services. The sound is generally felt to be good from the gallery although seating during the service is not ideal; we look forward to the reordering to offer much needed flexibility.

Rehearsals are held in the vestry on Sunday mornings, ready to start singing by 8.45 a.m. I am enormously indebted to those members of the choir who regularly sing on Sundays and rehearse on a weekly basis; and to several guest singers who are able to augment the regular choir for special events. ***But we are always in need of new singers.*** Attendance every week is not required: you will be welcome even if you can make only occasional services with the rehearsal on Sunday. Please do give this serious thought and help to ensure that the choir can continue to take a leading role on Sundays.

I am especially grateful to Chris Britton who takes rehearsals and conducts the choir on Sundays; and not least to Diana Wells for hosting the annual Choir Summer Party!

### Musicians

There are many services at St. Mary's that need music for Sunday services but also some weddings, funerals and many other events. So I have been grateful to Peter Mence for acting as a valued occasional deputy while Organ Scholar Sathin Wijesena continues to develop his skills. The third Sunday welcomes the gathered Music Group and range with inclusive Glorias and worship songs during communion under the leadership of Rachel Logan. The third Sunday has also on occasion been the opportunity to spot-lighting young performers and it would be good to encourage this to develop.

### Concerts

The Sunday Concert Series in 2019 was both musically successful as well as once again netting over £3,000 towards the reordering and included several groups and individuals associated with St Mary's, not least, the Marble Hill Singers. All musicians continue to be delighted in the improvement in the space and acoustics that Phase 1 of the reordering has brought and look forward to extending the possibilities that the next Phase will offer.

2020 sees slightly shortened Music Series to raise funds for the reordering; do come and support these events.

Canon Adrian Mumford  
Director of Music

### **Work of the Parochial Church Council 'PCC'**

The PCC has met five times since the last APCM with an average attendance of 75%. There are 13 lay representatives and four Deanery Synod representatives, each appointed for a three-year term. Together with the Clergy, the two Church Wardens and Director of Music, who is co-opted each year, there are 22 people on the PCC. Members take seriously their responsibilities as charity trustees and as representatives of the congregation of St Mary's who appoint them. They have worked well together to ensure the smooth running of our church, particularly in areas of finance, the care and enhancement of our buildings, charitable giving, safeguarding and supporting the work of the PCC Vision Groups, whose individual reports are included separately in these reports. Each member is encouraged to belong to at least one Vision Group. All the groups have the opportunity to report to each meeting of the PCC. Other items for discussion have included the appointment of two new Ministers of Holy Communion, overseeing the social calendar in the absence of a group leader for that group and of course progressing the reordering.

There has been the chance for some creative thinking on the PCC, as we started the new ecclesiastical year with a brainstorming session in small groups. Groups looked at what had been the main areas of growth in three areas over the past five years and in those same areas what should be the main areas of growth. The three areas were inspired by the Diocese of London Capital Vision 2020: confidence, compassion and creativity. Suggestions for growth in the future were fed through to the relevant Vision Groups to take forward.

Sophy Fisher as safeguarding officer has kept the PCC informed of steps we can take as a church to ensure the protection of our children and vulnerable adults and to ensure that we comply with all canonical requirements in relation to safeguarding (in particular section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, in relation to having due regard to House of Bishops'

guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

Thanks are offered to the Parish Office for ensuring the latest approved minutes are displayed in church and for preparing the papers for the APCM.

Charlotte West  
PCC Secretary

### **PCC Standing Committee**

This group deals with the work of the Parochial Church Council between PCC meetings. We have detailed discussions which are carefully minuted with discretion by Charlotte West, whom the group owes a great deal ...

The subjects we look at are already described in these Reports. They also include however, our contribution to the Common Fund, the use of Legacies, Office staffing issues, audio/visual screens, hire of our buildings etc. etc.

The work of all the groups listed in this Report is acknowledged with huge gratitude.

The Church is all its people however. The group's debate is always held within the context of our Parish's Vision Statement of our intent :

To nurture our children and young people with a positive sense of God.

To nurture our relationships with God and with each other.

To use our buildings more effectively to help make God real for the people of the area.

This group has tried earnestly to further those intentions. In this, we acknowledge that the leadership of Jeff and Piotr in Worship and in all areas of our Vision is exceptional ...

Barbara Williams

### **Reordering Steering Group**

Much work has been carried out over the year to progress the detail of the plans for reordering the nave of the church. The PCC approved the scheme in September 2018 to remove the fixed pews and the platforms on which they are placed and to replace them with high quality stackable benches from Treske on a new solid oak wooden floor. The plans involve making alterations to the heating, including adding some new traditional style radiators on the walls under the galleries. Wooden cupboards with shelves have been designed for the west end of the church for storage of all the hymn and other books, service booklets and other items presently kept at the back of the church. We will be removing the decorative plaster from the columns supporting the galleries - it was added in the mid twentieth century. The columns will look the same as the ones in the chancel. The walls under the balconies will be redecorated. Contractors have been appointed and the work will commence in July this year and last for about 8 to 10 weeks. During that period the church will be closed and we will worship in the hall.

Given the preparatory work that will be required and to ensure the church is not closed for too long, we have decided to redecorate the church next year. This will give us the chance to raise the additional funds needed. Before we redecorate, we will want to review the overall lighting.

We are very grateful to all those from the congregation who have generously donated to this project and to Garfield Weston Foundation for their grant of £25,000. Money that has been given specifically for redecoration will be held until next year, when we plan to carry out the full redecoration of the church. Further fundraising will continue throughout the rest of the year to ensure we can complete each of the phases of this project.

Stephen Brown and Charlotte West

### **Sacristans**

Audrey and myself are responsible for getting ready the Communion vessels along with the purificators and lavabo towels in preparation for the Eucharist services on Sunday mornings. One of us does this every Saturday evening. After the 9.30 service the vessels are put away.

Audrey is very supportive and does a lot for the church.

Jane Waterston

### **Safeguarding**

Those who look after our children and young people in the many groups which meet regularly are to be congratulated on keeping them safe while also engaging them in the church's worship. It is up to us all to support them. We welcome some new recruits.

Similarly the Parish Visitors have continued to keep elderly and housebound members in touch at the same time as they check on their welfare.

Many documents requiring attention have reached us from the diocese, where staff are anxious to plug any loop-holes that there might be in the armour of our defence against abuse of any kind. It is a hard task to keep up with them all and I am most grateful for the support of our Children's and Vulnerable Adults' Champions.

Sophy Fisher

### **St Mary's School Trustees**

According to the stone on the Arragon Road side of St Mary's Infants site, St Mary's School was founded 375 years ago this year. To mark this special anniversary, there will be a special service of celebration in the Summer term, in the presence of The Bishop of Kensington. The Trust Deed of 1861 appoints the Vicar and Church Wardens of St Mary's Church Twickenham as Trustees, 'and those whom they shall appoint'. To this end we have appointed those with professional skills and personal qualities which further the work of the Trust. The Freehold of the School Buildings resides in the Trust, various properties have either been acquired or bequeathed to the Trust and from the rental income of these properties, the Trustees meet to consider the requests from the Head Teacher to fund various projects which would otherwise find difficulty in being funded or

not be funded at all. For example, the Trustees pay for a part time Chaplain at the school, donate Bibles for each pupil, pay for a Learning Mentor and Anna Freud provision for children in crisis, a Music Teacher to help improve the hymn singing and increase the number of worship songs known by the children and various other things which enhance the Christian ethos at the school. The Trustees also appoint a proportion of members of the Governing Body who oversee the work of the school. These are known as 'Foundation Governors', as they are asked to be faithful to the Christian foundation of the school. At present there are 8 members of the Trust whom I would like to thank for the commitment and care they take in discharging their responsibilities to ensure that our children are nurtured with a positive sense of God, are safe, happy and enjoy learning and growing, so as to be better equipped to live full and fulfilling lives.

Jeff Hopkin Williams  
Vicar

### **Social Events and St Mary's Response Team**

Social activities are important part of the life of St Mary's as we get to know each other better and make connections across the different services that members of the congregation attend. The biggest social event as always was the Summer Fair and Flower Festival, which in 2019 took as its theme the natural world. People from the church and the community flooded in to enjoy the creativity of the flower arrangements in the church, the variety of stalls, things to eat and drink and activities for the children. So many people said it was their very favourite fair of the year and spoke of being made to feel welcome as they enjoyed the grounds and being part of what was going on. Huge thanks to Liz Sledge and her team of helpers for making it such a wonderful day.

Celebration Sunday followed shortly after, our annual service of celebration and thanksgiving, though wet weather resulted it being held in the church rather than the garden.

July saw the ever popular evening of hymns and Pimms, organised by the Ecumenical Group. Many favourite well known and less well known hymns were nominated for singing together. Music continued in September with the choir and others performing some Gilbert and Sullivan favourites in aid of reordering fundraising as part of the series of concerts offered on Sunday evenings throughout the year. The Eco Group challenged our general and local knowledge with their annual quiz and supper to raise funds for Oak Lane Cemetery.

We are grateful to Heather Moulson for taking over the co-ordination of the tea and coffee served after the 9.30 service on a Sunday morning, a chance to catch up with friends and meet new people.

Organising these events takes time and commitment. The PCC has oversight of all the regular social events and would encourage and support anyone who is keen to arrange a social activity. Help can be enlisted on an event by event basis from the team of volunteers who are part of the St Mary's Response Team. The team offers opportunities for members of the congregation to work together on events, get to know each other better and meet new people. Members of the team have helped out at a number of events over the year, and their contribution has been much valued. If you would like to be part of this team, please email Charlotte West at [the-vests@btconnect.com](mailto:the-vests@btconnect.com).

Charlotte West

## **Hampton Deanery Synod**

The deanery year started with a deanery Ascension Day service at St. Mary's Hampton. Jeff gave the address.

The first formal meeting was in June at All Saints, Hampton.

### New Area Dean

The new Area Dean (Reverend Tim Garratt) welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the Reverend Joe Moffatt for all his hard work as Area Dean over the past five years.

### Bishop's visit

He explained that Bishop Graham had volunteered some of his time to the Deaneries to act as a catalyst for Mission. He would be coming to the October 2019 Deanery Synod Meeting to outline his vision on what outreach looks like and how to get this on the agenda for churches / PCCs. The Hampton Mission with Bishop Graham would be in February / March 2021 and we needed to prepare for this.

### Diocesan Vision 2030

This was the main focus of the meeting. The Reverend Joe Moffatt explained that he had been tasked with working on the Kensington part of the Diocesan Vision and he would be gathering ideas and feedback for the drafting group. He commented that we should respond to Bishop Sarah's request to help her develop her plan.

The questions to consider from Bishop Sarah were:

1. Over the past five years, how have you seen God working in London or in your local community?
  2. Looking forward to 2030, what do you think God is calling the church in London to be?
  3. Looking forward to 2030, what do you think God is calling the church in London to prioritise?
- Members split into groups of 4-6 people to consider these questions.

The October meeting was led by Bishop Graham

### Kensington area Deanery Missions

Bishop Graham outlined the background to the Kensington Areas Deanery Missions. He commented on the four B's:

- Brexit – a divided Nation not sure what Brexit will look like;
- Boldness – we need to be bold in our mission;
- Bishop – a leader of mission; and
- Bible – what is it saying to us about our tasks?

Bishop Graham added that the church is an agent of reconciliation and has something to say. Bishop Graham explained that over the next two years each Deanery would be committed to host one month of activities to bring people together. The Bishop was asking each Parish to think of something to engage beyond the church and for others to find faith in Jesus Christ. There was a wide range of things which could come under the general heading of 'mission' and it was for each Parish to think creatively. Parishes could put on activities individually, join forces with nearby churches or even the whole Deanery. The Bishop would free up his diary for a couple of days each week during this month and make himself available as a leader of mission. The Hampton Deanery slot (February 2021) would be the fourth Deanery Mission event.

The Bishop proposed some questions to consider in groups:

- What could you do?
- Who could you do it with?
- How can you involve as many people as possible?
- What will you do next?

The Final meeting of the year was held at St Mary's. Jeff gave the meeting a short history of St Mary's and outlined its strategy.

The speaker for the main topic (sharing faith) had to pull out at the last minute so this item was postponed to a later meeting.

#### Deanery mission 2021 update

The Area Dean reminded everyone about the Bishops plans for the Deanery Mission (which were detailed in the October 2019 minutes) and that the Hampton Deanery slot would be in February 2021 (1 year away and rapidly approaching).

He asked members to brainstorm with a few others near them to explore:

- Who are you trying to reach out to?
- What could you do?
- How can you reach as many people as possible?
- What will you do next?
- How will you follow-up?

The Area Dean finished with an action for everyone – to take this back to their PCC and put it on the agenda of the next meeting for a robust conversation. There needed to be clarity over the next couple of months on the plans and actions needed to deliver them.

#### Christian Walk of Witness

Sophy Fisher reminded the meeting that there would be a Good Friday Walk of Witness from Twickenham Green to the Diamond Jubilee gardens (starting at 9:00am) and everyone was welcome to join this.

Francis Drasar

### **The Traidcraft Stall**

A big thankyou to everyone for supporting the Traidcraft stall this year to achieve an impressive turnover of about £2400. Our sales have helped to raise £200 for Traidcraft Exchange which helps small-scale independent farmers and producers with business training and development of local school and health facilities.

This year we have been reminded that our favourite ranges of chocolate depend on many thousands of low-paid workers in far-off countries, many of whom have never tasted a bar of chocolate! The 2020 Fair-Trade Fortnight slogan, *She deserves*, highlighted the gender pay gap in many rural communities. A fair price for the work of these producers across the world enables them to send their children to school, work their way out of poverty.

Traidcraft was one of the original founders of the Fair Trade Foundation, celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and support for small-scale producers is needed more than ever in today's global market-place, especially when so many lives and livelihoods are threatened by drought, floods, storms and rising sea level due to climate change. Many products now avoid single-use plastic packaging, include fairly-traded palm oil and are produced organically.

If you would like to join the Traidcraft Stall team (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday), please let us know as we always need help with setting up, selling and putting away the goods.

Diana Wells and the Eco Group

## **Parish Visitors**

The Parish Visitors continue to visit the housebound elderly, the unwell at home or hospital and those living in care homes. Also those with whom we regularly keep in touch. We want to keep people who are unable to attend church in touch with what is going on so that they may continue to feel part of the family of St. Mary's. We take Communion to the housebound and are available to visit the bereaved. Parents of children who are to be baptized are also visited.

We are also very conscious of the importance of welcoming newcomers to our church, greeting them on the path as they leave after the 9.30 service and following up those who complete the Welcome pew card. Please help us by greeting anyone you do not recognise when having coffee in the hall after the service. If they have been attending church for years and your paths just did not cross before, it does not matter! But they may be new and needing a friendly person to talk to.

Whilst we do our best to be aware of people's needs, we cannot always know when help might be required. We ask the congregation to be aware of those around them in church and let us know if someone is unexpectedly absent for more than two weeks or if they know that someone is unwell so that we can make contact. Anyone who needs a friendly listening ear is most welcome to contact me or the vicar.

We continue to be grateful to the Visitors for their commitment and for all that they do for St. Mary's.

Margaret Mence

## **Pilgrimage to Walsingham. September 2019.**

Last September, a group of 14 of us travelled to this beautiful, medieval village in North Norfolk. It was mistily autumnal which added to its charm. In 1061, St. Mary appeared to the Lady of the Manor - Richeldis. She asked the Lady to build a little house on that spot. A spring emerged there which flows to this day ...

On arrival, we were given bright comfortable rooms and settled in before a delicious supper of fish.

Our Vicar then led a short special Service for our Group alone. It was held in the small building in the shape of a house inside the main Shrine Church. During the Service, we all took a sip of the water from the Well, we received the sign of the Cross on our foreheads and the same water was poured into our cupped hands, overflowing as a sign of God's generosity. There was then

time for reading or for discussion in the cafe below the refectory or in the warm pub across the road.

On Saturday morning, Jeff led us around the Stations of the Cross, set in the gardens of the Shrine. This is invariably a deeply moving experience. There was then time for coffee and the opportunity to walk from the Anglican buildings to the Roman Catholic Slipper Chapel where the original pilgrims took off their shoes to walk the last mile barefoot.

After lunch, we were able to explore the fascinating religious buildings in Little and Great Walsingham and had time to enjoy the bookshop that is full of useful reading material . In the evening, there was a Eucharist shared by all the visiting Parishes followed by an unforgettable candle-lit procession around the undulating grounds. We then had the opportunity of a confidential chat with a Priest or the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession and Absolution).

On Sunday morning, each Parish Group had its own quiet Communion in one of the Chapels in the Grounds. We then prayed in the little Holy house for all the people and causes for which we had come here especially to pray. After a traditional Sunday lunch, most of us left. Those who could stay an extra night attended the final Service with all the Parish groups together.

All who went last year, recognised the care and work that Jeff gave to the Pilgrimage and we are very grateful ... It is difficult to leave Walsingham but the reality of what happens there, persists. Do join us next time ...

Barbara Williams