

 **Parish of Putney | St Mary's Putney**

St. Mary's AGM



8th May 2022

**ANNUAL REPORTS
on the life of
St Mary's Church Putney**

2021 - 2022

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THE PARISH OF PUTNEY

St. Mary's Church, 8th May 2022

AGENDA

- Introductory Prayers
- Apologies for absence
- Minutes of 18th April 2021
- Elections of:
 - a) 1 Churchwarden for 1 year
 - b) 2 District Churchwardens for 1 year
 - c) 2 x Assistant District Wardens for 1 year
 - d) There are no Deanery Synod representatives to be elected
 - e) There is 1 PCC/DCC members to be elected for 1 year and 1 DCC/PCC rep to be elected for 3 years
 - f) There is 1 PCC only members to be elected for a 3-year term
 - g) There is 1 DCC members only to be elected for a 3-year term
- Appointment of Sides-men and Sides-women
- Presentation of the Church Finances
- Church Reports
- AOB

APCM Meeting: Thursday 19th May 2022, 7:30pm, All Saints' Church

**St. Mary's AGM Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday, 18th April 2021
on the life of St. Mary's Church Putney**

Meeting commenced at 11.30am

Present: The Rev'd John Whittaker (Chair), Wardens, DCC secretary and Parish members.

Apologies: Hilary Macaulay, Paul Donnelly, Pam Smith, Norman Wilson, Mike Bull, Rev'd Jonathan Haynes, Isabel and Neil Bass, Rosemary Hatfield, Carrie Myers, Alex Lowe

Minutes of AGM 29th September 2020: There were no matters arising:

Minutes approved: Proposed by Mark Leadley; Seconded by Andrew Grocott; Approved unanimously.

Matters Arising: There were no matters arising

Elections:

a) Election of Churchwarden (One year): Andrew Grocott (proposed by Richard Holman and seconded by Angela Holman) There were no other nominations and Andrew was duly elected.

b) Election of Church District Wardens (One year): Two District Wardens were nominated: Angela Attah and Christiaan de Lange (proposed by Richard Holman and seconded by Andrew Grocott). There were no other nominations and both were duly elected.

c) Election of Assistant District Wardens (One year): Two Assistant District Wardens were nominated Christiana Vitale and Libbit Osborne There were no other nominations.

d) Deanery Synod representative: There were no Deanery Synod representatives to be elected. Sam Smith was elected to fill the casual vacancy caused by the resignation of Jeremy Donne during the year.

e) Election to Parochial and District Church Councils (Three years): There was one member to be elected to the Parochial and District Church Councils. Nikki Cornfield. There were no other nominations and she was duly elected.

f) PCC membership: There were 2 PCC Member to be elected. Charles Roberts (two years) and Thomas Willoughby (three years). There were no other nominations and they were duly elected.

g) DCC membership: There were 4 DCC Member to be elected. Libbit Osborne (one year), Katia Willoughby, (two years) Karen Todd (three years), and Dawen Gao(three years). There were no other nominations and they were duly elected. Proposer: John Whittaker, Seconded by Angela Holman

Appointment of Sides-men and women: Andrew Grocott thanked people. The list of names can be found on page 22-23 of the 2020-21 report. Proposer: Nikki Cornfield, Seconded: Andrew Grocott. Unanimously approved.

Presentation of the Church Finances: Andrew Sternberg (Treasurer) provided highlights from his report, thanking people for the appeal last year and the increased giving throughout this very difficult year. Furlough scheme has also helped. Finances have broken even which is a great achievement given the challenges of the year. The Rev'd Whittaker thanked Andrew Sternberg warmly for his highly competent handling of the accounts and very clear presentation. Approval of the Accounts were proposed by Andrew Grocott, seconded by Angela Attah and unanimously approved.

CHURCH REPORTS

Electoral role report: Angela Holman advised that this has been revised and updated as follows:

- Sept 2020 at APCM - 313
- Revision taken place and 8 removed (1 deceased; 7 moved out of Parish)
 - Welcomed 6 new members
- Number to be ratified at APCM - 311

Church Warden's report: Andrew Grocott commented about the year. Credit to the diocese and the clergy in the way the pandemic has been handled. Andrew also wanted to thank Paul Donnelly. All aspects were said to be covered in the report. Rev'd John Whittaker congratulated the splendid team of Wardens who had kept track of the assets of the church building and stated that we were very privileged indeed to have them.

Parish Assistant Report Josh reported that it has been a very strange year because of the pandemic. The detail is in the report. Huge thanks were due to all those involved particularly those in a leadership role.

Ministry with children and families Nikki Cornfield talked about the development of the online 9.15am service for youth and family during the pandemic. Seen the value of getting children in the service and Godly Play – this service will continue. Breakout groups online

have proved very popular. Streaming into the future: lucky with the tech team who set this up. Looking into a plug-in system going forward which should be more simplistic.

Richard Quesnel: Director of Music 1660 was the last time singing not allowed in churches. Thank and salute the choir for their resilience. Explored all different ways of having some music during the pandemic. Learnt a lot of blended models of our music can support worship. Improvising on the piano throughout the services. Have been able to have many services e.g. Holy Week. Loss of Harmonic Minors choir. Looking to the future to build this back and youth choir - talking to St. Mary's School, Putney High School and Lady Margaret's. From September will have appointed an assistance director of music, Will Mason. Two new services: Stations of the Resurrection 16th May 2020; July 11th Covid Laments, Hopes and Memorial

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals: Confirmations, admissions to communion, weddings and funerals were as reported.

Buildings and Maintenance: The report was taken as read.

Safeguarding: The Parish continues to give very special attention to this subject.

Parish Action: The report on Parish Action were taken as read. Great that even in pandemic year £366k raised. Congratulations.

Pastoral Care Group: The report on the Pastoral Care Group was taken as read.

Supper Circle: The report was taken as read.

Ale Mary: The report was taken as read. Warm thanks is offered to all who are involved.

Every Little Helps Stall: This has come to an end after 30 years and Rev'd John Whittaker. wanted to thank Mike Bull, Anne and Peter Tuppen, Celia and John Blake.

Flowers: The report was taken as read. Warm thanks offered to all who are involved.

Ringing Report: The report was taken as read. Warm thanks offered to all who are involved.

Servers: The report was taken as read. Warm thanks offered to all who are involved.

Chalice Assistants: The list was confirmed.

St. Mary's Music: The Report was taken as read. Warm thanks offered to all who are involved especially Richard Quesnel for keeping music going in a difficult time.

Breathing Space: This has come to an end as Jane Morley has moved. Warm thanks to everyone involved.

Contact and Discussions with a Local Muslim Community: The report was taken as read. Rev'd John Whittaker has taken this up.

St. Mary's Church of England school: The report was taken as read. Warm thanks offered to all who are involved.

Putney Debates: The report was taken as read. Warm thanks offered to all who are involved.

Parish Magazine: The report was taken as read. Warm thanks offered to all who are involved

Social Media The report was taken as read. Warm thanks offered to all who are involved.

Theology in the Pub The report was taken as read. Warm thanks offered to all who are involved.

Parish Assistant: The report was taken as read.

Youth & Family Assistant: The report was taken as read.

Curate's Report: The report was taken as read.

Rector's Charge 2020: The report was taken as read.

AOB: Richard Holman wanted to thank Rev'ds John and Jono on behalf of everybody for the way they have held the people of the church together through such a difficult time.

The meeting closed with the Grace

ST MARY'S DISTRICT CHURCH COUNCIL 2021-2022

List of DCC members 2021 - 2022

Rev'd John Whittaker, Rev'd Dr Daniel Trott, Rev'd Jono Haynes, Andrew Grocott, Angela Attah, Christiaan De Lange, Richard Holman, Sam Smith, Alex Lowe, Nikki Cornfield, Andrew Sternberg, Dawen Gao, Richard Quesnel, Mike Bull, Karen Todd, Katia Willoughby.

Secretary's report of the DCC proceedings

Wonderfully since I wrote the report last year, Covid restrictions have eased and we are getting back to normality. This has been visual in the Eucharist as well as the services which have been attended again well. Easter was wonderful in that we did the donkey procession from Palm Sunday from All Saints for the first time for 3 years (including the donkey 'Penny') and Easter Day in church was joyous. So looking forward to more and more normality returning to our world and to our church. God be praised.

Samantha Smith, Secretary

Report on St Mary's Church Electoral Roll AGM 2022

The Church Electoral Roll for St Mary's Church, which is a list of people entitled to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting and at the annual meeting of the congregation of All Saints', currently stands at 298.

We are required to revise the roll every year, removing the names of people who have moved away or who no longer habitually attend who live outside the Parish, ('habitually' taken to mean 'at least monthly') adding new people or updating contact details.

The revision will take place between April 23rd and 15th May prior to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 19th May, where the revised numbers will be ratified.

During this period members of the congregation are invited to confirm their details we hold on the current list by informing the Electoral Roll Officer if they wish to be removed or complete a form (ONE PER PERSON) if they wish to be included. The list can be viewed every Sunday in church or contact the Electoral Roll Officer by email [**electoral.roll.officer@parishofputney.co.uk**](mailto:electoral.roll.officer@parishofputney.co.uk)

Financial Report

	2021 31-Dec £'000	2020 31-Dec £'000	Variance £'000	NOTES
St Mary's Church, Putney				
Income Statement				
Income				
Giving	186.0	197.3	(11.2)	2020 boosted by generous giving during the height of the Pandemic.
Direct Giving	6.4	6.4	0.1	
Collection - loose plate				
Investments				
Property	22.3	21.6	0.7	
Other Investments	6.5	19.7	(13.1)	2020 included one off gains on investment income
Brewer Building Rent	10.1	10.1	-	
Other income				
Donations - incl Brewer Trust	17.9	20.9	(3.0)	
Donations - Brewer Building Trust one-off	15.0	-	15.0	One-off Covid related grant
Lettings	30.8	23.8	7.1	Post lock down lettings income has seen substantial improvement and is now c£8k per quarter.
Fees	4.5	3.8	0.7	
Other	(1.3)	0.3	(1.6)	Parish magazine deficit
TOTAL INCOME	298.4	303.8	(5.3)	
Ministry Expenses				
Personnel Costs - incl Stewarding	(15.5)	(9.8)	(5.7)	Pioneer Curate
Teaching costs	(44.2)	(36.8)	(7.3)	Lower furlough relief and inflationary payrise
Power costs	(0.4)	(0.8)	0.4	
Repairs and Maintenance	(9.9)	(8.6)	(1.3)	Majority of energy costs locked in at 2020 rates until Aug 2022. Not affected by recent rises.
Other Church Costs - incl security system	(22.0)	(7.7)	(14.4)	Two exceptional items - dock tower and terrace - c£13k. Also, £5k on heating repairs in Dec 21.
Parish Office	(12.0)	(14.6)	2.7	One-off water rates credit - c£3k.
Governance and insurance	(8.4)	(7.6)	(0.8)	
	(8.1)	(8.0)	(0.1)	
TOTAL EXPENSES	(120.5)	(93.9)	(26.5)	
OPERATING SURPLUS BEFORE PLEDGE	178.0	209.9	(31.9)	
Parish Support Pledge	(201.4)	(201.4)	0.0	Heid at 2019 level for last three years
OPERATING DEFICIT / SURPLUS	(23.4)	8.5	(31.9)	
One off items				
Brewer Building Covid Grant	15.0	1.2	13.8	One off income - Covid related.
Dock Tower / Roof Repairs	(13.6)	-	(13.6)	Repairs substantially higher than prior years
Investment income	-	12.6	(12.6)	2020 - unrealised gains on investment portfolio
ADJUSTED OPERATING DEFICIT	(24.8)	(5.4)	(19.4)	

Overall deficit - £23,400. 2021 Highlights:

- Slowly recovering from the Pandemic
- Substantial investments in Church Mission and Buildings
- Maintained our financial support for the Diocese
- Maintained staffing levels throughout the Pandemic

Income - £298,400 - £5,300 lower than last year after a one off £15,000 grant

2021 saw St Mary's finances continue to be affected by the pandemic. Letting income, though improved from 2020, and direct giving were substantially down. Several of the long-standing and financially generous members of our congregation decided this was the time to move on and leave Putney. To counter these shortfalls and fulfilling its commitment made in 2020, the Brewer Trust has agreed to give a one-off £15,000 grant. This helped address the 2021 income shortfall.

Moving forward, we kicked off 2022 with a stewardship campaign to rebuild and increase direct giving levels. We thank all of you who have either started or increased your direct giving. We are pleased to report that with the relaxation of Covid restrictions, lettings income returned strongly in the second half of the year and is now back to pre-Pandemic levels.

Expenditure - £120,500 - £26,500 higher than last year.

The main driver for increased expenditure was the major repairs work completed in the year. We spent £9,000 repairing the roof – with the Brewer Building bearing its fair share of the costs – and £10,800 repairing the clock tower.

We also invested in developing the ministry team with the appointment of Jane as our pioneer curate. The costs are largely borne by the Diocese, but we agreed to provide accommodation.

We committed to retain all our staff through the Pandemic. Personnel costs have increased due to inflationary pay rises but principally due to the furlough scheme falling away in the second half of 2022.

Power costs remained broadly unchanged. Our main electricity contract is locked in at 2020 prices until August 2022, so we have not felt the pain of the prices rises to date. However, current quotes are over twice as expensive as our current contract so we will forecast a substantial rise (£10,000 to £15,000) in future annual energy costs.

Other costs have been generally held in line with last year and our budget. The one notable exception is water rates, which saw a one-off benefit of over £3,000 due to over-charges during 2020. We continue focusing on controlling costs.

Parish Support Pledge – unchanged at £201,400 and commitment retained for 2022

For the third year running, we maintained our current level of financial support for the Diocese. We remain confident that we can afford this level of support but continue to keep this under review. **Andrew Sternberg, Treasurer**

Report on Giving

In 2021 regular giving suffered from a number of families moving out of Putney, including some of our most generous donors, and also from some members of the church community seeing their incomes fall due to Covid. As a result we saw a significant reduction in both the number of regular donors (a drop of 17, or 8%) and the value of regular gifts. Giving, including Gift Aid tax recovered, in 2021 was £14.6K (7.4%) down on 2020 and the impact of the 2021 changes will be felt evenly more keenly in 2022 because some of those who ceased or reduced their giving did so quite late last year.

	Regular	Baptisms	Tax recovery	Total
	£	£	£	£
Year - 2021	146,004	1,880	33,849	181,733
Year - 2020	158,553	475	37,333	196,361
Movement £	(12,549)	1,405	(3,484)	(14,628)
%	(7.9%)	295.7%	(9.3%)	(7.4%)

	People	£ per month	£ Average	£ per year
Started	6	326	54	3,908
Increased	5	134	27	1,605
Reduced	7	(240)	(34)	(2,880)
Ceased	23	(1,782)	(77)	(21,378)
	(17)	(1,562)	(92)	(18,745)

Note: Figures include Gift Aid where relevant

The number of people giving regularly fell by 17 to 186 in 2021.

The January 2022 income appeal had, by the end of March, achieved an increase in annual giving of £10,613. However some more people have left Putney and cancelled giving and so the 2022 net increase in giving is £5963.00

	People	£ per month	£ Average	£ per year
Started	8	370	46	4,920
Increased	28	383	14	5,693
Reduced	0	0	0	0
Ceased	4	(310)	(77)	(4,650)
	4	443		5,963

Note: Figures include Gift Aid where relevant

Richard Holman, 23 April 2022

Report from Church Wardens 2020/22

In writing this, I cast my mind back to the term “new normal”. I recall encountering this term soon after the pandemic started and two years later, I wonder if we are there yet?

What the past year has demonstrated is that despite the extensive lockdown in the first quarter of 2021 and the restrictions which followed, the appetite to use the church and Brewer Building as centres for the local community and beyond to come together in settings away from regular church services remains undiminished.

The Busy Bees Nursery is well established within the community and continues to provide nursery care and education of a very high standard. The ability to have young children mix in such a safe environment is so valuable, especially when contrasted to those periods of lockdown.

The Putney Pantry took advantage of the repurposing of the area in front of the Brewer Building to allow it serve customers “al fresco”. Does anyone miss the wooden bench that used to be more of an eyesore than a place to sit? Issa and his staff not only provide fare of the highest quality but do so in a manner which is in keeping with being part of St. Mary’s.

The letting of the various rooms and the church itself on occasion is a vital part of the finances of the Brewer Building and St. Mary’s. These were impacted significantly by the lockdown early in 2021 and the measures which followed. Nevertheless, as these restrictions were relaxed, the lettings have started to return to close to pre-pandemic levels. Unfortunately, some of the regular users have been unable to restart, but there have been some new partners, including a regular culinary masterclass on a Saturday night.

I would like to express my appreciation to Christiaan de Lange, Cristiana Vitali, Libbit Osborne and of course Angela Attah. Angela is stepping down as a Warden after many years of services and her contribution cannot be overstated. Her calm demeanour, knowledge of the congregation and friendly approach will be sorely missed. It does open up the opportunity for another member of the congregation to join the Warden Team. You are always welcome to contact me at grocott.andrew@gmail.com, on 07831 332 588 or WhatsApp. **Andrew Grocott, 23rd April 2022**

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals

Enquiries for baptisms and weddings are beginning to pick up. More wedding enquiries than baptisms. We performed two weddings in 2021. Baptisms- we performed 17 baptisms in 2021 – 15 children/babies and 2 adults. Confirmations: 5 adults were confirmed in Feb 2021 at St Mary’s church. Admission to Communion: 23 children attended an ABC course in September for a service in October 2021. Banns of Marriage: 35 couples had their banns read at St Mary’s. Funerals: In 2021 there were 5 funerals in St Mary’s Church followed by committal at a crematorium; 1 funeral in St Mary’s without a committal at a crematorium; 1 memorial service in the church; and our ministerial team conducted 5 funerals in local crematoriums. **Antonia Wainman and Julie Craig.**

Buildings and Maintenance Committee

The Buildings Committee met twice in 2021 (in March and October) and it has met once this year (in February). The Premises Manager (Berni Griffiths) has done a great job of rebuilding lettings income as well as continuing to deal with maintenance issues on a regular basis. The Committee was very sad to learn of the recent death of Peter Tuppen, who was involved in the maintenance of St Mary's for many decades.

The main issues arising in 2021/22 were:

- Tower clock and sundial – after some masonry fell from around the clock, repairs were put in hand and the opportunity was taken to repaint the sundial.
- Net Zero Carbon – the Committee has spent some time discussing the possibility of installing photovoltaic cells on the south roof of the nave. This project is being led by Hugo Chandler, who has considerable expertise in this area, but he has been hampered by the difficulty of obtaining reliable current usage data. Although a significant investment would be required for the installation it could lead to worthwhile savings in future electricity costs.
- Utility costs – Andrew Grocott has spent a great many hours trying to resolve complex issues relating to utility bills over the past few years and he has finally been able to make some progress in putting the arrangements on to a sound basis.
- Communications – Andrew has also gamely taken on BT, with the twin aims of reducing our costs by replacing the current over-specified system and also ensuring that we have a sufficiently strong wireless signal to justify acquiring new streaming equipment.
- Security – a new security system has been installed but it is not yet operative due to the current weakness of the wireless signal in the church.
- Canopy outside the arches – the £7,000 grant from Tideway Tunnel was finally received recently. However, due to changes in the usage of the arches, there is now less need for the canopy and the DCC has agreed that the funds should instead be applied to upgrading the audio-visual system.
- Lancaster Room – sound baffles have been fixed to the ceiling. The oven in the kitchen will be replaced shortly.
- Ventilation – the Church Architect, Alan Pates, has raised the question of the adequacy of the ventilation in the nave. The Committee has not found any easy way to address this, but a quote has been obtained for putting an openable window in the ringing room in the tower. Due to other financial priorities, and the apparent reduction in Covid risk, this work has not yet been commissioned.
- Drainage – we still have too many problems with the drains, which were not constructed for the current level of activity in the church. Putney Pantry has agreed to share the cost of upgrading the system that stops fat collecting in the drain.
- Health & Safety / Fire Risk – Precision Safety continue to act as our Health & Safety advisers and they also carry out routine maintenance on electrical equipment. **Richard Holman (Chair), 20 April 2022**

Community Activities in the Brewer Building and St. Mary's church

It has generally been a been a relatively quiet start to the year however as people return to normal life things are picking up and bookings are bouncing back.

During the quiet period we took the opportunity to carry out repairs to the Terrace and improve the decking to provide a larger usable space for events, we also recycled the stones from the borders to make a path along the bankside wall in the riverside garden.

As the restrictions began to ease, but still remained distance controlled, we utilised the Marquee in the garden to enable outdoor, all-weather exercise and boxing classes. This has taken a toll on the flat surface of the lawn which is scheduled to be resurfaced with professional grade Easigrass providing a further usable area for exercise, BBQ events, photo calls at Weddings etc.

In addition to the regular Church Services, Weddings & Baptisms, the buildings are also being used by a variety of 'community groups' including a signing class for the hard of hearing and once again we were a 'Hub Venue' for the Wandsworth Arts Fringe Festival in June.

This year has also seen the re-establishment of the First-Class Learning 11+ tutorial classes, Little Voices drama, Pilates, Yoga, Zumba, Boxing Exercise classes all returning to the Lancaster Hall. The highly successful ((Bounce)) enterprise who offer high energy, intense, cardio training on trampettes three times a week are also looking to book more sessions.

Sing & Sign, Mini Jam, Lucy Sparkles, Bach to Baby, Baby Broadway, and NCT classes all continue to provide a valuable service for new mums, babies and toddlers alike with the addition of Monkey Music on Monday mornings. Our own Toddler Group continues on a Tuesday morning lead by our Curate, Jono Haynes. 'Adult ballet' with Alice Crawford, 'Gentle Exercise' with Emidio Milletti and 'Pilates with Chrystella' providing senior activities for the young at heart.

Whilst the Putney Pantry acts as a hub for our activities in and around the Church and Brewer Building, they also host our monthly meetings of the local 'Women's Institute' who this year donated a 75" HD TV to replace the one that we lost. Regular Comedy and Jazz events also bring a vibrant nightlife in to the building offering further catering opportunities for the Pantry.

The Church space is also occasionally used for hosting larger events such as various fund-raising charity concerts, Boat Race Day, We Are Shop [kilo sales], local council meetings and political gatherings, hustings, consultation, and planning presentations etc.

The Wandsworth Symphony Orchestra continue to rehearse there every Wednesday night and will perform their Christmas Charity event here again this year. The Dover House Choir will also be back for their Christmas Carol Concert to raise money for Parish Action and The Fulham Camerata will once again perform their Christmas show here raising money for Paul's Cancer Care which has now become a regular fixture.

'Busy Bees By The Bridge' Nursery School operate at the back of the building by the riverside garden and under the stewardship of Caroline Henderson once again achieved 'Outstanding' status from Ofsted. Caroline is retiring this year and the reins will be picked up by Busy Bees teachers Vicky Tier and Juliet Bodger.

The 'Boiler Room Studio' is now a fully functioning rehearsal space, and a second recording studio is currently being built in the back of the Sunday School Arch behind the Boxing Gym. The Storage Arch has also been upgraded to a workshop which currently hosts our Repair Café and once again will be converted into a 50-seat theatre for the Wandsworth Art Fringe Festival which returns in June this year. Working closely with Thames Water and Wandsworth Council we have managed to reduce the major flood risk in this space.

St Mary's Church and Brewer Building is open all day and into the night, seven days a week and whilst we are making extensive use of these excellent facilities for the benefit of the congregation and the wider community, our objective remains to keep the Church open to *all* visitors for peaceful prayer and quiet reflection.

Berni Griffiths, Verger, Premises & Bookings Manager

Safeguarding: Adults and Children

Safeguarding in 2021-22 was directly affected, as it was the previous year, with the continuation of the Covid 19 pandemic. Social contact was vastly reduced and the Safeguarding team were acutely aware of the likelihood of difficulties in relationships that might go unnoticed with schools and churches being closed or severely restricted thus limiting opportunities to notice and reflect on our parishioners personal struggles.

Therefore, when issues came to light, we met as a joint parish team in order to share concerns raised and observations. In the absence of incidental conversations the importance of joined up communication between the pastoral and safeguarding leads was stressed. Whilst no examples can be shared we try to avoid complacency and remain receptive to any concerns shared.

CHILDREN IN THE PARISH

Sunday school groups

During the first half 2021, some members of our Sunday School team (the 'Wondering Angels') continued to support the 9.15am Sunday Services at St Mary's. Working with Nikki and the Godly Play team, our Wondering Angels led smaller breakout groups of children and their families during these services, both in church and online. Thank you to all our Wondering Angels and the Godly Play team for your amazing storytelling and 'wondering' leading.

We were finally able to restart Sunday School in September 2021 and it has been a real delight to welcome our children and Sunday School leaders and helpers back! In the Autumn and Spring terms we ran 4 Sunday School groups for children from age 3 to 13, 5 times a term. Each session is based on a bible story, with age appropriate songs, games, stories, reflection, prayer and craft activities. The older children follow the church

lectionary, drawing out themes such as exploring what can get in the way of our relationship with God; while the younger children follow a simpler course, which has included the Creation and parables such as the Lost Sheep and the Good Samaritan.

Inevitably, as a consequence of the covid lockdowns, both the number of children attending Sunday school and the number of Sunday School volunteers are significantly less than pre-pandemic levels. We have welcomed 66 children to Sunday School since September, however attendance each week varies, with an average of 22 children a week. We currently have 22 Sunday School leaders, including 4 new Sunday School volunteers this year. In addition, we are lucky to have two teenage volunteers helping out with our youngest groups as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award activities. We are incredibly grateful to all of our talented Sunday School team, for their time, commitment, enthusiasm and their never-ending adaptability to respond to last minute requests for help.

Thanks also go to Sally Eltringham for fabulously training our new volunteers; Adrian Weed for tirelessly compiling the Sunday School team rotas each term and distributing the activity materials to the Sunday school leaders; and to Julie Craig for all her cheerful help with the admin, including mail outs, Sunday School registers and making sure that we all keep up to date with our safeguarding checks and training.

If you are interested in finding out more about joining our Sunday School team please do contact Nikki or me at hannahking.2@btinternet.com. We would love to hear from you.

Hannah King, April 2022

St Mary's Sunday Creche Review

In normal times, we run a crèche every Sunday throughout the year (including school holidays) for children aged 1-3 in the Parish. The crèche runs during the Sunday 10am Eucharist service and is designed to give parents/carers a chance to enjoy this service without interruption from the children in their care.

We have a team of 29 volunteers who voluntarily fill in a rota on a quarterly basis (albeit at least half of them are currently inactive in a volunteering sense). All of them are DBS/CRB checked and the active volunteers help for 2-3 Sunday sessions per quarter. We rota 3 volunteers per session but often just 2 volunteers run the session. For child protection reasons we never run the crèche with only 1 volunteer present and as a result we have been forced to cancel sessions recently due to insufficient support. The crèche is run in the Clergy office (John's office) upstairs behind the lift and can easily accommodate demand for space. We have around 38 children currently under active registration with the crèche. During the time children spend in the crèche, they engage with volunteers, eat simple (allergy free) snacks, play with toys stored in the Cromwell Room, read books and take part in a short religious service of prayers and hymns.

We were delighted to re-open crèche post-pandemic on Sunday 12th September 2021 and have been mostly able to provide a weekly service since this time. It has been a joy to see parent and children return albeit we aren't as busy and active as we once were. Despite this, I would like to thank all those that have supported me during the last year especially

Julie Craig in the office and John Whittaker as well as my team of very understanding volunteers. Praying for a continued return to normality for us all. **Sophie Holdcroft, April 2022.**

Godly Play

Whilst we have used Godly Play extensively in our mid service groups this year, our Godly Play room has largely been unused for worship this year, partly due to its small size when social distancing was in place. We hope this will change soon. In addition, we hope to resume the Godly Play visits from St Mary's School as soon as possible.

Like Sunday School, our Godly Play teacher numbers have dwindled. We currently have 3 trained teachers, but with Jono leaving we will only have 2 very soon. We are currently looking at recruiting and training new teachers. This requires a 3-day training run by the Godly Play Foundation, but we hope to have at least 2-3 people interested already. If you are interested in joining the Godly Play team, please contact Nikki. It would be wonderful to build a new team and to have some energy behind the Godly Play programme

Nikki Cornfield

St. Mary's Play group

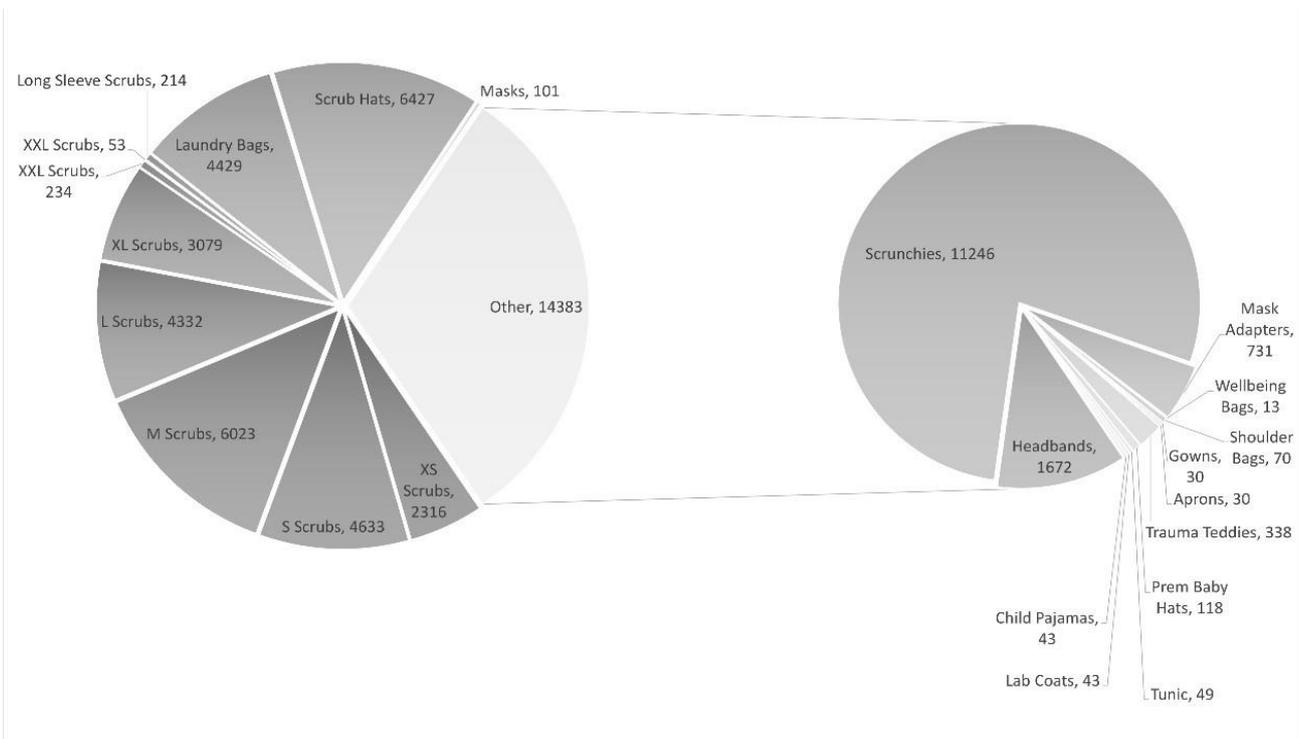
The Toddler Social returned in a socially distanced manner and has in recent months opened up following the ease in restrictions. Hospitality is once again offered to parents and carers and their little ones. Numbers have increased to around 15-20 children who enjoy a time of playing, sometimes a story and a song with Mousy, the Church Mouse. Volunteers are very much welcome to help with the running of the group and if you feel able to commit some time on a Tuesday morning please speak to Rev'd Jono or Rev'd John.

Parish Action 2021

The Parish Action Committee is a committee of the PCC, and has the purpose: 'to coordinate and further the work of the parish in the areas described by the third, fourth, and fifth Marks of Mission: (3) To respond to human need by loving service; (4) To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation; and (5) To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.' It does this chiefly through supporting a small number of charities: fundraising, volunteering, and raising awareness. Throughout 2021 the Parish Action Committee was chaired with great dedication by Rosie Taylor-Davies, who worked alongside the other members of the committee to mobilize the wider parish.

Parish Action continued to be active during 2021 despite the pandemic, although it was not possible to run many of the regular parish events.

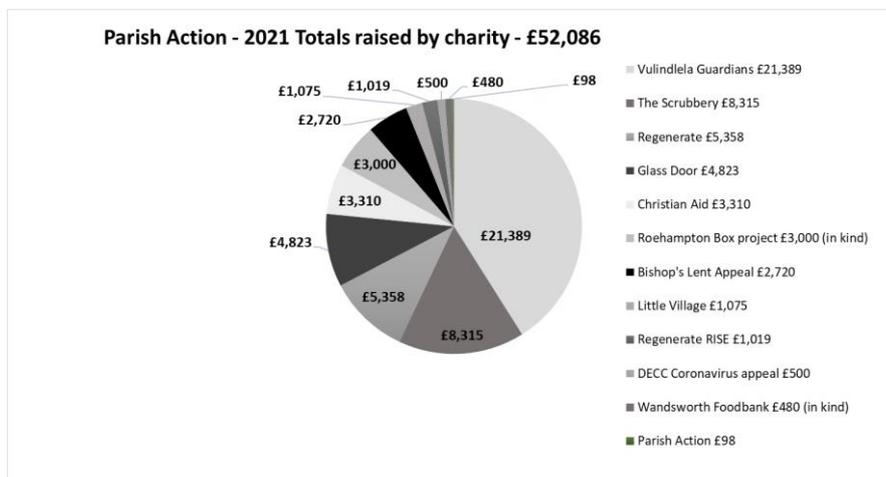
The Scrubbery continued to make urgently needed scrubs for medical facilities locally, and across London and England. The Scrubbery raised money to pay for raw materials and equipment through an online appeal, several small events and some large donations. In addition, the Scrubbery team made 'wellbeing bags' for medical staff that included personal care and food items as a small thank you for their dedication to their patients.



Vulindlela Guardians ('VG') continued to raise funds through a web appeal and regular giving from a number of the congregation. The funds are used to pay for primary and secondary school, university fees, and basic food and supplies for the VG orphanage. The balance of VG funds will be used to provide the continuity of support for the children over future years.

A wonderfully organised and attended sponsored walk raised over £5,300 for the Regenerate charity. Glasdoor money was raised from several runners at the Royal Parks Half Marathon, fireworks at All Saints' and a small web appeal. Christian Aid activities and collections were again run as part of the Putney 'Churches Together' group.

Principal 'in-kind' donations came from the toy collection for Christmas (for the Roehampton Box project) and food collections for the Wandsworth Foodbank. The Bishop's Lent Call was supported by funds raised from a 'lockdown savings' appeal. Little Village and Regenerate-RISE were supported via web appeals. Finally, a donation of £500, from Parish Action emergency funds, was made to the Disasters Emergency Committee appeal for Coronavirus.



In spring 2021 discussions began about changes to the way Parish Action operates, including the makeup and appointment of the committee, the number of charities supported, and the balance between fundraising and other kinds of engagement. No major changes were made in 2021, however, and, after consultation with the congregations, the charities for the next three years were confirmed as the Charlie Waller Trust, Christian Aid, Citizens UK, Glassdoor, Regenerate, and Wandsworth Foodbank. The major restructuring, postponed from 2021, is expected to take place in 2022, as Parish Action starts a new chapter under a new chair. **Richard Phipps (Treasurer, PAC) and Daniel Trott**

Pastoral Care Group

Pastoral care in the Parish has been difficult to deliver in the same easy way as it might have been two years ago. We know that isolation difficulties have increased and bereavement is a constant feature of our community, exacerbated by restrictions on attendances at funerals and other social groups.

The relaxation of Covid rules with the opening up of the church and cafe have alleviated some of that. But hospitals and care homes have restricted visitors and home visits have had to be reduced to avoid the risk of transfer of infection to vulnerable residents which is double-edged. There is a greater responsibility on the Pastoral Team to pick up concerns and offer support in whichever way is appropriate, whether walking, visiting or meeting for coffee to listen and share the everyday and deeper worries of our church community. We are also minded to support our supporters among the congregation who give their time tirelessly.

Supper Circle

Our Supper Circle has again seen an exceptionally quiet year in 2021 driven by COVID-19. Given the lack of activity in the past two years a mailing list refresh is required alongside inclusion in service notices/newsletters to ensure this service is known about and is meeting the needs of the Parish. If anyone is interested in volunteering or learning more about the Supper Circle we welcome enquires.

Social Activities

The Social Team is thrilled to be back again bringing our church community together with meet ups, both small and big; including the provision of food and drink after service to commemorate and to celebrate dates and special occasions in our church calendar, as well as putting on new fun and social events to bring people together and to keep things fresh and exciting.

One such example is our recent hugely successful and enjoyable Comedy Night, held in the Church with acclaimed Christian Comedian, Andy Kind. With John's blessing we chose to donate the profits of this event to a church-approved charity supporting Ukrainian Refugees. Whilst the aim of our events is bringing people together as opposed to a primary focus on fundraising, nevertheless we always cover costs and also normally make a considerable profit, which goes to the charities supported by our fundraising Parish Action committee. As the world slowly has been returning to normal, our committee is steadily

growing and we are pleased to welcome eight new members. We meet three times this year to plan a diary of events for the Church year, and led by John, we are excited to be thinking of new ways to bring vigour to our functions and to continue to extend the hand of friendship to congregation members of all ages, as embodied in our recent Boat Race Day party, held in our splendid riverside grounds - complete with jazz band, safely -enclosed bouncy castle, bar and bbq. This year in addition to our all- age events, we also hope to introduce new events with focus on particular sections of our church, such as the upcoming cinema pyjama matinee for school years Reception through to year six, and pizza parties and discos for our teenagers who are now at senior schools.

We welcome any contribution of help on an *ad hoc* basis, as well as new committee members - Team spirit is at the heart of what we do. Please contact John or Amber Raine on 07748 982 806 / ambermaxine@hotmail.com for further information about joining us.

Flowers

We are a small group and greatly enjoy the process of creating arrangements in our beautiful Church. I will ask the team to choose dates on which to start arranging flowers again after Easter. New members are most welcome; no prior knowledge is needed, and instruction is available. I would like to thank Mike Bull for his help in planning and making the Christmas and Easter decorations together with Ellen and Carrie this year. We will continue to provide arrangements in memory of loved ones on request. If you would like to sponsor one of our Sunday pedestals, or join the team please contact me: spaleologo@btinternet.com **Sofia Paleologo**

Bell Ringing

Ringling at Putney is now back to normal following the pandemic and various periods when the church was closed. We have had a very up and down year in the lives of our ringers. Sam Ede was awarded a CBE in the Queen's 2021 birthday honours for her services to law and we rang a quarter peal later that June to celebrate that amazing achievement. Sam has since given birth to her first child, so it has been a very eventful 12 months for her. The flipside of the coin is that sadly we have lost three ringers since the last of these annual reports. One was a former ringer called John Ridley, whose brother and nephew were part of a peal rung in his memory. But most notably we lost tower and church stalwarts Ann and Peter Tuppen, both in their 80s, who died either side of the end of 2021, both ringers until age and the stairs defeated them, and parents of Sarah, a former Tower Captain. We rang a quarter peal to commemorate Ann on her funeral day in January this year, and will repeat the tribute when Peter is finally laid to rest. Many, many current and former Putney ringers were present for Ann's funeral, which was a true testament to how close-knit the ringing community at Putney is.

We have also been part of events across the nation to use bells in all towers to mark special occasions. On 10th April, our bells were part of a national toll to mark the death of the Duke of Edinburgh – 99 whole pulls with a gap in between each (requires real strength and skill); towers across London tolled to mark the 4th anniversary of the Grenfell fire in June; and a

national toll to draw attention to the COP 26 conference in Glasgow in October. We were also very pleased to be asked to ring for some weddings during the year, which really felt like life was getting back to normal.

We still struggle to get a band together for Service ringing on some Sunday mornings, but have had a couple of new ringers begin recently which is very encouraging. We continue to receive support from experienced ringers from other towers for our practise nights on Mondays, which is much appreciated and allows us to extend the range of things we can ring. If you would like to learn to ring please contact the band through the Parish Office.

Sidespersons and Welcomers' Report

The services at St. Mary's rely on several groups of people and I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks for the Sidespersons team who are often the first people the congregation meet. This year has seen a change in the composition of the team as some have left the Parish and pleased to say that there have been a number of people who have joined.

Sidespersons: Alison Guest, Camilla Hoenich, Claudia Colombo, Jeremy Cole, Deborah Chittenden, Evelyn Dorkel, Ian Parramore, John Blake, Kate Gibson, Katie Bishop, Tali Mbangwa, Robert Wilson, Maya Lojoo, Sarah Thomas, Ben Barker, Richard Spencer.

This year has seen two changes in the way the team works. When "on duty," the children of the team are more than welcome to come along. I have also looked to include the children in the ringing of the Sanctus Bell during the Eucharistic Prayer. In addition, I have set up a WhatsApp Group which allows changes to be notified at short notice.

The Welcomers at Caritas include clergy, wardens, Susan Stopforth and Christopher Garnett.

This role at St. Mary's provides an ideal opportunity to participate in the services as well getting to know the congregation. If anyone is interested in joining the team, they would be more than welcome. The training is straightforward and please contact me on grocott.andrew@gmail.com, 07831 332 588. **Andrew Grocott 24th April 2022**

Servers

Antonia Wainman continues to manage the Serving Rota. Currently the serving team consists of 34 servers: 10 adults and 24 children. The majority of children are aged between 8 and 11, spread across Years 4 – 7. Servers act as acolytes and crucifers, serving at both morning and evening worship, and work hard to enable the worship of the attending congregation. Sadly, the pandemic has meant that servers and their parents are slow to commit to rotas but we are very grateful to a small pool of regular serving volunteers. Some new recruits would be a very welcome addition. **Antonia Wainman, April 2022**

Chalice Assistants

We are very happy to report that chalice assistants have returned to our services. We now have two, rather than the four assistants serving in pre-Covid times, as part of the serving team at 10am service. Some worshippers receive bread only, some take bread and wine, affectively all participate fully in the Eucharistic feast.

Music

Music at St Mary's has really gone from strength to strength this year. September saw the appointment of an Assistant Director of Music and the first three-day Patronal Festival at St Mary's.

William Mason joined us in September, taking responsibility for assisting with the preparation and accompaniment of the choirs, playing the organ and piano for Sunday services and launching a new recital series. He was awarded the prestigious Associateship of the Royal College of Organists and flew the flag of St Mary's in March 2022 when he gave an organ recital at Southwark Cathedral.

The three day 'Time and Tide' patronal festival, held in the second weekend of September, was organised in collaboration with the Thames Festival. The festival began with a marvellous 'meandering cabaret' written by Jono Haynes and featuring the adult choir, a cast of actors and readers and soprano soloist Hilary Cronin who went on to win the International Handel Singing Competition a few weeks later! Other highlights of the festival included a recital by scholars from Putney High School, a family day of 'rivers of the world' activities linking culture and faith, a festival Eucharist followed by a riverside reception accompanied by Mark Buckingham's trio; the weekend ended with a serene piano recital including Chopin Nocturnes and an improvisation to the film 'Flux' projected in the church. The music department was busy throughout the autumn with the notable relaunch of the Junior Choir and the collaboration between Adult Singers from St Mary's and All Saints' on Advent Sunday. Christmas was marked by festive music in Journey to Bethlehem, the crib service and the usual Christmas services - not forgetting the choir's appearance on stage in the square for the turning on of Putney's illuminations!

Junior Choir numbers are progressing well, and children from St Mary's School and Putney High meet weekly with Richard to prepare joint services with the adults - including Advent, Mothering Sunday and Easter. The choir has welcomed a pupil from Lady Margaret's School who is volunteering in rehearsals as part of her Duke of Edinburgh scheme. The young singers have recently enjoyed a pizza social and are looking forward to a trip to Southwark Cathedral in September.

Mid-service groups and some targeted recruitment initiatives have helped strengthen the adult choir who prepared lots of new repertoire for Lent 2022 and sang Compline for Ash Wednesday; they continue to meet weekly and have joined forces with All Saints' recently for Palm Sunday. They have also supported the Good Friday and Easter worship. Richard has composed a new communion setting, the St Mary's Service, which the

choir has helped to launch with the congregation - Gloria, Sanctus and Agnus are all settling in slowly but surely and helping to renew our congregational repertoire.

Some perspectives ahead: the choir will be singing Evensong at St Mary's Battersea in collaboration with Katy Silverman in May, and we are launching a new recital series, with 30 minute concerts held at 11.30am on Sundays after the morning Eucharist. This initiative was pioneered by Will Mason who - sadly for us! - has accepted the role of Assistant Director of Music at King's College School, Cambridge and leaves us this summer.

Richard Quesnel, Director of Music, April 2022

Report from St. Mary's CE Primary School

We welcomed Ofsted to St Mary's in December 2021 and were very proud of the inspection report which commented on happy, polite, eloquent children with many opportunities to develop talents and interests. School leaders were praised for an ambitious curriculum with well-defined plans for learning. Staff engagement with parents and carers was highlighted and pleasingly, Her Majesty's Inspector noted that the team enjoys working at our school. Governors thanked Cheryl, her senior leaders and whole staff team for their achievements.

We are also thankful for the continued and much valued support from John and the Church team. It was a real joy to have the whole school back at St Mary's Church for our celebration of Mothering Sunday. Looking forward, we have an exciting vision for our pupils and staff and are embarking on the transformation of our playground into a wonderful outdoor learning environment.

Putney Debates

The online debate in 2021 held by the Foundation for Law, Justice and Society, Oxford, was The Unity of a Nation. Leading constitutional experts representing England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland discussed the union of the United Kingdom and the future of its unity. You can access these discussions here:

<https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/research/putney-debates-2021-unity-nation>

Parish Magazine, Bridge & Common: Keeping the show on the road

The Parish of Putney has had a parish magazine for over 100 years. It is popular and is eagerly read by people in the parish and outside it. It has always had plenty to talk about. Over the years, the magazine has appeared in various shapes and sizes.

The current parish magazine, 'Bridge & Common', was launched at the end of 2019. Editor Miriam Boursiquot, graphic designer Will Fazackerley, interviewer Madeleine Neave and others did not let Covid-19 stand in their way. They were determined, with enthusiasm and hard work, to keep the show on the road. The team, with Richard Holman and I acting in an advisory capacity, kept the magazine going through Covid and came out the other side.

Regular features are articles by members of the clergy, an engaging interview and articles about whatever is going on in the parish. We are very grateful to the team for maintaining Bridge & Common's valued place in the life of the Parish of Putney.

The current issue has an article by the Rev'd Canon Richard Sewell, Dean of St George's College, Jerusalem, who was a curate at St Mary's. Another article is by the Rev'd Daniel Trott on '150 years of All Saints' Church'. And there's more. Look out for the latest 'Bridge & Common' at St Mary's and All Saints'. **Paul Donnelly**

Social Media

The parish continues to maintain a presence on social media with the aim of improving awareness and increasing attendance for events across the parish.

Follow us on **Twitter: @StMarysPutney**

Rev'd John Whittaker **@PutneyPriest**

Rev'd Jono Haynes **@CurateJono**

Or keep up to date on **Instagram: @PutneyPilgrim**

Engagement with the social media at a parish level is quite low but it is good to maintain this presence. Explore all the ways to follow Jesus... **Jono Haynes**

Theology in the Pantry

Theology in the Pantry meets weekly over a glass of wine for a short talk followed by lively discussion on topics such as Scientism, Gnosticism, Buddhism, Anglicanism, Thou Shalt Love Thy God, the Gospel truth of the Miracles, the New Religion of Environmentalism, The Cross as a marketing logo and Is God a She? Meetings are posted in notices of all the churches in Putney. Numbers remain small however and a leaflet campaign in February and social media presence have not provided the hoped-for boost. Cafe Theology should appeal to parishioners who do not necessarily attend church services, but the conundrum remains how to reach them. **Jenifer Norris**

Wandsworth Citizens

Citizens UK is an alliance of groups who seek to strengthen their institutions, build up leadership and campaign on agreed issues of social concern. A highlight of this has been the campaigning for businesses and councils to commit to paying the living wage. Our parish is working with other churches and schools in Wandsworth to launch a local 'chapter' and the work done in 2021 means that a strong alliance will be in place by the end of 2022. John and Daniel have been on training, a core group is forming up and we would love to hear from anyone in our churches who would like to be involved in this part of our church life.

Initiatives 2022

As we have emerged out of Covid restrictions in 2021 we have turned our attention to different ways we can serve and engage with our wider community. Three new possibilities have been developed during the year: a parenting group to provide input and reflection for

parents; a Repair Cafe which will see volunteers offering 'repair services' based in the church on a Saturday morning.

Youth and Family Minister's report

Each year when I sit down to write these reports, I look back at the previous years report. Last year was all about Covid – how we got through and what we had learnt. It ended with the hope that we could take the things we'd learnt and incorporate them into our well-loved model of Children and Families Ministry at St Mary's.

Prior to Covid Children's ministry was largely based on the Sunday School model, with Sunday school operating alongside the main Parish Eucharist. There was some variety with Godly Play, as well as a termly All Age Eucharist, but most of the work done with the children was formational / educational (learning the stories etc) and done by lay volunteers.

During lockdown we started an All Age 9.15am service which highlighted for us the value of children regularly worshipping with a smaller element of teaching and more attention on making our services more "experience-oriented" by helping our children and young people to pray and worship.

The on-line worship also highlighted the value of all ages (often as families) worshipping together, and the place for interaction between leaders (ordained and lay) and participants as part of the worship / engaging with Biblical / Christian teaching, thereby affirming the children's places in the church as fully-fledged participants who already have a call to ministry.

Valuing both models, we have trialled a "mixed-mode" approach to our children's ministry this year:

Parish Eucharist with Sunday School Sundays.

Parish Eucharist – All Together: We have one reading, an interactive address and shorter intercessions and Eucharistic Prayer.

Parish Eucharist with mid-Service Groups: Opening worship is together, followed by time apart for a short and focused age-appropriate engagement in a key message from the ministry of the word. We have used Godly Play, music and other ways to engage with the message with the children. The mid service groups have been led by ordained and lay leaders.

Parish Eucharist Sundays: Generally, in holiday time, when we do not have specific provision for children in our worship, we welcome the children with activity 'packs' so that the children can engage with the theme of the service.

Although children and youth attendance has not been at pre-Covid levels, we do believe that we have begun to create a faith formation which is authentic, organic, and consistent, and that the children have a sense of "belonging" and "journeying" together with their families, and the wider community.

We would love feedback on these services, so please do contact Nikki or John if you would like to offer feedback or suggestions.

Collaborations with St Mary's School - Lockdown also meant that our usual contact with St Mary's school in the form of school assemblies and services in church for Harvest, Christmas Nativity, and Mothering Sunday were not able to happen. It was a priority for us to nurture the connection between school and church during this time apart. In addition to the pre-recorded assemblies John and Jono delivered to the school, we initiated two collaborations with the school, one at Christingle and the other for Mothering Sunday. On both occasions an invitation to our Sunday service was in the pack and a very significant increase in attendance was seen at both services. Whilst many of the school services have returned to church (it was wonderful to have them back!), we decided to repeat the Christingle and Mothering Sunday packs again this year and plan to continue doing so in the future. We plan to continue looking for ways to strengthen our bond with the school community.

Admission of the Baptised to Communion Courses – we have run two “ABC” courses this year, one in September / October 2021 and another in December 2021 / January 2022. Both the courses were well attended with 23 children admitted to communion in October and 30 in January. The course was originally pioneered and run by Caroline Donne, and this was the first time we were doing it without her. The course has changed slightly to reflect the team's strengths and continues to grow as we reflect on each course. The next course will run in December 2022 / January 2023.

Parenting group: A June 2020 report from the Oxford Diocese showed how declining attendance rates in the Oxford diocese since 2015 have been steepest among children under age 17, and they are not the only diocese experiencing this. The report states that many feel a “significantly reduced” connection to the church by the time they reach age 15. There are many factors to this but one of the main factors that the report points out, is that although parents are primary influencers in laying faith foundations, many families often don't live out their faith together, mainly because most parents aren't sure how to do it or what to do, or that parents lack confidence to pray together or discuss matters of faith. We wanted to name this in our community and find a way to support our parents and carers to find ways to nurture the faith of the next generation.

So, prompted by this, as well as a desire to create meaningful community, contact and support within our parent / carer portion of our congregation, we worked together with Care for the Family and The Kitchen Table Project to create a programme that we believe is well fitted to our congregation.

We will explore how to create strong and healthy foundations of faith in children, as well as practical support to enhance family relationships. The sessions will be fun, relaxed, and interactive allowing for the sharing of ideas and experiences. They will take place on 5 consecutive Wednesday evenings from 27th April – 25th May, and will be facilitated by John, Jane and Nikki. For more information on the group, please contact Nikki.

Curate's report

Opening up and returning to shades of the familiar has enabled the return of the toddler, and senior socials, choirs, bells and serving teams in church, I have the pleasure of interacting with each group and many more as curate. Huge thanks are due to those who give so generously of their time and talent for the life of the church in Putney. Volunteers are always welcome and encouraged as folk move away and we are especially in need to spread the load on the acolytes (adult and children), crucifers, occasional thurifers and lay deacons at the Eucharist. Full training is given and these roles are a unique and special.

The Toddler Social is also on the look-out for volunteers to assist in the running of the Tuesday morning session, please keep the search in your prayers.

Ministry with schools continues to be fruitful. The move from an online presence to ministering in person has been welcome and I have enjoyed working closely with the Heads at St Mary's primary school with regular assemblies, services and collective worship content.

On a Wednesday lunchtime communion we've welcomed Patricia as a lay deacon, and it is excellent to see new faces at the service and lunch.

Aside from preaching and services, baptisms, funerals and weddings I continue to work actively with the social teams and support special events held across the parish. The choir singing at Christmas on Riverside Radio and the return of the Boat Race being highlights. I am grateful for the support of Nicola and the Positively Putney team and all at Parish Action at church and community events. It has been a joy to work with Richard and Will on the Patronal Festival and musical extras and begin to plan for more ... !!

The opportunities to spend some time with the emerging junior choir has been super.

The reopening of the pantry has enabled a clergy presence to support the valuable pastoral care offered by Issa, Monika, Thomas, Charlie and the team.

Thanks are due to the camaraderie and considerable admin support of Julie, Berni and Antonia. Andrew, Angela, Christiaan and Libbit our Wardens and to Nikki for her energy, enthusiasm and leadership as Youth and Families Minister.

There is lots going on at St Mary's and many wheels keep it turning, as I write this knowing that my time as curate will come to an end at the parish picnic in July, I am thankful for a curacy that has enabled me to grow in faith, make connections and serve the church, and I am grateful for the inspiring ministry of Daniel, Jane, and Richard; and Richard H (Caroline and Carrie) our Reader(s) and especially to John Whittaker for his guidance, wisdom and friendship. It will be very hard to leave this parish which has felt truly like home over the last three years.

I hope that I am known for valuing the importance of a sense of humour, so like all good comedies this will end with a wedding!

God bless you and the life of the church here in Putney. **Jono**

Pioneer curate's report

Pioneering is a fairly new concept to me, as it is to the parish, so my first task has been to engage with the theory of pioneering through training, reading and making contacts. I have worked with key stakeholders to begin embedding these ideas into the parish's imagination.

I have spent time getting involved in local community and church projects including the Scrubbery, Citizens UK and Regenerate Rise. This has enabled me to think about whether these afford opportunities for the development of new ecclesial communities and has also taught me about how volunteer-based projects can be run.

Pioneering begins with listening. I have enjoyed working with a team of 8 volunteers from our congregations to carry out a listening project. Together we have been gathering and interpreting qualitative data about our church and parish community. This work is still ongoing and a report of our findings should be completed within the next two months. In addition, I (and some of you) will be working as part of Wandsworth Citizens to listen to our local community more widely. This listening is expected to take place in June.

Once we as a parish have had time to reflect on everything that we have heard in our listening, we will need to choose a group of people with whom we want to pioneer. The choice will be guided, on the one hand, by understanding who is missing from our church at the moment and, on the other, by recognising our own gifts and passions. The second year of my curacy will be about building a team that want to get involved in pioneering and getting stuck into some experiments in reaching our target group. As I am only here for three years, it is imperative that whatever project we embark upon is done together so that it has a chance of remaining sustainable when I leave.

Alongside pioneering, I have been undertaking all the usual tasks of a first year curate – learning to plan and lead services including funerals and baptisms as well as our regular services, finding out how to be a pastor, trying out different types of teaching such as sermons and study groups, and so on. I have also been on a personal journey of moving house, adjusting to a new way of life and preparing for ordination as a priest this summer.

Team Rector's Charge

2021 Easter 3 and AGM – Luke 24 36-48

Our passage from John's gospel this morning presents a climax to the mounting tensions between those who were following and those who were opposing the ministry of Jesus.

In the previous chapters to this, Jesus has been speaking with authority, he has been protecting his sheep such as the paralysed man, the woman caught in adultery and the badly treated blind man. His opponents are accusing him of harbouring a demon, his supporters are beginning to regard him as the long-awaited Messiah. The showdown on the question of Jesus' identity happens in the temple at the feast of the Dedication. This feast is a celebration of the victory of light and liberation by the Maccabean rebels against

the oppression of Israel under the Graeco-Syrian occupation 164 years earlier and it provides a great backdrop to the debate on Jesus's identity. Is Jesus the bad shepherd like the foreign oppressors or is he the good shepherd like the Maccabean rebels. 'If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly' he is asked. The question is posed, the die is cast.

The stunning reply to the question is an outrageous claim: 'The father and I are one.' This claim would have outraged his opponents and puzzled his followers and was only vindicated and made sense of after the Resurrection.

But it's not that climatic claim I would like us to briefly reflect on today, rather it is an earlier verse where Jesus says to his disciples: My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me.

The agenda of God is to bring the Kingdom of God into the midst of creation and of humanity. The mission of Jesus was to proclaim the kingdom was near, to show the Kingdom of justice, joy, healing, reconciliation and redemption. The legacy of the Risen Christ was to invite and empower his followers to become the church, to be a people who pray for the kingdom, a people who worship, a people who inhabit the abundance of god's grace, a people who seek to love God and love neighbour, a people who together, are to be, like Jesus a good shepherd amongst the dangers in our world. Counter intuitively we are collectively called to be a good shepherd, firstly by being sheep, sheep who hear the voice of Jesus, sheep who are known by God, sheep who follow the ways of the kingdom.

This Sunday is our church's annual meeting and that will take place about 15-20 minutes after the end of the service and we are all warmly invited to it.

I would like to offer us some reflections on the life of our church, looking back a little, looking at the elections we will shortly have and looking forward a little as well. As we reflect on the life of our church, including governance and finance, buildings and projects, worship and relationships our bedrock and guiding principle through which we review all that we do is how it helps us to be people who journey together, who help each other hear the voice of Christ and follow our risen Lord and who take our part in that holy calling to cooperate with the coming of god's kingdom to all people and all places.

Looking at the reports of so many different areas of our life I can say nothing but thank you to the people who wrote them and more importantly thank you to all who made the contributions that are written of. It is a glowing testimony to the work, love, care, prayers, skill and ministry of so many. Thank you.

A recurring theme in reading through the reports is the inevitable, almost standard comment, on the backdrop of pandemic and our emerging out of that. I think for all of us our minds become a bit blurred at what restrictions were in place when, and how we have been feeling during the course of the year.

Perhaps it is worth remembering that whilst the focus of pandemic impairments were in the first half of the year, they did linger on all year and we still laid on an extra Christmas Eve eucharist conscious of those who needed the reassurance of space as an alternative to a busy midnight service later on in the evening. Easter of this year felt the first time we have had a major festival in over two years, well attended and moved on from the bulk of the concerns we have lived with for so long.

What is also clear, is that despite the hugely challenging year we have experienced, some really good things have been happening and I thank each of you for your part in that.

I can't remotely hope to comment on all the different facets of our church life but would like to draw our attention to four areas. Worship, children, finance and our staff and ministry team.

Worship. It has been wonderful to see our choir return to good strength and attract some new members, Richard and Will have worked hard with members of the choir to achieve this. It has also been great to see a new junior choir begin after the Harmonic Minors effectively ended during covid. The foundations of work laid with the junior choir last year are the basis of an exciting outreach initiative this year where Richard and the clergy team will be working with years 4 and 5 at St Mary's school to compose a song and deepen understandings of Mary, whom both school and church are named after. Thanks to Andrew Grocott, Ruby Vincent, Julie Craig and Antonia Wainman for all the hard work on rebuilding rotas for welcomers, side people, coffee servers, readers and intercessors and the serving team

Ministry amongst children: as with churches all over the country our ministry with children has taken a hit from covid, although it was great having 50 children with us on Easter Day, the same number as in 2019. Sophie Holdcroft, Hannah King, Nikki Cornfield and others have worked well to get creche running and a pattern of worship provision which provides meaningful interaction for children on the 40 term time Sundays of a year. As we look forward, I believe we need a more consistent pattern so that people understand the rhythm and some of the variances between our different mid-morning services.

Thirdly **finance.** In the packs you will see the giving report produced by Richard Holman and summary accounts produced by our treasurer Andrew Sternberg. These will be reported on in more detail at the meeting. This has clearly been an immensely challenging year with a large number of people stopping giving, mainly as a result of households leaving London.

It has been good to have a funding programme this year which has given us a positive direction of travel, but with much ground remaining to make secure the financial stability for our church. Thank you so much to Richard and Angela Holman, Andrew Grocott and Andrew Sternberg as the treasurer and giving team and Charles Roberts who is helping with electronic ways of receiving donations and data handling for the funding programme.

Staff and ministry changes: It has been wonderful to have Jane Andrews ordained deacon and join us in the parish. Prayers with her as she prepares to be priested at the start of July. Congratulations to Jono Haynes for securing the role of Team Vicar of All Saints in East Sheen. We have been blessed by his ministry and know he will serve God, the church and the community of East Sheen with humanity, love, skill and humour! Joshua Harris completed his year as pastoral assistant with us in July and it is good to hear he is progressing with the process for ordination selection. Last year with our tight finances we choose not to have a parish assistant and this year, sadly, we have been unable to successfully recruit one.

During the year Will Mason has joined us as Assistant Director of Music and this year leaves us as he and his new wife move to a new post in Cambridge. Finally, we have had changes amongst our Reader Ministers. Carrie Myers has decided to step back from public ministry for a time and is expecting a child any day now! We are grateful to her for her calm, wise, scholarly ministry over the last few years. Caroline Donne has also stepped down after leaving Putney. She has been such a tour de force in the parish that her departure leaves a big hole in her work on Godly Play, pastoral ministry and preaching and teaching ministry as a Reader.

In our gospel we hear of Jesus saying to his followers: 'the sheep hear my voice, I know them and they follow me' After the resurrection the disciples began to see that they were to be sheep, following the voice of Christ and also collectively with others, become the church, the Body of Christ, the good shepherd bringing God's kingdom to the world. Here in Putney, 2000 years later we are part of that incredible story of gift, grace, generosity, love, acceptance, service, vocation and call. We are called to be people who listen, people who live out the Kingdom, people whom God delights to love and to work through. Our annual Church meeting rejoices where we see this happening, we challenge ourselves where we know there is more work to do and we trust in the Risen Christ, who is one with the Father and who has promised to always be with us with gifts of grace as he seeks to live out the way. Thanks be to God for that privilege and thanks be to God for our church and all that goes on in her life. Amen.