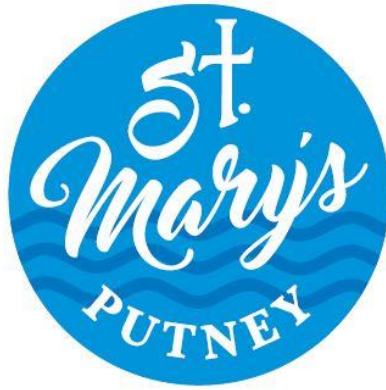


 **Parish of Putney | St Mary's Putney**

St. Mary's AGM



23rd April 2023

**ANNUAL REPORTS
on the life of
St Mary's Church Putney
(pre AGM)**

2022 - 2023

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St. Mary's Church, 23rd April 2023

AGENDA

- Introductory Prayers
- Apologies for absence
- Minutes of 8th May 2022
- 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) 4 Deanery Synod representatives to be elected for 3 years
 - f) 1 PCC member to be elected for a 3-year term
 - g) 3 DCC members to be elected for a 3-year term and 1 DCC member to be elected for a 2 year term
- Appointment of Sides-men and Sides-women
- Presentation of the Church Finances
- Church Reports
- AOB

APCM Meeting: Wednesday 10th May 2023, 7:30pm, Manual Rooms, located on the footpath between Putney Common Road and Erpringham Road.

Minutes of St Mary's AGM held on Sunday, 8th May 2022 on the life of St. Mary's Church Putney

Meeting commenced at 11.20am with an opening prayer.

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

Apologies: Antonia Wainman

Minutes of AGM 18th April 2021: There were no matters arising:

Minutes approved: Proposed by Angela Attah, Seconded by Alexis Chapman, Approved unanimously.

Matters Arising: There were no matters arising.

Elections:

a) Election of 1 Churchwarden (One year): Andrew Grocott (proposed by Mike Bull and seconded by Patricia Shipley). There were no other nominations. Andrew was elected.

b) Election of 2 District Churchwardens (One year): Two District Wardens were nominated: Linda O'Riordan (proposed by Angela Attah, seconded by Richard Holman) and Christiaan de Lange (proposed by Linda O'Riordan, seconded by Angela Attah). There were no other nominations. Both were elected.

c) Election of 2 Assistant District Wardens (One year): One Assistant District Warden was nominated Christiana Vitale (proposed by Linda O'Riordan, seconded by Angela Attah) and there is one vacancy. There were no other nominations.

d) Deanery Synod representative: No Deanery Synod representatives to be elected.

e) Election of 1 to Parochial and District Church Councils (One year) and 1 for three years:

There was one member to be elected to the Parochial and District Church Councils. Alex Lowe (proposed by Linda O' Riordan, seconded by Angela Attah) and Jeff Dale (DCC only) (proposed by Linda O'Riordan, seconded by Angela Attah). There were no other nominations and they were elected.

f) PCC membership: There was 1 PCC Member to be elected (three years). Mark Leadley (proposed by William Fazackerley, seconded by Chloe Fazackerley) and Thomas Willoughby (two years). There were no other nominations and they were elected.

g) DCC membership: There was 1 DCC Member to be elected (3 years). Simon Osborne (proposed by Linda O'Riordan, seconded by Angela Attah), There were no other nominations and he was elected. (Post meeting note: Simon withdrew his standing and so there was a vacancy for the year)

Appointment of Sides-men and women: Andrew Grocott thanked people. The list of names can be found on page 17 of the 2021-22 report. Proposer: Andrew Grocott, Seconded: Andrew Paul Donnelly. 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. Advised that letting income is back to pre-pandemic levels. Had substantial repairs and maintenance, roof (£9,000) and other major expenditure masonry (£10,000). Despite the pandemic continued to invest in mission of the church – maintained children's officer, music appointment of Assistant Director of Music, Rev'd Jane Andrews Pioneer Curate. Also maintained pledge to the Diocese throughout the period (no obligation). Deficit of £20,000 not sustainable so have increased the giving campaign as well as looking at costs. Also, power costs increasing from August 2022. Overall positive situation. Questions asked about the pledge to the Diocese, deficit, legacies and giving regularly. Also "Festival Churches" event mentioned. 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 Sternberg, seconded by Linda O'Riordan and unanimously approved.

CHURCH REPORTS

Electoral role report: Thankful remembrance of those who have died in the year. William Charnock, Eileen Larkin, Su Garnett, Peter Tuppen. Angela Holman advised that this is under revision. The revision will take place between 23rd April and 15th May prior to the APC meeting on 19th May.

Richard Quesnel: Director of Music Exciting year – very dynamic and hoping to continue in September. Grateful of Parish investment in Adult and Junior choir. Contact with St Mary's School, Putney High and Lady Margaret's. Sorry to lose Will Mason as Assistant Music Director. Will be replacing. Development of recitals. Also, choir tasters. More collaboration with DoM at All Saints' church. Working on new repertoire – new setting for St Mary's communion services.

Parish Curate's report: Rev'd Jonathan Haynes coming to the end of his curacy. He thanked the Parish for their generosity in allowing exploration and change especially over the pandemic. He will take with him to his new Parish a huge learning curve and grounding.

Jono thanked especially Rev'd John Whittaker. John commented that Jono will be sorely missed.

Church Warden's report: Andrew Grocott commented about the year. Andrew wanted to thank Angela Attah for her service and calmness. Angela received presents for her service. Angela thanked everybody especially Rev'd John, Paul Donnelly and Andrew Grocott for everything having been involved nearly 10 years in being a warden and deputy warden. Rev'd John congratulated the splendid team of Wardens.

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals: Reports on confirmations and Admissions to Communion were also reported.

Buildings and Maintenance: The report was taken as read.

Community Activities in the Brewer Building and Church: The report was taken as read.

Safeguarding Report: The report was taken as read.

Children in the Parish: The report was taken as read.

Parish Action: The report was taken as read.

Pastoral Care Group: The report was taken as read.

Supper Circle: The report was taken as read.

Social Activities: The report was taken as read.

Flowers: The report was taken as read.

Bell Ringing: The report was taken as read.

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

Chalice Assistants: The list was confirmed.

St. Mary's Church of England school: The report was taken as read.

Putney Debates: The report was taken as read.

Parish Magazine: The report was taken as read.

Social Media: The report was taken as read.

Theology in the Pub: 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 2021: The report was taken as read.

AOB: The meeting closed with the Grace at 12.09pm

ST MARY'S DISTRICT CHURCH COUNCIL 2022-2023

List of DCC members 2022 - 2023

Rev'd John Whittaker, Rev'd Dr Daniel Trott, Rev'd Jane Andrews, Rev'd Helena Whittaker, 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, Linda O'Riordan, Jeff Dale.

Secretary's report of the DCC proceedings

This year has been a year of 'getting back to normal' after the pandemic and a year of a lot of new initiatives. One of them was the Bingo night in early February 2023 which was very well attended and raised a good sum for our charities. Where the church services were concerned, again there were many new initiatives like the listening project and more

variety in the format of the Parish Eucharist at 10am. The DCC has tried to be more interactive this year and look towards our mission and how we can fulfil it more effectively. Looking forward to moving forward together this coming year.

Samantha Smith, Secretary

Report on St Mary's Church Electoral Roll AGM 2023

The Church Electoral Roll for St Mary's Church, which is a list of people entitled to be elected to the PCC/DCC, to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting and at the annual meeting of the congregation of All Saints', currently stands at 296.

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 8th until 23rd April prior to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 10th 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 Parish Directory and current Church Electoral Roll and inform the Electoral Roll Officer of any changes to their address or contact details. Please also inform the Electoral Roll Officer if they wish to be removed or if they wish to be included or download this QR for a form. The list can be viewed every Sunday in church or contact the Electoral Roll Officer by email electoral.roll.officer@parishofputney.co.uk



Financial Report

St Mary's Treasurer, Andrew Sternberg, presented the following financial report at the meeting:

St Mary's Church, Putney Income Statement for DCC	Actual £'000	NOTES
Income		
Giving		
Direct Giving	182.8	Substantially lower than £210k budget - but a number of generous donors left Putney
Collection - loose plate	9.2	
Investments		
Property	23.9	
Other Investments	6.4	
Brewer Building Rent	10.1	
Other income		
Donations - incl Brewer Trust	23.8	
Lettings	49.3	Post lock down lettings income has seen substantial improvement and is now c£11k per quarter
Fees	4.8	
Other	(0.7)	Parish magazine deficit and bank fees
TOTAL INCOME	309.6	
Ministry Expenses		
PA & Curate accomodation	(8.2)	
Pastorial Assistant Expenses	(2.2)	
	(5.1)	
Personnel Costs - incl Stewarding	(57.4)	
Teaching costs	(0.4)	
Power costs	(21.3)	Energy costs mitigated in 2022 by i) historical fixed price contract; and ii) Government support
Repairs and Maintenance	(12.1)	Very little additional expenditure in Q4. £12k per annum is not sustainable.
Other Church Costs - incl security system	(11.9)	Includes £3k of "non-cash" depreciation. Overall, down on budget and in line with 2022
Parish Office		
Telephone and internet	(3.6)	Reduced substantially from 2019 - (£4,500 pa) and continuing to push down
IT and software licences	(1.2)	
Photocopying and stationery	(4.1)	
Governance and insurance	(8.4)	
TOTAL EXPENSES	(135.8)	
OPERATING SURPLUS BEFORE PLEDGE	173.8	
Parish Support Pledge	(201.4)	Held at 2019 level for last three years. Reduced by £14k to £187k for 2023.
OPERATING DEFICIT	(27.5)	

Report on Giving

2022 continued the trend of the previous year, with the number of people stopping their regular donations significantly exceeding the number of new donors. Also, the average value of the losses was greater than the average value of the gains.

The figures shown in the table below may appear to contradict the negative comment above, but the fact that total donations for the year marginally increased over 2021 was due to some substantial one-off gifts and also to most of the new and increased donations coming into effect early in the year, when we ran an income appeal, while some of the larger losses were in the second half of the year.

	Donations	Baptisms	Tax recovery	Total
	£	£	£	£
Year - 2022	146,554	2,250	34,512	183,316
Year - 2021	146,004	1,880	33,849	181,733
Movement £	550	370	663	1,583
%	0.4%	19.7%	2.0%	0.9%
	People	£ per month	£ Average	£ per year
Started	17	941	55	11,298
Increased	33	747	23	8,963
Reduced	8	(413)	(52)	(4,950)
Ceased	(36)	(2,471)	(69)	(29,029)
	(19)	(1,196)		(13,718)
Note: Figures include Gift Aid where relevant				

The number of people giving regularly fell by 19 to 165 in 2022, having been 201 at the end of 2020. The annualised loss of net income, including Gift Aid tax recoveries, over the two years 2021 and 2020 amounted to £32,463. **Richard Holman, 17 April 2023**

Report from Church Wardens 2022/23

I have written this year's report whilst on vacation and have been able to do so by using the Internet and I will return to that topic later.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has affected everyone, and St. Mary's has felt the impact of the invasion on its utility costs as we all have. What should have been a straightforward renewal of gas and electricity at St. Mary's, turned out to be a difficult and draining experience. In addition to the contracts being up for renewal, St. Mary's had to contend with the collapse of its gas supplier, Green Network Energy. This whole exercise had a steep learning curve and I feel confident that St. Mary's has obtained as good a deal as possible. The gas and internal electricity supplies are on a one-year contract which runs to the middle of October and all being well will be able to renew at the lower rates that are becoming available. In addition, the charitable exemption from the Climate Change Levy was secured and back dated to June 2021 as well as the reduced rate of VAT at 5%.

I mention this in the light of the Stewardship Campaign and to give reassurance that St. Mary's has done and will continue to do all it can to keep its costs under control.

St. Mary's had its first visitation from the Archdeacon's representative since the pandemic and that provided an opportunity to discuss how the church was faring. That discussion, along with a meeting in October of wardens in Kingston, confirmed that whilst churches

continue to build back, it is bumpy road for all which may require us all to think a little differently.

One of these areas is the area of broadcasting services and thus make St. Mary's more accessible. This brings me to the installation of fibre broadband into the church which took place during the year. The quality of internet access at St. Mary's became of particular concern during the pandemic when it was difficult to broadcast services and the clergy and staff found working from home difficult. OpenReach had no plans to upgrade what is termed the "copper wire" service and whilst a 5G hub provided an improvement, it was not a long-term solution.

Early in 2022, St. Mary's became aware of that fact that it may be entitled to take advantage of the Government's scheme to rollout fibre broadband. After a number of site visits and hopes being dashed, the fibre service along with Wi-Fi was commissioned in September. The clergy and staff can now work not just from home, but also more efficiently at the church, the CCTV can now be used as intended and it opens up the prospect for the better broadcast of services.

Linda O'Riordan joined the warden team during 2022 and her enthusiasm is much appreciated. Christiaan de Lange has stepped down as he has moved to Surbiton which means the team now consists of Cristiana Vitale, Linda and myself. We work well together and look to have one of us "on duty" each Sunday. There are times when this is not always possible and if you are interested in joining our team please contact me on 07831 332 588 or grocott.andrew@gmail.com **Prepared by Andrew Grocott 26th March 2023**

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals

We have had steady enquiries for both weddings and funerals:

- Banns of Marriage: 38 couples had their banns read at St Mary's.
- We performed 6 weddings in 2022.
- Baptisms: we performed 25 baptisms in 2022: 22 children/babies and 3 adults.
- Confirmations: we prepared one member of St Mary's for confirmation at a service at All Saints' Putney along with 2 of their congregation members.
- Funerals: we held one funeral in St Mary's; four funerals at St Mary's followed by committals at crematoriums; ten crematorium committals; and one memorial service

Antonia Wainman, Baptisms and Weddings; Julie Craig, Funerals

Buildings and Maintenance Committee

The Buildings Committee met once in 2022 (in February) and it has met twice this year (in January and March). Its members are Mike Bull, Hugo Chandler, Nicholas Coates, Berni Griffiths (Premises Manager), Andrew Grocott (Churchwarden), Richard Holman, Phil Lyons and Alan Pates. We are very grateful to Berni for his stewardship of the buildings and for generating substantial income from lettings. The main issues arising in 2022/23 were:

- **Net carbon zero** The big issue on the Committee's agenda is the possibility of installing an array of photovoltaic panels on the south-facing roof of the church and

possibly also on part of the roof of the Brewer Building. We hope that a scheme of this nature will deliver a good return on the substantial investment needed to implement it, which could be in the region of £100K, in terms of much reduced energy costs. It would also be a major step towards meeting the call from General Synod for all parts of the Church to be 'net zero carbon' by 2030.

- **Parish Architect** Alan Pates, a member of the St Mary's congregation, retired from the role of Parish Architect in 2022, after 20 years. Alan designed the Brewer Building and he also completed the interior reordering of St Mary's. In the 1990s he was responsible for the renovation of All Saints' church. The Parish owes an enormous debt of gratitude to Alan, who has provided a great deal of *pro bono* advice in addition to his work on major projects. We have appointed Aya Kihara Paul of Richard Griffiths Architects as the new Parish Architect. She brings considerable experience in working with heritage buildings.
- **Quinquennial survey** Every five years our architect must carry out a full survey of the building and Alan Pates' final task was to deliver the 2022 report. There were only a few issues that he advised required urgent attention, mainly in relation to routine maintenance of the roof. Most of that work has now been carried out by Tim Berber, our regular evening steward and handyman. The survey also lists work that we should aim to do over the next five-year period.
- **Telecoms** Andrew Grocott has spent countless hours chasing BT to upgrade the signal into the church, which ultimately required a considerable amount of work by them, which they carried out at no cost to us.
- **Routine maintenance** Problems with the drains, which were not designed to cope with the current intensive level of use of the buildings, continue to occur a few times a year, but we have found no feasible way of eliminating this issue. There are also occasional floods in the arches under the approach to Putney Bridge. They are the responsibility of Thames Water, who are struggling to find a way of mitigating the huge force of water that can result from periods of heavy rain.

Richard Holman, 17 April 2023

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

In addition to the regular Church Services, Weddings & Baptisms, our buildings are also being used by a variety of independent 'community groups' including various wellbeing, education, art and dance classes plus once again we were a 'Hub Venue' for the Wandsworth Arts Fringe Festival in June this year.

This year has also seen the stable re-establishment of the First-Class Learning 11+ tutorial classes, Little Voices drama sessions, Pilates, Yoga, Zumba, Kung Fu and 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 even more sessions.

The Church space including the Godly Playroom is also being utilised for Sing & Sign, Mini Jam, Bach to Baby, Baby Broadway, and NCT classes all of which continue to provide a valuable service for new mums, babies and toddlers alike. Monkey Music on Monday mornings in the Lancaster Hall and our own Toddler Social on a Tuesday morning continue to go from strength-to-strength lead by our Group Leader - Helen Daniels. Senior activity for the young at heart provided by 'Adult ballet' with Alice Crawford and 'Pilates with Chrystella.'

Whilst the Putney Pantry provides a catering hub for all our activities in and around the Church and Brewer Building, they also host our monthly meetings of the local 'Women's Institute' and weekly sessions with our own 'Theology in the Pantry' group.

The Church space is also occasionally used for hosting larger events such as various fund-raising charity concerts, Boat Race Day, Vintage Vera Furniture Flea Market / 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 continue to operate at the back of the building and in the riverside garden under the new management of Vicky Tier and Juliet Bodger who took over from Wooze (Caroline Henderson) who retired last year. Once again, our BBBB nursery achieved an 'Outstanding' award from Ofsted this year.

The 'Boiler Room Studio' is now a fully functioning rehearsal space hosting regular Drum Lessons and sessions under the Stewardship of Theo Buckingham. The second recording studio 'Studio Blak' is now up and running in the back of the Sunday School Arch behind the Boxing Gym with recording, mixing and mastering sessions produced by Mikie Blak of the Groove Warriors. Mark Buckingham, also of the Groove Warriors continues to offer sax and piano lessons in his isolated studio space built in the same chamber underneath the bridge.

The Storage Arch continues to develop as a workshop for our Repair Café and once again this year the space will be converted into a 50 seat theatre for the Wandsworth Art Fringe Festival which returns in June. There will be an addition performance space in the Arts Tent and refreshments available in the riverside gardens for the duration of WAF '23.

The Manual Room by All Saints' Church continues to support N.A. on Saturday and All Saints' Sunday School sessions - 'Small Saints' on Sunday mornings. As well as providing an early morning daily Gym Club we now have regular Doggy Flyball sessions, and it has also become the space of choice for monthly meetings of the Metropolitan Police and MENSA as well as the regular bookings for Children's and Adult parties.

St Mary's Church, the Brewer Building and Manual Room are 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 St Mary's Church open to *all* visitors for peaceful prayer and reflection.

Thanks to all our support team and stewards who help keep this complex operation running smoothly to provide such a variety of opportunities for the local community.

Berni Griffiths Verger; Premises, Bookings & Events 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.

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. **Isobel Vass**

CHILDREN IN THE PARISH

Sunday School

We currently run three Sunday School groups at St. Mary's church, ranging in age from three to thirteen year of age, and split into school year groups: Preschool/Reception; Years 1-3; and Junior Youth Group (Year 4+). 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 it means to live by our Christian principles; while the younger children follow a simpler course, which has included a series of 'All about me' and 'Jesus loves Children'. In addition, in the Spring term we reintroduced a session of Godly Play for Junior Youth Group for the first time since the pandemic and we plan to extend this to the Y1-3 group for one Sunday School session next term.

Since the pandemic, the number of children attending Sunday School has slowly been increasing. We welcomed 76 children to Sunday School over the last year, plus extra visitors including children from baptism parties. Attendance each week varies, with an average of 29 children a week (up from an average of 22 children a week in 2021/22). We have also increased the number of Sunday School Sundays each term, from 4 immediately post pandemic to the current 6 times a term.

We currently have 21 Sunday School leaders, including 1 new Sunday School volunteer this year. In addition, we have been lucky to have three teenage volunteers helping out with our youngest groups as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award activities. We are incredibly grateful to all our talented Sunday School team, for their time, commitment, enthusiasm and their never-ending adaptability to respond to last-minute requests for help. They do a fantastic job and without them Sunday School wouldn't be possible. Thanks also go to 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 Cornfield Nikki.Cornfield@parishofputney.co.uk or me at hannahking.2@btinternet.com We would love to hear from you. **Hannah King, April 2023**

St Mary's Sunday Crèche

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 8 volunteers who fill in a rota on a quarterly basis. All of them are DBS/CRB checked and help for 3 or more 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. We have one or two new parents who have expressed interest in becoming crèche volunteers, so once they have been worshipping at St Mary's for six months, we will be able to carry out DBS checks and add their names to the rota. 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 14 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 a prayer and a children's hymn. Although some families moved out of London during Covid, we have some new families joining us for Sunday worship and there is still a large demand for the crèche on a Sunday. Tara and I would like to thank all those that have supported us these last two terms, especially Julie Craig in the office and Rev'd John Whittaker as well as our team of very understanding volunteers.

Godly Play

Please see the Youth and Families Report which includes an updated about Godly Play.

St. Mary's Play group

Tuesday's Baby and Toddler Social is going from strength to strength. I took over the running of this energetic group in September 2022 and we have an extremely friendly bunch of parents, nannies and carers who regularly attend each week. Numbers have increased to around 20-25 adults who are made to feel very welcome. Babies and toddlers enjoy a time of playing, sticking and glueing at the craft table and singing songs with Mousy, the Church Mouse puppet. The group is based in the Lancaster Room on Tuesday mornings between 10-11am during term time so do pop in and join us for a coffee and chat. We ask for a voluntary £3 donation. If you'd like to help out and serve the drinks and feel able to commit some time on a Tuesday morning, please speak to Helen Daniels c/o the office.

Parish Action 2022

During the COVID-19 pandemic, in addition to supporting the nominated charities, and without the ability to hold events, Parish Action extended support to people with a special interest to fund raise for charities associated with the pandemic and other pressing causes. Special thanks go Rosie Taylor-Davies, our chair, Sarah Barron, Catherine Dando, Rebecca Locke, Richard Phipps and Chantry Westwell, our committee members, who left in 2022 after many years of hard work with Parish Action, including outstanding endeavours to keep charitable giving alive during lockdown. Over 2022 Parish Action has paused and sought to re-establish itself and evolve, gradually bringing back the focus to the nominated charities chosen by the Parish. Parish Action raised **over £12, 000** (much of which was gift aided adding another 25%) for these charities in 2022:

Amazon Smile: from people who have signed up to nominate Parish Action as their charity donated money to the Scrubbery.

Christian Aid Victims of the Ukraine Conflict: online collection

Christian Aid Week: supporting developing nations and challenging global poverty who benefitted from money raised through an envelope drop, a charity car wash with All Saints' School, a church cake sale and All Saints' School playground collection.

Charlie Waller: supporting the education of mental health in young people who benefitted from a collection and donations from children's activities at the Parish Picnic

Glass Door: giving shelter and supporting the homeless of London, who benefitted from money raised at a sponsored sleepout and profits from our Patronal bonfire and firework event.

Little Village and Embrace the Middle East: who benefitted from money raised at the Parish Churches' Christmas collections.

Regenerate: supporting local young people and creating opportunities for them to thrive benefitted from a collection and donations from children's activities at the Parish Picnic.

In addition, Parish action collected groceries, toiletries and toys and gifts for the following charities:

Roehampton Community Box Toy Collection: collected at the toy service to provide new gifts as Christmas presents for children between 5-15 years, for families using the social supermarket in Roehampton donated 160 presents.

Wandsworth Foodbank: supporting the local community with emergency food, advice and support for those going through financial hardship. The churches are collection centres for monthly collections in St Mary's and All Saints' churches of donated groceries/toiletries.

In 2022 Parish action also joined a local action group:

Wandsworth Citizens is a local expression of Citizens UK in the borough of Wandsworth, seeking to work for wider change using the 'community organizing' method. We joined in Spring 2022, paying a membership fee of £2,000, and immediately took part in a campaign for Wandsworth Borough Council to become a Living Wage Employer.

Parish Action also said goodbye to two charities in 2022, who have become established with support from Parish Action:

The Scrubbery: formed in the pandemic to provide scrubs to the NHS. This amazing charity was supported by Parish Action until the pandemic receded in 2022. Over its time with Parish Action 28k items of kit (excluding wellbeing bags) have been produced saving the NHS of over £350k. The Scrubbery continues to operate independent of Parish Action, currently providing humanitarian medical aid for hospitals within Ukraine.

Vulindlela Guardians: Parish Action has been proactive in helping raise over £100, 000 over 15 years for this educational charity in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe charity. Thanks to all the sustained support this charity is now self-sustaining and therefore in 2022. Vulindlela Guardians continues to operate independent of Parish Action.

Thanks to Callie Lombard, who chaired Parish Action from May - November, standing down when her family moved away from the Parish. Thanks also to Suzanne Grocott (PA secretary), Sarah Brearley, Heidi Wales, Alexis Chapman, Alex Cook-Stevenson and Katerina McCann, and our new committee members, Charlie Renwick (PA treasurer), Alex Millbrook and Liz Kashyap for their wonderful, on-going hard work and all the people of the Parish of Putney that help with the fundraising. **Michelle Penn, Parish Action Chair**

Pastoral Care Group

Pastoral Care has happily, finally been fully restored and shaken off most of the restrictions imposed by Covid-19. However, we are conscious of the harm done by such prolonged isolation. Meetings and other social groupings have re-started within the church premises with the added benefit of offsetting loneliness and dis-location. The café does much to support this general, kindness endeavour. Clergy continue to visit the sick and bereaved taking up matters on an *ad hoc* basis, whilst others in need are supported over time, often informally by kind volunteers, in different ways. One or two have been referred to the Putney Relief Committee, who provide financial support either as a one-off or monthly basis and have been kept under review. The Senior Social Group run by volunteers at All Saints' each Monday morning is an extremely valuable resource for both churches. A few individual cases of distress have been discussed among the core pastoral/ safeguarding group so that the most appropriate support can be offered, where possible or a referral

made to another agency – medical, care home etc. As ever the pastoral team continue to be mindful of ‘care limitations.’ Both they and volunteers are reminded to avoid crossing safeguarding boundaries inadvertently or stepping into the remit of other professional disciplines, for which they are unqualified. The Pastoral Care Leaflet is available to reinforce good practice in this regard. **Isobel Vass**

Supper Circle

Again, it was another very quiet year for the Supper Circle, with minimal requests or referrals for this service. It is suggested that this support is redeveloped during 2023 to ensure it is meeting changing needs.

Social Activities

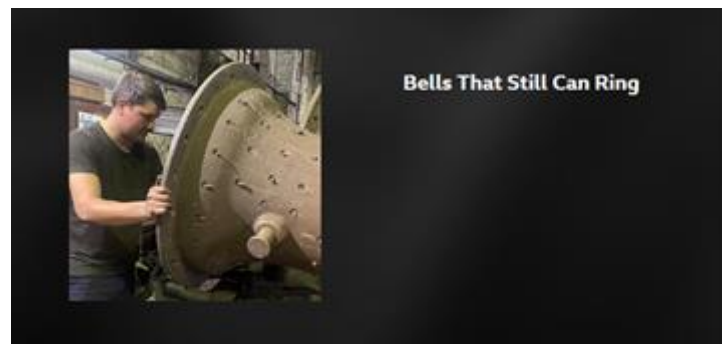
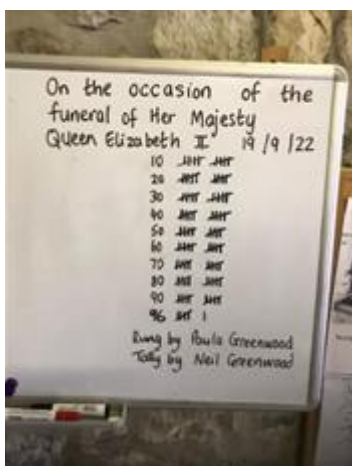
This year, one of The Events Team's main tasks was to consolidate the team and refocus events according to the capacity of volunteers we have. In the spirit of thankfulness for the involvement we receive and with the aim of not over- stretching ourselves and also mindful of the fact that Rev'd John will be on sabbatical for some of the year, we decided to streamline our events to get maximum enjoyment and participation from a few key dates. We selected the Sunday service for the Coronation on 6th May, The Parish Picnic in July and our Patronal celebration in September - three key events we felt we could promote and run within our capacity, which would have maximum appeal for our community. We also introduced a new fundraising Event, Old Fashioned Family Bingo Night. This took place on a Saturday evening and was a huge success. Whilst Rev'd John is very clear that the main goal of The Events Team is to bring people together, we also champion one or two events each year for which we fundraise for the charities supported by our Parish Action team. This was a huge success, raised approximately £1,000 and was very easy to organise and run. The inclusion of a live host and DJ in between games brought the whole event to life with children and even teens dancing and partying, whilst adults enjoyed the spectacle, atmosphere and the chatting. We have had tremendous feedback and will keep this event on our calendar for next year. New Events which we will run next year include a Scavenger/Treasure Hunt around Putney, involving both All Saints' and St. Mary's churches. The Events Team is always very happy to increase our small core team of volunteers who can commit to attending 3-4 meetings a year and to being involved in the running of 4 to 5 events throughout the year. Anyone who is interested can contact Rev'd John or Amber on 07748 982 806.

Flowers

We are a small group and new members are most welcome; no prior knowledge is needed and instruction is available. I would like to thank Mike Bull for planning and making the Christmas and Easter decorations together with and Ellen, Carrie and I. 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 has gone from strength to strength in Putney during 2022. We sadly began the year saying farewell to Peter Tuppen, a stalwart of both the church community and the bellringing team, and father and grandfather of two of our current ringers. He is greatly missed. During the year we welcomed several new learners to our fold, Madeleine, Piran and Tom, and they go from strength to strength at their own pace, with lots of support from the more experienced ringers around them. We also are regularly visited by Alda, who shares her time between Cornwall and here and is progressing superbly, and Owen from the ringers at All Saints Fulham. Indeed, events during 2022 have led to a much closer association with the ringers of All Saints Fulham. The Jubilee celebrations in June and then the ringing surrounding the death and then funeral of Queen Elizabeth drew both bands closer as we needed to support each other with ringers to make the ringing for these occasions viable. This has continued with regular support of ringers from both bands crossing the bridge most Sundays to ring first at Putney and then at Fulham. The death of Queen Elizabeth pulled all parts of the church community together. Rev'd John sent me extracts from Operation London Bridge, which comprehensively detailed the timelines for each part of the ringing on the death of the Sovereign, not done since 1952. It was an extremely moving time. Three of us took it in turns to toll the tenor for an hour at noon on the day after the Queen's death, and as we left the church in turn it was to the sight of people standing outside, heads bowed, in complete silence and respect for our late Queen. The Proclamation of Charles as King gave us the opportunity to intentionally "fire" the bells to make a joyous noise to mark the occasion, again, not done for 70 years. On the morning of her funeral, Michael Uphill was one of the ringers at Westminster Abbey for the actual funeral service, whilst at Putney I slowly tolled the tenor 96 times – once for each year of her life – as a mark of respect. This period also required a huge effort from Gerrard, our Steeple Keeper, in repeatedly putting on and taking off the muffles for the death, proclamation, tolling and funeral.



As the year drew to a close the ringers were delighted to be asked to feature in a programme for Radio 4 produced by Caroline Donne, a very familiar name to St Mary's parishioners, who has now moved to the coast. Caroline was making a programme about Taylor's Bell Foundry in Loughborough. Our bells at Putney were cast by, and are maintained by, Taylors. Myself, Michael Uphill, Piran Caseley and Madeleine Neave were

interviewed for the programme – should you wish to hear it, it is still available on BBC Sounds – search for *Bells That Still Can Ring* and our bit is about 22 minutes in, but the rest of it is also extremely interesting. As a ringing band we are now going from strength to strength, with a lovely eclectic mix of people and personalities, ages and abilities coming together for this slightly quirky but deeply traditional pastime. As the Coronation draws near in 2023 we are now almost overwhelmed with enthusiastic new recruits who want to “ring for the King!”... but more of that in next year’s report.

Paula Greenwood, Tower Captain

Sidespersons and Welcomers’ Report

This team of dedicated volunteers are more often than not the first people you will meet each Sunday at St. Mary’s. I have listed those who form the group performing this role at the 10.0am service and am grateful for their time and passion. Sidespersons at 10am: Alison Guest, Camilla Hoenich, Claudia Colombo, Neil Vass, Kate Umney, Deborah Chittenden, Evelyn Dorkel, Ian Parramore, John Blake, Kate Gibson, Katie Bishop, Tali Mbangwa, Robert Wilson, Maya Lojoo, Sarah Thomas, Ben Barker, Richard Spencer. During the year the rota and WhatsApp Group have worked well and any children of those who are “on duty” are actively encouraged to play their part. Whilst this a stable team, new members are always welcome to join and I see it as an entry level for anyone who wishes to become more actively involved at St. Mary’s and to meet more of the congregation. It is relatively easy to learn the ropes and if you are interested then please contact me on grocott.andrew@gmail.com 07831 332 588 or on WhatsApp. **Andrew Grocott, 26th March**

The Welcomers at Caritas include clergy, wardens, Susan Stopforth and Christopher Garnett. The setting and ambience for Caritas is peaceful and reflective, with plenty of time and opportunity to greet and include newcomers and for making an extra moment those who are less mobile or less frequent in their attendance. If you are comfortable with circulating the collection plate, ringing the bell at the right moment, ushering to communion and remembering to count and put the collection in the safe, then this is the ideal role for you. If you can offer one Sunday evening a month, as and when you are available, that would be perfect. **Susan Stopforth, March 2023**

Servers

Antonia Wainman continues to manage the Serving Rota. Currently the serving team consists of 27 servers: 7 adults and 20 children. The majority of children are aged between 8-11, across Years 4-7. Servers act as acolytes and crucifers, serving at morning and evening worship, and work hard to enable the worship of the attending congregation. We are struggling to provide child servers at caritas. Some new recruits (particularly adults) would be a very welcome addition. Training of course provided! **Antonia Wainman, March 2023**

Chalice Assistants

We now have three, 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 continued to flourish this year. We bid farewell to William Mason, who took up the position of Assistant Director of Music at King's College School, Cambridge and are delighted to welcome harpsichord and organ virtuoso Callum Anderson as our new Assistant Director of Music. Callum is a specialist in music from the baroque period and has already demonstrated his mastery of our fine Marcussen organ, designed especially for this repertoire.

Callum's arrival has enabled the choir to consider plenty of new and exciting repertoire from Handel to Britten. The choir was also strengthened by the challenge of learning new music for Rev'd Jane Andrews' ordination, for which we joined forces with All Saints' Choir and made great progress. This strengthened the choir's ambition and we worked hard to prepare a new selection of carols to showcase choir and organ alongside our traditional congregational hymns with descant. We continue to collaborate regularly with All Saints', and have also joined forces with All Saints, Fulham for Palm Sunday 2023!

Adult choir numbers have grown slightly and we are delighted to welcome some new members recently; other singers from local choirs have also joined us for major services and our own choir members often take part in big local singing projects, including 1885 singers, Hammersmith & Fulham Choral Society etc. St Mary's Adult Choir was also delighted to accept Katy Silverman's invitation to sing Evensong at Battersea and we look forward to returning the favour. The Junior Choir goes from strength to strength and now numbers about 10 children who sing weekly, and about twice a term in services, either with the Adult Choir or – increasingly – on their own! They have really grown in confidence and vocal quality and are becoming a recognised and well supported addition to the musical life of church. Almost all children attend St Mary's School and we continue to develop contacts with our church school. We led a project called 'Mary and Music', featuring the composition of a new song for the school; Richard set to music words written by the children inspired by the story of Gabriel's Annunciation to Mary. The pupils sang this song in church and also designed angel artwork which was displayed in St Mary's throughout the Autumn.

Our recital series (*Coffee and Classics*) is developing slowly, featuring local talent, and this is something we hope to develop in the months and year ahead. Our own Junior Choir will be singing in June! *Richard Quesnel, Director of Music*

Report from St. Mary's CE Primary School

St Mary's continues to be a school of choice for the local community and over-subscribed. It's a testament to the quality and longevity of the teaching staff, the enthusiasm of parents and the positive attitude of pupils. The school is very grateful to be part of the wider St Mary's community and takes strength from inclusivity. The school welcomed families from Ukraine - through extraordinary circumstances, they are immersed in school life and the school is supporting their learning. Further, the ties with St Mary's church remain strong with collective worship services at school, the Faith group and ongoing support from Rev'd John, Rev'd Jane, Nikki and Rev'd Helena. We've been delighted to see school events at the

church resume including the Autumn Harvest services, the dearly loved Nativity “Crib” service at Christmas, Mothering Sunday and Ash Wednesday Eucharist service. Additionally, the “Blessing of the Backpacks” service, held 11th September at St Mary’s church was such a joy and surely to be repeated in years to come.

The SIAMs inspection (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) is on the horizon and the school and governors have been immersed in how it stands tall to being effective to "*the school’s distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish*". Additionally, redevelopment of the playground and Sustainability remains a key focus.

Finally, noteworthy changes to the school and governing board include longstanding governors Paula Greenwood (Local Authority Governor) and Judith Kennedy (Foundation Governor) having been appointed for an additional term. The governing board further welcomes 2 new governors Ruby Vincent (Foundation Governor) and Sara Dolling (Co-Opted Governor). With heartfelt thanks to Cheryl Payne (Headteacher), the Senior Leadership Team and teaching staff. We appreciate you, not just in your teaching but for preparing our children for the road ahead.

Faith Group at St Mary’s Church School

St Mary’s Faith Group are embarking on a period of thoughtful reflection on what it means to be a theologically rooted school, examining our values and mission to ensure both are fully realised, and thinking of new ways to embed a Christian vision in all layers of the school. **Phil Pyke**

Putney Debates

There were no debates this year. **Sue Rolfe**

Parish Magazine, Bridge & Common: Continuing a 100-year-old Tradition

Bridge & Common, in its present form, was launched at the end of 2019. It is the latest incarnation of the Parish of Putney’s parish magazine. The Parish has had a magazine for over 100 years. It has always been popular and eagerly read by people in the parish and outside it. Editor Miriam Boursiquot, graphic designer Will Fazackerley, interviewer Madeleine Neave and others keep *Bridge & Common* in fine fettle. The team, with Richard Holman and I acting in an advisory capacity, find interesting and relevant things to report about the Parish of Putney. There are regular articles by members of the clergy, an engaging interview carried out by Madeleine 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 John Whittaker, Team Rector, on the subject of Lent. Another article introduces the new Bishop of Kingston, the Rev’d Canon Martin Gainsborough. 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**

Café Theology

Cafe Theology meets in Putney Pantry on Monday evenings. Topics have varied widely from aspects of doctrine and scripture to theological takes on what is in the news. Particularly good discussions have been on *Charisma, Laicité, A Response To Humanism, The Theology Of Harry's Book Spare, Was Jesus A Socialist?, Queen Elizabeth And Her Faith, Book Of Revelation, and The Wisdom Of Spending £100m To Absolve Our Guilt*. One person introduces the topic, having done some research. The highest turnout was for the discussion on Satan with 14 people but is more typically between 4 – 10, numbers not fully recovered from lockdown. Cafe Theology meetings appear in the notices of every denominational church in Putney. It aims also to attract people who are interested in religion, but not are necessarily churchgoers. A poster on the noticeboard in Sainsbury's has been the most fruitful form of advertising though oddly, unlike other posters, it never lasts for more than a day or two. Local websites have not yielded any results, but a more active social media push is probably the route to follow. **Jennifer Norris**

Repair Café at St Mary's

In the early part of 2022 I discussed the idea of a Repair Café with Rev'd John Whittaker and Rev'd Jane Andrews. They were very supportive. So having registered the name Repair Café Putney with the main organisation, I advertised locally for volunteers. To my delight I received applications from over 10 volunteers, each with the vital skills needed to fix, mend and sharpen. One of my good mates, Mike Trussell, joined me as co-founder. He has provided solid support and good humour at our weekly and monthly gatherings. The big advantages of St Mary's church are a) the location and b) having the use of the cellar for storage. So, from April 2022 we began our monthly sessions. we repair: fabrics, electrical appliances, electronic gadgets, laptops, kitchen knives and bric-a-brac and, when the manpower is available, bicycles and clocks. At each session we have average 30 repairs and raise around £170. Customers are invited to sit down opposite the repairer and watch. We try to build a sense of community. Some customers return every month. There is a very positive buzz. You can see the smiles on everyone's faces. Volunteers enjoy showing off their skills and customers enjoy watching their treasured item brought back to life (where possible). My hope is that, over time, we can encourage people to value possessions more highly and not to discard them when they fail. Too often, the repair cost is viewed purely in comparison to the replacement cost. But this does not take into account the environmental costs of production and disposal! Commercial repairers use the term BER Beyond Economic Repair. Repair Cafés do not have to follow this cut off price as we repair for love not money. After the repair session, most of us stay on for a sandwich lunch. This helps to

reinforce the team spirit. And behind it all I get wonderful support from Rev'd John and Berni Griffiths.

Workshop St Mary's allows us to use the cellar opposite the bell tower for our own private work. We currently open up weekly on Tuesdays from 11am-4pm. We have 2 regular volunteers. It is a self-help arrangement. Anyone with a practical bent can use it. We repair a lot of things around the church. My hope is that, over time, awareness builds regarding the need to create less waste and to live more sustainably.

Youth and Family Minister's report

2022 / 2023 saw us continuing our new "mixed-mode" approach to our children's ministry, a mix of Parish Eucharists with Sunday School, All Age Eucharists, Parish Eucharists with mid-Service Groups and Parish Eucharist Only Sundays.

Children and youth attendance has slowly started to increase after Covid. It has been nice to feel a sense of rhythm and belonging again and we continue to feel that we are creating a faith formation which is authentic, organic, and consistent and part of the wider community.

More and more children are getting involved in the services. We have started to rota children and families to take part in different aspects of the services, including pre-service prep (we sometimes have craft activities that need preparing etc), Intercessions (families have done these together which is very special) and helping during the Eucharistic Prayer (speaking parts, carrying the bread or wine to the altar, helping with the collection and carrying the plates to the altar for a blessing and ringing the bell). If anyone would like to get involved or would like to offer feedback / suggestions on these services, please do contact Nikki Cornfield or Rev'd John.

All Age Service Planning Team – This year saw the creation of a new All Age Service planning team. A very big thank you to Kate Bolton, Simon Kam Cheong, Heidi Wales and Anna Pyke for joining John, Rev'd Helena and myself in this creative worship process, coming up with ideas and delivering these services. If anyone would like to join this team, do contact Nikki or John. We truly would like to make these services ALL Age so all adults are welcome.

Collaborations with St Mary's School – During lockdown we initiated two collaborations with the school to nurture the connection between school and church during the time apart; one at Christingle and the other for Mothering Sunday. We decided to continue these collaborations this year, sending "pack" invitations to each child in the school, inviting them to these Sunday services. It was so lovely to see so many "school families" join us creating Christingles at the Christingle service and bunches of daffodils at the Mothering Sunday service. A massive thank you too to everyone from the congregation who helped us prepare the Christingle and Mothering Sunday packs – it is so lovely to be able to do these tasks at the same time as spending time together.

In addition to this, at Christmas, we sent each family at the school a Christmas card along with a flyer with all the Christmas services listed on one side and the provisions for children at church from January to April on the other. A similar flyer was distributed at Easter

detailing all the Easter services and the Sunday Children's provisions until August 2023 on the other. We hope these flyers will help families plan and create a rhythm in their worshipping practice. Thank you to Tom Willoughby for the artwork and production of this material.

Parenting groups: We have run two parenting courses since the last AGM – one in April & May 2022, and the other in Oct, Nov & Dec 23. Both the groups were relatively small, so we were able to have meaningful discussions, guided by material which we worked together with Care for the Family and The Kitchen Table Project to create. We explored how to create strong and healthy foundations of faith in children, as well as practical support to enhance family relationships.

The groups were facilitated by Rev'd John, Rev'd Jane and Nikki. For more information on the group, please contact Nikki.

Glass Door Sleep Out - We hosted our first ever Glass Door Sleep Out (or IN the church!) at St Mary's Church this year! A small group took part this year and we would love to see more families involved in the years to come. Well done especially to the 3 children who took part, Harrison, Noah & Fredric, aged 5, 8 and 10 at the time who slept overnight at the church on Friday 7th October. We were very pleased to raise £1698!!

Admission of the Baptised to Communion Course – The ABC course took place in December 2022 / January 2023. 27 children across the Parish took part and were admitted to communion on Sunday 5th February. For the first time this year, we held the Admission Services in both churches so that the children could be welcomed by their church family into the worshipping community to which they feel most connected. 14 children were admitted at St Mary's; Alexander, Alice, Anae, Ben, Ciaran, David, Emily D, Emily M, Micky, Olive, Oliver, Toby and William. We continue to pray for them and their families as their journey with faith and deepen their connections as members of our church family.

Godly Play: After a very quiet period in the Godly Play room during Covid, it has been wonderful to have the children back for Godly Play this year!

We have used Godly Play on numerous occasions for our mid-service groups and are looking forward to increasing the number of sessions in the Sunday School format. Thank you to Paula Greenwood for leading the Sunday School session this year and to Hannah King for scheduling us in!

It has also been a delight to welcome St Mary's School back to our Godly Play room this year! We have hosted Years 3-6 so far and looking forward to hosting Years 1 & 2 in the coming month or two.

During these sessions, the class is split into two and John leads a session in the main body of the church whilst Nikki teaches the Godly Play session upstairs. The class switches halfway through so they experience both sessions. Jane will lead the "church" sessions whilst John is on sabbatical.

We have been very lucky to have Tina Thomas who taught at St Mary's school for many, many years on board with us for these sessions. She has liaised with the school and provided much needed support for these sessions. Nikki held a session for the St Mary's school teachers in October 2022 to inform them more about the method.

St Mary's hasn't been the only school visiting us in the Godly Play room this year. Nikki and Rev'd John hosted similar Godly Play / church sessions for the Year 2's at Brandlehow School as part of their learning about Belonging. We explored the role of Baptism in the Christian faith and hosted 57 children over two days. A big thank you to Nathalie Gordon from Brandlehow School for arranging these sessions.

Like Sunday School, our Godly Play teacher numbers have dwindled, in fact we now only have 2 qualified Godly Play teachers! We would love to recruit and train new teachers. This requires a 3-day training run by the Godly Play Foundation. 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.

Youth Group - November saw the re-birth of our parish youth group for children in year 6 and year 7, run by Rev'd Helena, Rev'd Daniel and Nikki. We have met 5 times since November, trying to meet once a month, usually in the arch at St Mary's. Our next meeting is a fun afternoon at Jungle Rumble! In addition to the monthly youth groups, our Year 7's, along with some of the youth who attend Camino (see Jane's report), have attended events run by Youth Ministry in Communion (YMIC) - a new and exciting project pioneering collaborative-sacramental youth ministry.

There is so much scope and promise in the Youth Group and we would love to get more people involved in this ministry. If anyone is interested in joining our leadership team, please contact Nikki or Helena. You're more than welcome to come along and see what we do and be inspired to take part!! Likewise, if there are any children in Year 6 or 7 who would like to take part, please do get in touch.

It feels like my report is one massive recruitment drive! It feels very exciting to finally be able to see the potential of this ministry – there is so much we could do and so many ways we could support children, young people and families and it would be so wonderful to have more passionate people on board for us to flourish!

Nikki Cornfield, Youth & Family Minister (part-time 10 hours per week)
nikki.cornfield@parishofputney.co.uk

Pioneer curate's report

I write this surrounded by teenagers preparing for their summer exams. As a Pioneer I make connections with people who don't come to church by serving them and building community. *Study Space* is an initiative to provide a quiet and structured environment for revision by opening up St Mary's every afternoon for a week in the school Easter holidays. This project is worthwhile simply as a way of serving our local community. It also gives me

lots of new relationships with young people, some of whom may be interested in other things that the church is doing.

Study Space also exemplifies another dimension of pioneering – teamwork. I try to share initiatives with as many people as possible and so generate energy and purpose far broader and more embedded in our church life than anything I could do by myself. *Study Space* volunteers have found tutors, applied for sponsorship, looked after the young people, publicised the event, helped with paperwork and baked cakes.

This time last year I was in the middle of a listening exercise finding out what you value about church and faith and who you want to share that with. Based on that report the PCC asked me to pioneer with teenagers. *Study Space* is part of this pioneering and so is *Camino*. *Camino* is a youth group that meets for conversation, games, crafts, cooking, and faith-related discussion. We have enjoyed making Valentines cards for Regenerate Rise, a local charity working with isolated elderly people, and baking Christmas cookies for St Paul's Pantry, a community foodbank. One of the young people described what they like about *Camino* as follows: *"It's nice to have a safe space to talk about faith where there are people who know a lot about it but without pressure to become more Christian than you are."* Another described the delights this way: *"Cheese toasties"*.

A second finding of the Listening Project was that we/you are interested in supporting older people. I've been trying to do some of this too as an occasional volunteer at Regenerate Rise and by leading a congregation that meets at Mount Court, semi-sheltered house just off Putney High Street. My next project is to begin offering regular services at the Platt Centre for Regenerate Rise. If all goes well, I will be talking about it in next year's report.

I continue also to learn all the regular skills of parish ministry.

In September my priesting (delayed by Covid) finally took place. The combined choirs of St Mary's and All Saints' sang beautifully, Rev'd Daniel orchestrated an elegant liturgy, Rev'd John supported me with typical generosity and I smiled for about 95% of the service. Thank you all for helping me reach this moment.

Team Rector's Charge

This was partly delivered as a sermon at the 10 am and 6 pm services on Sunday 23 May and partly as comment during the ACM on that same day.

The gospel reading was the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24 13-35). This account of two disciples pondering on the meaning of the startling events in Jerusalem over the Easter weekend, with a stranger whom they discovered was their Risen Lord, provides an embryonic illustration of the life of the early church.

The passage has a lot going on: journeying and discovery, confusion and sadness, dialogue and engagement, opening up of the scriptures, hospitality and Christ being made known in the breaking of the bread. All of this suggests that the walk to Emmaus reflects the experience of the new emerging church. We can reflect on the life of St Mary's on how the

stands of our shared journeys in faith resonate with those experienced by the disciples on the road to Emmaus.

Sadness and confusion

We noted our sadness at the deaths of Rob Walmsley, Ivo Forde and Margaret Yearsley. The church is slowly recovering from the impairment to our common life that arose out of covid, albeit the good recovery in numbers of people worshipping since September 2022 seems to be faster than the recovery in volunteering and financial giving that we need for our community to flourish! It has been disorientating and discouraging to face a £24,000 increase in energy costs this year.

Structural developments

The streaming and audio upgrade is now due to be done in Spring / early summer 2023. A solar panel project, to be undertaken both for environmental reasons and the pay back in lower energy costs looks like it will cost about £100,000.

Legacies

We are hugely grateful to generous legacies left to us by Peter Tuppen, Caroline Blenkinsopp, Eileen Larkin and John Deby.

Hospitality

The Repair cafe reflects environmental concern, service to the wider community and hospitality within the church. Study Space has provided a great support to GCSE and A level students preparing for Summer exams.

Engagement with the Scriptures

This is an area of life which needs more attention, particularly around the creation of midweek study groups.

Christ known in the breaking of bread

Musicians, readers, intercessors, servers, welcomers, Sunday school and creche teams, ministers, refreshment providers and many more contribute to our worship being a place where Christ is encountered in the breaking of bread.

Gratitude

On behalf of the whole community, I express immense gratitude to the many people who work so hard and whose ministry and service is captured in the reports for this Annual Meeting. Thank you, it is a privilege to serve with you and amongst you.

God bless

Revd John Whittaker