



# Parish Reports 2023-2024

Annual Parochial Church Meeting  
28 April 2024

St Mary the Virgin  
Church Street  
Twickenham  
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[www.stmarytwick.org.uk](http://www.stmarytwick.org.uk)

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## The Archives of St Mary's

The new cabinets in the north gallery now contain most of the 19th and 20th century documents, minute books, parish magazines, albums of photographs and framed pictures. Since the re-ordering of the nave, the archives have acquired some brass plaques and other items. Some of the older archives remain stored in the tower safe which is secure and also remarkably stable from the temperature and humidity point of view. After further checking it will be possible to add more to the history section of the parish website and plan how to share information about the archives.

Enquiries are often received, mainly concerning family history research:

- An enquirer's great grandfather was licensee of the George Inn in King Street in the 19th century and, following his suicide, his widow, daughters and sons-in-law continued to work there into the 20th century.
- A researcher for a film on the American Revolution was looking for portraits of William, 5th Viscount Howe, who was buried in the Holly Road graveyard.
- A family asked about details of the Tryon tomb in the churchyard.
- Following the St Mary's Guides Centenary celebrations, some records have been added to the archives which previously only commemorated the Scouts.
- A descendant of Rev. James Lacy, curate 1765-1776, whose ledgerstone is directly inside the front gate at the entrance to the churchyard from Church Street, inscribed: This vault contains the remains of the Revd. JAMES LACY and Family.
- A descendant of Rev. W. P. Cole Sheane, Vicar 1923-1948 (whose only son, Hugh, was killed in November 1944) hoped that his mother's ashes could be buried with him; sadly his burial was not known in our records.
- A Twining family descendant asked about locating five ancestors' graves which are in two table tombs in the Holly Road graveyard as well as being commemorated by memorials in the church and on the exterior wall.

New records continue to join the archives, including a large number of documents on the building of the church hall in 1989 with a 3D model. Further offers of memorabilia are always very welcome, including printed or digital photographs to add to the records.

Diana Wells  
Hon. Archivist

## Bellringers

Over the last 12 months we have been able to ring for all Sunday services and nearly all Wednesday evenings, even during the summer months. We have been active throughout the year, welcoming visiting bands and introducing new people to ringing.

We celebrated the King & Queen's Coronation in May 2023 by ringing immediately after the service and then went on to support ringers at All Hallows in Twickenham for more ringing. At the Fair in June we demonstrated ringing to anyone who wanted to see how it all works.

Sadly, in July we said goodbye to Norman Edwards, Tower Captain of St Mary's 1982-2020. Many of the bellringers who had known Norman over the years joined in with the ringing before and after his funeral on 18th July. Bellringing played such an important role in his life, which was celebrated and thanks given at the service in St Mary's. A quarter Peal of Grandsire Triples, one of Norman's favourite methods, was rung after the morning service on Sunday 23rd July 2023. The band included current tower captains/ringing masters of Richmond, Chiswick, Acton and Twickenham All Hallows and St Mary's who all did a lot of ringing with Norman.

On Advent Saturday a full peal was rung for Thomas Ashwin-Siejkowski's 18th birthday, lasting just over 3 hours. Thomas is a keen bellringer and was initially taught by Norman and this was his first peal, a real achievement! Well done Thomas! He's now assistant Tower Captain, helping with developing our learning and ringing techniques.

We were asked to ring for three Christmas Carol Concerts and we also rang for our own Advent and Carol Services. A jolly band formed just before midnight to ring in the New Year, competing with fireworks outside!

With our practice nights on Wednesday evenings we all aim to continue to improve our ringing skills which I hope is appreciated! I want to thank all those who make it possible, for their dedication, especially on Sunday mornings! If you would like to learn but never asked, please make contact, I'm very happy to 'show you the ropes'!

Liz Sephton  
Tower Captain

### **Buildings Group**

The Buildings Group reports to the PCC on the care of the church fabric and on the maintenance of the hall. We work closely with the Church Wardens and our Buildings Manager, Katie Kean. We have had a busy year.

The Group met six times over the year and members took responsibility for individual projects to support the upkeep of the Church and the hall. We welcomed two new members, Gill Clark and Chris Webborn, and we are already benefitting from their skills and energy.

In September the church was broken into; little of value was stolen, but there was considerable damage to the 300-year-old north door as well to as the Vestry and cellar entrances. We are currently undertaking the remedial work and will also be upgrading our security in line with police recommendations. We hope that the bulk of the repair costs will be met by our insurers.

In November, following a period of heavy rain, parts of the rendered cornice above the north door gave way and crashed to the ground, dislodging the lantern in the process. We took immediate action to provide protective scaffolding over the two main doors, pending a survey of the whole of the cornice and localised repairs. A specification for the work is being drawn up, which will be undertaken by specialist conservation contractors, hopefully over the summer. The cost is currently unknown, but inevitably will be substantial.

Every five years, Church of England parish churches are required by law to be inspected by a suitably experienced architect or surveyor. Our Quinquennial Inspection was undertaken in December 2023 by our architect Richard Griffiths. Other than the obvious problem of the cornice failure, the church was found to be in fair condition overall, but a number of actions were identified. We will address the most urgent works over the coming months.

Work on the replacement tower louvres is nearing completion. Each of the oak louvres has been made by hand, and they are all of slightly different dimensions to ensure a good fit with the medieval stonework. Robust anti-pigeon measures will be the final step.

We have had a fire risk assessment undertaken and are currently reviewing its recommendations.

An elegant new wireless microphone for the lectern has been installed, and after some teething problems should now be working properly. The Church hopes shortly to start streaming selected services and events from the newly installed camera at the tower screen.

At the hall, we have held meetings with Richmond Council who lease part of the building from the parish. The aim has been to exchange information so we can better coordinate our various maintenance responsibilities. This includes discussions on the best way forward on energy use as our gas boilers approach the end of their lives.

Over the Christmas holidays, the offices in the hall were reconfigured and upgraded to provide more space for the Windsor kindergarten. The new church office is in a new room combining part of the landing with the former Kindergarten office.

In the Memorial Garden, estimates were obtained for building the ramp. The Church is now in the process of fundraising, with grant applications lodged.

In 2023 the garage at Dial House (which backs onto the Memorial Garden) was returned to Parish use and it has since been re-roofed.

We continue to liaise with the Eco Group and were delighted to support their successful bid for an Eco Church Silver award. The ambition now is to go for Eco Church Gold.

My thanks to all members of the Group, the Wardens and others in the congregation who have again given so generously of their time and skills. We always welcome more helpers so if you would like to join us, do get in touch.

Geoff Noble  
Chair, Buildings Group

### **Charitable Giving**

At the end of 2023 £300 was given to each of the following charities proposed by members of the congregation:

- Child Aid for Eastern Europe
- Coroners' Courts Support Service
- Crosslight Advice on money management
- Embracing Age
- Friends of Mengo Hospital U.K.
- Friends of Vellore U.K.
- Growbaby
- Intergenerational Music Making
- Kingston Samaritans
- Mission Aviation Fellowship
- Mission for Vision
- Mothers' Union Overseas Development Fund
- Prison Advice and Care Trust
- Small Steps
- Toilet Twinning

Although this total of £4,500 with £500 kept in reserve for next year is an improvement on last year's sum of £3,025, it still represents a very small proportion of the church's overall income and discussions are taking place as to how our charitable giving is to be funded in future, especially as health and safety concerns occasioned by the presence of scaffolding preclude the holding of our annual fete.

For Christian Aid a separate collection of £664 was made, partly raised by offering pastries after the 9.30 service, and for Mengo Hospital £345.57 has been collected in the course of the year.

Since the last A.P.C.M. we have hosted speakers for Christian Aid, Mission for Vision (Sarah Wilson), Brighter Together and Crosslight Advice and we look forward to hearing Joseph Vambe speak about Christian Aid on April 7th.

Warm thanks go to all those who contribute to our charitable giving and especially to members of the Ecumenical Group, whose help in the administration of this activity is invaluable.

Sophy Fisher

## Children and Young People

Our Church Vision is to seek to nurture our children and young people with a sense of God's love for them and purpose for their lives. We want them to develop their spiritual being, opening themselves to God's love, and be welcomed, loved and involved within our church community. We continue with our aim to rebuild numbers of children and young families engaging with the church post-Covid, and gradually to restart activities beyond the Sunday school.

### *Sunday school*

During school term time, Sunday School has offered the children and young people worship, Bible stories and readings, discussions and activities appropriate to their age and understanding, which they join in enthusiastically, before returning to the church to worship with the rest of the congregation as our church family. Numbers are rising slowly, and it is really lovely to see a few new families joining the church, but we are still well below levels before Covid, hence the emphasis on growth in our Mission. These smaller numbers mean that all children and young people over 9 years are meeting as one group, combining what used to be our Adventurers, now 9 to 11 years, and SMG - young people over 11 years. This remains a temporary fix for the relatively small numbers of younger people aged 9+ attending St Mary's church/ Sunday school on anything like a regular basis. We are open to involving them in further activities outside Sunday school and the 9.30 service, including through Diocesan events, which is the plan for 2024 and beyond. Our younger children continue to meet in two groups - one for 3 to 6 years, and one for 6 to 9 years.

The parish Nativity play, as ever in our 9.30 Eucharist, was a joyous occasion with so many of our children and young people participating. Many thanks to Julie Hall and her team for all the organising and rehearsing. The children also made lovely Christmas cards for posting to those less able to attend our services.

We are very grateful, as ever, to Julie for managing all the planning and administration for the Sunday school and leading worship for the younger two groups. She is supported by those who volunteer as leaders who put real thought and preparation into each session, and they in turn could not manage without those who turn up on the day to help. We still need more volunteers.

Please think whether you could contribute in a leading or helping capacity. You don't have to be young or have any children to get involved!

### *Minnows*

St Mary's Minnows is our group for parents and carers with children aged 0 - 4 years on Monday mornings in term time. We are so pleased that Sarah Waller took the initiative to restart, from the Autumn term 2023, this welcoming activity in church which had sadly been in abeyance for some years. It offers a friendly, welcome and relaxed time to chat with refreshments, playtime and singing. It provides a safe place to meet and is also a lovely, gentle introduction to the church for young families. Thank you, Sarah and those who help you! We require at least one helper each week for Sarah to safely run the sessions - if you would be available once or twice a term to help serve refreshments and chat to the families, please contact Sarah Waller on [minnows@stmarytwick.org.uk](mailto:minnows@stmarytwick.org.uk) (or phone number available from the Parish Office) as this term's rota has quite a few spaces to fill.

### *No Messy Church*

Sadly, after a single very successful Messy Church in the previous year, we have been unable to find enough volunteers to offer this informal and fun after-school activity, with food, worship and Bible themed crafts. We hope and pray that we can restore this once a term in the coming year.

### *In Church*

We aspire for the children and young people to be an integral part of our worship and community and their engagement in the Eucharist is a vital part of this. We offer a children's table in the church during the service, where the youngest children attending can feel welcome with books and colouring materials, themed to the church year.

The children and young people have enthusiastically helped lead several 3rd Sunday services during the year.

The family Celebration Sunday service in the Memorial Garden was led by St Mary's school. It was lovely to have Angela Abrahams, the head of the school and a school choir, which helped swell the sound of our worship in this outdoor service. with many school families attending.

We had a fun and uplifting Christingle service in church, with the Scouts as ever attending and helping with the service and offering mulled wine and refreshments in the hall afterwards. St Mary's Families - both parents and children - had great fun assembling the Christingles to distribute in the service. There were many families attending who do not regularly come to church, and we raised over £400 for The Children's Society! Also more thanks go to the Scouts for continuing to provide the tea tent and barbecue equipment for our fair. This help really does enhance our ability to welcome the Twickenham community to the church and grounds with food and drink, and to help with our money raising.

On Christmas Eve we welcomed families into church for our two very well attended Crib services, with Fr Jeff providing an interactive and joyful child-friendly story of Christmas.

### *Our St Mary's school*

In the absence of a Chaplain, Fr Jeff has continued to enjoy his involvement at the school. He has led Collective Worship, celebrated Agape Meals, taken questions of a theological nature, consulted with the Worship Ambassadors, attended Governing Body, Ethos Committee and Admissions meetings, met with the Head Teacher on several occasions to talk about the ethos at the school and how it can be promoted, explained the story of the Nativity and what the Eucharist is all about and hosted services at the church for Harvest, Christmas, Easter, the Leavers and when pupils receive Bibles donated by the Trustees. All these experiences has led him to an appreciation of the huge opportunities a Chaplain will have in the very near future, to "nurture our children and young people with a sense of God's love for them and purpose for their lives." St Mary's PCC- and Trustees-appointed Governors help ensure that the school community is supported and strengthened in its strategic vision. We are so grateful to those from the church community who offer their support to the school as Governors and as Trustees.

St Mary's School continues to hold regular services and other events in our church, made so much easier by our reordered interior. These include the Leavers' Service, the Harvest Service, Christmas Carol Service, the Bible Service, and the Easter service.

### *St Mary's Families*

St Mary's Families have kept in touch on church events and other news through their WhatsApp group, and through emails on key events when needed. It would be lovely to find a coordinator for this to help with our comms.

### *Assistant Priest recruitment*

Sadly, last year, we failed at the last hurdle in recruiting an Assistant Priest who would also act as a chaplain to the school. We have been carrying out a further recruitment exercise this year, and we are delighted the new appointment was announced on 21 April.

Thank you to all who have participated in our Children and Young People's work at St Mary's to enrich their lives through the love of Christ - children and young people themselves, leaders and helpers and Fr Jeff.

Judy Britton

### **Cleaning Team**

St. Mary's Scrubbers are still trying to keep the church clean but we do need about 6 more volunteers to help us out. We would welcome any offers, male, female, young or getting on. Depending on how many of us there are, the teams of 4 people need only clean once every five weeks. So if anyone fancies joining us you would be very welcome. It is also another way of getting to know other folk in the congregation and having a coffee together afterwards.

Jenny Kelly

### **Communications**

St Mary's uses the worldwide web, email and social media channels to communicate St Mary's news, events and church community activities with audiences near and far.

The following is a summary of activity on the principal online channels we use, for calendar year 2023.

The content and administration of these channels is almost entirely dependent on a very few volunteers.

Website [[www.stmarytwick.org.uk](http://www.stmarytwick.org.uk)]

- St Mary's own official website had around 585 unique visitors per month in Jan-Oct, rising to over 1000 in December. It's really important that we share details of our Christmas services and events in good time, with a noticeable increase in visitors from late October.
- The vast majority of visits are to the home page, with over 4800 unique visitors over the year (6615 visits) - underlining the importance of showing the majority of information that people need directly on our front page. The next most visited page is prayers (1033 visits). Four other pages make up the majority of the rest of the traffic: What's on, Services, Room Hire and Contact Us.
- Other than our 'behind the scenes' page (where there is video-training for those who post on the site on how to update it), public visitors spend most time on our Prayers and Room Hire pages, where we hope that visitors would take time to engage with the information provided. Most of our other high-traffic pages receive short visits to access a specific detail before moving to another page.

### **Emails**

- At the end Dec 2023 we had 241 subscribers to our weekly email that carries a message from the Vicar and links to the parish newsletter and list of Intercessions, both of which are revised on a weekly basis and also posted on St Mary's website.
- The email distribution is very stable, with 5 people unsubscribing during the last 6 months of the year. (We changed in June to using Mailerlite to send the weekly email message).
- Engagement with our emails remains steady with around a 70% open rate, and 20% click rate (people accessing the linked newsletter).



A Church Near You - St Mary's webpages [[www.achurchnearyou.com/church/15505/](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/15505/)]

- The CofE's official website hosts pages dedicated to St Mary's, covering Services and events in church as well as offering an online copy of the weekly parish newsletter and details of church facilities.
- In 2023 we achieved just over 12000 page views; the trend is upward - in a typical rolling month this now [April 2024] means we receive around 1250 page views.

Facebook [[www.facebook.com/StMarysTwickenham](http://www.facebook.com/StMarysTwickenham)]

- Posts on our page had a total 'reach' of some 11,200 in 2023; an increase of some 72% over 2022.
- We have 289 'signed up' followers; 74% female and 26% male; 91% located across the UK - unsurprisingly predominantly in the vicinity of TW; 4% were in the USA.
- The two most popular posts covered David Goode's piano recital (in May, reach 2200) and the video of the tower bells being rung to commemorate Norman Edwards (in July, reach 1700).
- Posts marking the deaths and funeral arrangements for Norman Edwards (posted in July) and Audrey Thomas (posted in December) achieved a reach of 359 and 322 respectively.

Chris Williams

## **The Eco Group**

### *Eco Church*

For some years St Mary's has been a Fair-Trade Church and has worked towards the Eco Church criteria. This initiative, run by Christian charity A Rocha, is a tool that gets the whole church community thinking about the ways they care for God's Creation as a key part of their Christian faith through five specific categories: Worship and Teaching, Buildings, Land, Community and Global Engagement and Lifestyles. By completing an online survey, churches can be considered for an Eco Church Award at Bronze, Silver, or Gold level as a way to help us 'go green' in all areas of church life. The good news is that, since this time last year, St Mary's has been awarded the Silver Award, achieved by progress made in all five categories. In fact we have achieved the gold standard in both Worship and Teaching and Land, so this year we are 'Going for Gold!'

### *Oak Lane cemetery:*

The Eco Group monitors the care of the Churchyard, the Garden of Remembrance and the Hall courtyard, as well as the church's buildings, raising awareness of environmental issues. Last year a crab apple was planted in the Churchyard for the King and another in Oak Lane for the Queen's Jubilee with a donation from The Woodland Trust. We have a particular care for the Oak Lane cemetery and this year a Management Plan has been set up with the involvement of the Richmond Borough Parks Officer and the approval of the PCC in order to oversee its maintenance in the long term. Ever since lockdowns we have monitored the heavy footfall on paths and grass due to the increased numbers of visitors who have enjoyed the peaceful nature reserve in the centre of Twickenham so the Plan aims to care for the plants and trees as well as safeguard the gravestones and support the wildlife such as owls, foxes, squirrels and birds. The Trust for Conservation Volunteers carried out successful workdays to control the ivy and brambles around the tombs and gravestones.

Future plans include insect hotels, a wildflower area, information board, historical information and community events including a community day in September with the help of Habitats and

Heritage. We plan a repeat of the successful fund-raising Quiz and the Christmas Carol Singing attended by over 50 local residents.

### *Fair Trade*

Since Traidcraft was wound up after 40 years, the stall has been run for Easter and Christmas sales, and as a Fair-Trade Church we have ensured use of fair-trade tea and coffee for the Sunday refreshments in the Hall. We encourage the use of fair-trade goods at all meetings and events in order to support producers who are struggling with the effects of climate change such as floods, droughts and crop failures.

Diana Wells (Fair Trade) with Liz Webborn (Eco Church),  
Anne Hutchins and Francesca Jordan (Oak Lane cemetery)

### **Ecumenical Group**

We are proud of our role, to foster links with other denominations and faiths.

On Good Friday 2023 Father Alex Lane of All Saints' Church led us on the Walk of Witness, which was well attended by Christians of both Anglican and other denominations. This year it will be led by the Venerable Richard Frank, Archdeacon of Middlesex.

The annual Walk of Peace and Friendship organised by Hounslow Friends of Faith took place on 12th August, when we were able to visit three places of worship in Hounslow, namely a Hindu temple, the Jamia Masjid Mosque and Holy Trinity Church.

On 27th August Hymns and Pimms were hosted by our Vicar at St. Mary's with the help of our organist, Adrian Mumford, and a reading by Father Ulick of St. James's Roman Catholic Church. This was a thoroughly enjoyable occasion, for which the refreshments were provided by the Ecumenical Group.

Previously the group had been involved in May in providing pastries after the talk on Christian Aid given by Brian Martin.

The Interfaith Knitting Group, founded by Barbara Witzefeld, continues to flourish, now organised by Lynda Imir. Its members knit for local charities and for Ukraine. They meet regularly in the Church Hall on the third Saturday of each month and have an email address of [knitting@stmarytwick.org.uk](mailto:knitting@stmarytwick.org.uk)

Many thanks go to members of the Ecumenical Group for their enthusiastic involvement and invaluable help throughout the year.

Sophy Fisher

### **Flower Team**

The flower team has enjoyed decorating the church to enhance worship and emphasise the building's beauty on a weekly basis during the past year and particularly for the festivals of Christmas, Easter, harvest and weddings. The main additional event was coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla when we surrounded each arrangement on the windowsills with a golden crown.

We have been pleased to welcome two new members to the team, who have been making a very helpful contribution to our efforts. We celebrated with a post-Christmas party at the end of January, during which Joy Lee gave an inspiring demonstration with many useful tips on flower supports other than environmentally damaging floral foam. The flower team is aware of the

environmental and monetary costs of buying imported flowers and makes an effort to keep costs down and to source material locally where possible.

Celia Goodman     Amanda Boardman

## **Hampton Deanery Synod**

The Hampton Deanery Synod, covering 15 parishes and the Activate Church, gives the PCC an important link between the parish and the wider structure of the church.

A deanery synod ('synod' means 'council') consists of all licensed clergy and elected lay representatives from each parish in the deanery. St Mary's this year has had one lay member, Judy Britton.

Hampton Deanery Synod meets three times a year, hosted by each of the churches in turn. Meetings are convened by the Area Dean, currently the Reverend Ben Lovell, Vicar of St Mary's, Hampton. This year, Judy attended the first two meetings, and Father Jeff, the third. After welcoming refreshments and time to meet and chat, the meetings open with collective worship, followed by local deanery news and the main speaker.

The May '23 meeting, held at St Michael's, Fulwell, welcomed the Reverend Jonathan Rust, Kensington Area Director of Mission Development, as the main speaker. He gave an inspiring talk on Reaching Out to Our Neighbours, underlining the Diocesan Vision 2023, with the ambition 'for every Londoner to encounter the love of God in Christ'. He challenged parishes to consider who they were not reaching in the community and to think how we might engage and encourage them, in time, to become church members. He encouraged parishes to try approaches, and not to worry if they did not succeed this time - there were always lessons to be learned!

The November '23 meeting was hosted by St Richard's Hanwell with Jo Jones, who is the Bishop of Kensington's Youth and (secondary) Schools Chaplain, and Jacob Holme who leads a youth collaboration across several churches. They talked about reaching out to 11-18 year olds in ways that would engage them. Collaboration was important; there were fewer youth workers and it was very difficult to recruit them. But like-minded parishes could get together to arrange events to attract young people. Jo Jones arranged some events for young people, particularly those without youth workers.

In February '24 the meeting was at St Mary's Hampton, where Oliver Home, the new Diocesan General Secretary and Chief Executive of the London Diocesan Fund, was the main speaker, explaining his roles, the advice, support and (limited) resources which were available - looking for engagement with parishes to understand their needs.

Judy Britton

## **Lent Groups**

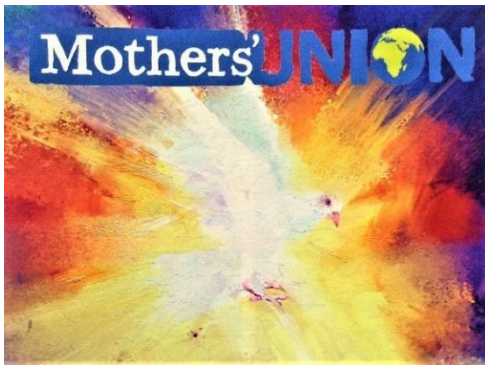
For Lent 2024 we revisited some of the mountain tops in the Bible, focusing on some significant moments in both the Old and the New Testaments that occurred on mountains. The 5-week course started by looking at the giving of the 10 commandments on Mount Sinai and our response to the 10 commandments. We then moved on to the New Testament to look at the Beatitudes or values for living as given by Jesus as part of His Sermon on the Mount. The transfiguration of Jesus, thought to have taken place on Mount Hermon, which we looked at in week 3, was seen to be the turning point in Jesus' ministry, as from then on He moves towards Jerusalem and towards what is to happen just outside on the hill at Calvary, our fourth session. The final week was the hill of the ascension as reported in Acts and seen as preparation for the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

As in previous years, we met in church for a short introduction to the week's material and then divided into small groups for a period of discussion. Following refreshments with homemade cakes we shared some of what we had been talking about and concluded with the saying together of Compline or night prayer.

Participants welcomed the opportunity to meet in small groups to talk about their understanding and their experiences, to reflect together, ask questions, express doubts and be encouraged by one another and, as always, to get to know other members of the congregation.

Charlotte West

## Mothers' Union



The International Charity that now is the Mothers' Union did not stop its work during the Covid Pandemic, both in the United Kingdom and overseas. It has over 4 million members worldwide and it continues to grow and the glorious global Wave of Prayer in July 2024 is happening! Over 3 days, all MU members, all over the world in different time zones, beginning at 12.00 noon their time, will be praying for areas of the entire world that are in need. Joining in this effort spreading round the planet feels extraordinary ...

Our local Branch served pancakes to all comers on Shrove Tuesday in church. Members of the Branch of the MU at St Mary's continued to attend the Prayer Hours and Services of Holy Communion celebrated using the version of the Liturgy written in 1662 on Wednesday mornings at St Mary's.

We feel that what was undertaken by members of the St Mary's Branch has now been successfully passed on to other groups. The work of this Branch has been completed. Members continue to support the Global Charity however, and as individual former members we shall always cherish the memories of, and salute all that has been achieved by, loyal and indomitable past members at St Mary's since 1893!

We look forward, with the hope of Mary Sumner our founder and with the hope of St. Mary, our Patron Saint, to whatever is to come!

Barbara Williams  
2023 Branch Leader

## Music at St. Mary's

The choir continues taking its valued and customary role in leading the musical component of worship. The choir aims to provide music that contributes to and enhances the liturgy by performing anthems during the communion from the gallery and leading the congregation in both hymns and service music in the chancel, feeling better connected there during the service.

Rehearsals are held in the vestry on Sunday mornings, ready to start singing by 8.55 a.m. I am enormously indebted to those members of the choir who regularly sing on Sundays and rehearse on a weekly basis; and to several guest singers who are able to augment the regular choir for special events. But we are always in need of new singers. Attendance every week is not required: you will be welcome even if you can make only occasional services with the rehearsal on Sunday. Please do give this serious thought and help to ensure that the choir can continue to take a leading role on Sundays.

I am especially grateful to Chris Britton who takes rehearsals, conducts the choir on Sundays and hosted the Summer Party last year!

Organ Scholar Patrick Tate, now just 16 years old, has been with us for two years and is both highly personable and making splendid progress: he has now taken-over on two Sundays in my absence and plays with increasing confidence. He is learning both piano and organ and shortly takes his GCSEs including music.

### *Concerts*

With wonderfully warmed acoustics after the reordering, the church has never been more popular for concerts with such groups as Richmond Concert Society and the Richmond Light Orchestra as regulars. In 2023 our own Sunday Evening Concert Series was terrifically successful including regular appearances from the Marble Hill Singers, a stupendous piano recital from David Goode (returning this year) and Hamish Dustagheer and the popular 'Hymns and Pimms' welcoming congregations from other local churches. A full series of monthly concerts is arranged for 2024 to include two piano recitals, choral music and a concert from Christopher Herrick: please do come and support them.

Adrian Mumford  
Director of Music

### **PCC and Standing Committee**

Since the last APCM in April 2023, the PCC has met five times. As well as discussing regular business items including policies, finance, and the use and maintenance of our buildings, the PCC welcomed updates and reports from Vision Groups, and extends its thanks to all those who contribute to the many aspects of St Mary's Church's vibrant life and work.

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

The Standing Committee consists of the Parish Priest, Wardens, PCC Secretary, Treasurer, a representative nominated by each Warden and a representative elected by the PCC. The Committee met five times during the year to conduct the business of the PCC between PCC meetings.

On behalf of everyone at St Mary's, the PCC expresses its gratitude to Fr Jeff for his dedication and ministry, and we are especially grateful to Jeff for taking on a much-increased workload over the last three and a half years, ensuring that ministry at St Mary's School continued while being the sole priest at the Parish.

The Committee would also like to thank Cath Nortje and Katie Kean for their efficient running of the Parish Office and being great ambassadors for St Mary's.

Clarinda Chan  
PCC Secretary

### **Safeguarding**

Our progress on safeguarding may now be reported via a dedicated dashboard and there are monthly on-line drop-in sessions to address any queries. We are supported in our work by the Diocesan Advisor for the Kensington area, Caryn Weber, and my thanks go to all the volunteers who have successfully completed the two required on-line training modules and especially to the

two Children's Champions, Judy Britton and Julie Hall, who play so large a part in fostering our children's worship at St. Mary's.

Sophy Fisher  
Safeguarding Officer

### St Mary's Group

In April 2023 we visited the newly restored Marble Hill House and were able to admire the changes in the house and gardens. In May we held our A.G.M., chaired by Jeff, after which we listened to some favourite poems, including one about a vicar! In June we took the ferry across the Thames to visit Ham House and drank tea in the beautiful gardens. Then in July we had our regular summer party, enjoying all the food and drink kindly provided by members of the group.

Our new season began with a tour of York House Gardens, its trees and statues, led by Paul Leonard, in October Joy Lee skilfully showed us how successful arrangements can be achieved by gathering greenery growing wild in public places and in November Adrian Mumford spoke on the role of organ music in our worship and the care taken in choosing the right hymns for different moments. This was followed in December by our Christmas party while in January we watched a strange performance of Measure for Measure at the Mary Wallace Theatre and in February a few of us had an enjoyable game of Monopoly. Our visit to the Twickenham Museum planned for April had to be brought forward to March because of the museum's closure for restoration work and so in April we shall instead visit an exhibition on the Great Escapes of the Second World War at the National Archives.

Huge thanks go to the team who faithfully serve the refreshments after the 9.30 service every month.

Sophy Fisher

### Tea @2.30 - a social group for everyone



This group has been going for nearly 2 years now and we welcome everyone - young to old and even those with waggy tails! We meet on the **first** and **third** Wednesdays of every month at 2.30pm. If you want companionship, a chatter and lots of laughter do join us for a fun afternoon. Hot drinks are provided and sometimes there's cake! We usually meet up in the church or vestry but we have used the garden and had an outing to Squires.



Do come along and bring a friend. All are welcome from the wider community, not just St Mary's.

Julie & Julia

## The Twickenham Almshouses

These almshouses are named after William Candler (1826 - 1907), a master grocer from Twickenham, whose legacy resulted in their construction on Amyand Park Road in 1936. Since 2008 the management and everyday upkeep of this property has become the responsibility of the Richmond Charities. This move to the Richmond Charities has been financially transformative, allowing an ongoing plan of improvement across the whole estate, including Candler Almshouses. There are now dedicated bathrooms for each home and general updating of living spaces continues. A major project is a five year plan to install photovoltaic (solar) panels and storage batteries on as many of its almshouse estates as possible, in order that residents will benefit directly from the electricity generated which will reduce their energy bills.

Candler Almshouses was part of Phase One and 100 panels were installed on the roof, on a rear canopy and on a newly constructed car port, which optimised the number of panels on the estate. At the same time, the whole roof was renewed as the existing one dated back to when the property was built.

As Candler Almshouses is a building of townscape merit, the panels on the roof had to be situated in such a way as to not be visible from the road. They also could only be fitted on roofs which slope south or west, in order to maximise the exposure to sun and light.

Not surprisingly, there was a lot of disruption during the building process but the residents dealt with it extremely well, showing patience and good humour. The construction firm, London House Projects, were very helpful, courteous and supportive throughout the project.

This is an innovative programme, embracing 21st century technology, that will reassure both the charity and residents by future proofing their energy supply from the volatility of the market. It will cushion residents from possible energy cost spikes, with the charity working hard to ensure residents are on the correct tariff, with the best supplier to allow them to sell back energy to the National Grid and get paid for it.

As a new trustee of the Richmond Charities, I'm still finding my feet but I have seen, first hand, the fantastic work that the charity does in the borough. The community spirit is vibrant and strong. The almshouses are vital because the pressure to house vulnerable older people is becoming ever greater.

Finally, if you or your friends wish to know more about our almshouse community then please visit our stall at the Richmond May Fair on Saturday 11 th May.

Robert Hall, Trustee appointed by the Vicar of St. Mary's Twickenham



## Trustees of the Twickenham Parochial Schools Trust



The Trustees are responsible for the management of a Trust settled in 1861 for the purpose of providing permanent school accommodation for children in Twickenham.

Much has changed since 1861, in particular, the introduction of free school education for all children. The role of the Trust has therefore developed into being one of financial, spiritual and moral support. For example, paying the salary of a Chaplain and help with the funding of the mental health support of children at St. Mary's Church of England Primary School.

The Trustees have continued to discuss the Requests for Financial Support made by the Head Teacher. The children have continued to be able to enjoy the fruits of one large Grant made by the Trustees last year which has allowed all the children at the School to gather in one space, all at the same time - a huge success ...

Finally, the Trustees should pay tribute to the Rev'd Jeff Hopkin Williams for continuing to write and deliver a series of Services of Collective Worship for all the children of St Mary's School. Collective Worship will continue. The children do not forget what they absorb through it - ask them! - People never forget their good teachers...

Barbara Williams

## Walsingham - Annual Parish Pilgrimage from St Mary's Twickenham



### WALSINGHAM IS WAITING FOR US ...

A group from Saint Mary's visited Little Walsingham last year (2023). Going on a pilgrimage is not the same as just going away for a weekend. Our group was led in its First Visit to the Holy House and round the Stations of the Cross in the beautiful gardens on the Saturday. We joined all the other groups for the principal pilgrimage Services and we said our Intercessions in the tiny Orthodox Chapel in the Shrine Church.

Little Walsingham is a beautiful, interesting and historic village full of quirky charm but also mystery. There are many places of worship there serving the various traditions of the Christian Church. We stayed in comfortable rooms. The food was generous and there was always someone to talk to. Nothing was compulsory however, not even conversation because when you visit Walsingham you are there in that lovely place to pray for others and to be open to whatever and Whomsoever you may find there.

Walsingham is a special place. Do join us on our next visit.

AND there will be a special Walsingham morning at St Mary's on Saturday 18th May followed by a Bring and Share Lunch.

Barbara Williams



## PCC Membership 2023-24

Members are elected for 3 years and can seek re-election for another 3 years, after which they must stand down for at least a year.

<b>Chair</b>	
Rev'd Jeff Hopkin Williams	
<b>PCC Lay Members</b>	<b>Elected/re-elected (for 3 years, max 2 terms)</b>
John Albasiny	Elected 2021
Annie Atlay	Elected 2021
Stephen Tetley	Elected 2021
Geoff Noble	Re-elected 2022
Elizabeth Sledge	Re-elected 2022
Clarinda Chan	Re-elected 2023
Rosemary Fulljames	Re-elected 2023
Sophy Fisher	Elected 2023
Jane Noris	Elected 2023
Helena Tarrant	Elected 2023
	vacant
	vacant
<b>Deanery Synod</b>	<b>Elected for 3 years from 2023 to 2026</b>
Judy Britton	Elected 2023
	vacant
	vacant
	vacant
<b>Co-opted Members</b>	<b>Co-opted for a year at a time</b>
Adrian Mumford	Director of Music
Paul Smart	Treasurer
<b>Church Wardens</b>	<b>Elected for a year at a time (max 6 years)</b>
Margaret Mence	First Elected 2022
Barbara Williams	First Elected 2018