

*The Parish of St Mary and St John the Divine,  
Balham*

**Our Vision Statement:  
St Mary's Church is a community  
of Christian people  
who embrace the commandments  
to love God and to love one another.**

We aim to be

- an inclusive church that welcomes diversity
- a thinking church where questions can be asked
- a living and growing church where change can happen

**St Mary & St John the Divine Balham**



*The Church on the High Road*

**APCM REPORTS**

**APRIL 2010**

## **Electoral Roll Report 2010**

As the Electoral Roll Officer I would like to report that 8 people have joined this year. Five names were removed as they had moved away. There are currently 126 people on the Electoral Roll.

*Helen Cowen - Electoral Roll Officer*

## **PCC REPORT FOR APCM – 2009/2010**

Members of the PCC for 2009/2010 were:-

Revd Wilma Roest (Chair)  
Graeme Calf (Churchwarden)  
Victoria Gregory (Churchwarden & Deanery Synod)  
Olu Agbalaya  
Alice Browne (Deanery Synod)  
Sarah Collier  
Helen Cowen  
Anzo Francis (Treasurer)  
Karen Gray  
Suzanne Hinkson-Marks  
Elaine Joseph  
James Morton  
Hetta Norman (Deanery Synod)  
Alex Russell  
Tatiana Stevenson  
Jay Willis Brown Acquah

The current PCC was elected at the APCM on 26 April 2009 and has met 6 times. Meetings usually take place in the Narthex and occasionally in the Music Room; we start promptly at 7.45 with an opening prayer and are always finished by 10.00. Although we follow a detailed agenda, there is always room for lively and interesting discussion; coffee and biscuits keep us going, decisions are made and we head for home feeling that we have contributed a little towards life at St Mary's.

them each week. We are fortunate to have two voluntary organists (and be able to supplement them with paid organists from time to time). We are very fortunate to have a musical incumbent who values music as part of the liturgy.

What difference does all this make?

Think of November and Remembrance Sunday – the trumpets mournful in the opening hymn and during the setting of the Nunc Dimittis we sang during communion, over turned by Vaughan Williams' setting of the Old 100<sup>th</sup>.

Think then of our carol service, starting with a single light and a single voice and building to "For unto us a son is born" from Handel's Messiah (many thanks to the visitors to the choir stalls who helped make that happen).

Think more recently of our Holy Week services – the intense simplicity of Taizé chants while feet are being washed and again while the altar is stripped on Thursday evening and on Friday during the Veneration of the Cross contrasted with the Easter Acclamation on Saturday and this joyful Eastertide on the Sunday – not to mention Halleluia Chorus from that Messiah on Easter Sunday

But also recall that this Church sings – we use a variety of hymns and songs including Iona and Taize and plainsong and traditional and modern – we all sing three Mass settings during the year, it is not a choir concert but collective worship

Hopefully we are about to appoint a new Director of Music – so a more personal reflection: I have played (sic) a small part in the music at St Mary's. I try to do my best and encourage others also to be part of the choral tradition and worship. Sometimes it goes well; sometimes I am reminded of my many limitations! In all things though, I can only do this with the support and input of my friends in the choir and on the organ bench. For the opportunity to worship together, thank you.

*Keith Mitchell*

the Oasis Garden lawn starts to grow, this needs cutting at least monthly. New shrubs may need planting to fill gaps, while other things need pruning back. Weeds also start to grow, and the paving blocks need to be sprayed with weed-killer. Also the benches are washed down.

### **Summer & Autumn**

Apart from planting bedding plants, the main activities are lawn cutting, weeding and watering. There is a water butt and hosepipe in the Oasis Garden, and a hosepipe in the 'Den' area for watering the north and east flower beds. As usual, I will be putting up a rota on the notice-board for volunteer grass cutters and waterers.

On 10<sup>th</sup> April, the trees on the north side of the church will be trimmed back or a start made on removing them, in order to reduce leaf fall blocking our gutters, and prevent root damage to Irene House. On the same day, we plan to start replacing the damaged and rotting log edgings to the north and front flower beds. Other tasks include building a trellis screen to hide the water butt.

If you would like to help, please see me or Sarah Collier.

*Graeme Calf, Garden Coordinator*

### **Choir report 2010**

*What a great August – 5 Sundays without the choir!*

How did you read that?

As one who was grateful for 5 weeks off (and with one at Christmas and one at Easter) of 7 weeks in the year of not turning up >30 minutes before the start of the service, putting on the St Mary choir robes, being seen by all and heard by some with indifference and then staying for another 30 – 45 minutes after the service? If so, thank you for your input this year – whether regular, occasional, just joined, just leaving or continuing for many years.

Or as one who would rather there was no robed choir anyway? But St Marys has kept its strong musical tradition – changed of course but vibrant. We are very fortunate to have members of the congregation who can and will lead the singing and add to the worship by offering an appropriate an-

As well as discussing the day-to-day matters of maintenance, finance, lettings, security etc. this year the PCC has been following closely the progress of the three Working Groups – First Impressions, Community Involvement and Working with Young People. Links with local schools have improved greatly (it was wonderful to have the Chestnut Grove Steel Band at the Summer Garden Party), and the Wednesday Coffee Mornings are well attended. Junior Church is working well and improvements are being made for disabled access. Work in these areas continues.

We had a happy Christmas gathering at Blithe Spirit in Balham High Road, singing carols and collecting money for Spires, followed by an excellent meal and a lot of fun and look forward to another "Away Day" in the summer when we will have an opportunity to discuss matters in greater depth.

We are always keen to welcome new members to the PCC. If you are interested, please speak to one of the Ministry Team or any of the PCC members.

*Sarah Collier  
PCC Secretary*

### **Churchwarden's Reports - Fabric and Ornaments 2010**

At the outset we would like to give our deep thanks to Daphne and Martin who gave us such a comprehensive handover when we first came into post, and continued support throughout the year. This, with Wilma's pastoral care, has meant that we have been able to draw on extensive experience and achieve much this year.

#### ***The Fabric and Building***

The PCC year started in July with planned building works. The scheduled works, required by the Quinquennial Report, were repairs to the guttering and downpipes, both on the north transept and vestry, and on the apse west end. The latter required scaffolding, and included repairs and repainting of the external cornice. These works, which required Archdeacon's approval, cost £5,180 (VAT zero rated), and were carried out in August during the TSM summer holidays. We were pleased with

the work, leaving the church looking smarter, and hopefully stopping the damp ingress we have been experiencing for a long time. The north porch and wall of the Holy Family Chapel appear to have dried out, and we are hoping to decorate these at the Working Party on 18<sup>th</sup> September.

Sadly around this time we experienced some vandalism. The Oasis Garden gate release was broken, as were windows to the vestry during an attempted break-in and damage to the basement door. We duly set about repairs (as well as informing the police) and the works cost us £447.35 and £582.50 respectively. The good news was that we were able to recover our losses from Ecclesiastical Insurance, minus two lots of £50 excess.

We found a home for our redundant pipe organ and during August, members of St Mary's Church, Merton Park, started to take away parts of it and this has been ongoing. In the same month the bell rope snapped, not surprisingly after many good years of use, and it was repaired. Also in August the narthex floor was sanded and re-polished, and a lot of our hirers have commented how much better it looks.

In October, C.E.S. Electrical Engineers, who produced their Inspection Report on the need to urgently replace the older dangerous wiring in July, came to fit temporary lighting in the Holy Family Chapel. During that visit, flooding was discovered in the basement due to a faulty boiler pressure release valve, which was subsequently repaired. Later in the month, C.E.S. had a walk-about with Martin and Victoria, and discovered that more re-wiring work was needed than initially anticipated. The latest quote came as a bit of shock for re-wiring sub-mains, lighting and power, being £21,400 plus £2,000 contingency (VAT exempt). We are currently inviting a second quote, and investigating whether grants are available. These works will require a faculty.

In January, a disabled frame and drop-down bar were purchased for the narthex and disabled toilets, and a hearing loop sign, as part of our First Impressions working group improvements.

The Development Project has been completed during the year by the purchase of 30 new chairs for the balcony. New hymnbooks were also purchased during the year.

## Gardening Group Annual Report to APCM 2010

The Garden Working Party meets formally from 10am on the second Saturday of each month, although in practice people drop in at various times to do odd jobs. Members include Graeme Calf, Nigel & Sarah Collier, Sarah McDermott, Susanne Mitchell and Robert Stevenson. Sean also helps with the gardening, and Denis Battams helps with watering. Graeme also changes the gate code for the Oasis Garden each month. In addition, our compost bin is replenished with vegetable waste from the kitchen, and at least one member brings in her waste from home!

With an annual budget of £500, we oversee the three plots of garden around the church – the Oasis Garden, and the north and front flower beds, as well as the planters outside the main doors. Tools are kept in the shed in the 'Den' area. The Oasis Garden is a sheltered sun trap, although now slightly over-shadowed by the new vicarage, and very popular with the target groups – young mums with tots, senior citizens, shoppers and lunchers, as well as summer evening meetings.

In June the Oasis Garden was used for the annual Summer Garden Party, and we had a crop of our own tomatoes, apples and broad beans. As we entered autumn, work started on the boundary wall between the Oasis Garden and the building site for the new vicarage. We moved some of the apple trees and shrubs out of the flower bed, in order to protect them from damage. We were conscious that the Oasis Community Garden cost £25,000 to construct, and we had won second prize in the Wandsworth in Bloom Competition in 2008 after much hard work. Nevertheless, some damage was caused to the Oasis Garden during the construction period over the winter, and a start was made on restoring the flower bed at the March working party, when trees and shrubs were reinstated or moved to fill gaps. It is already starting to look much better!

The paragraphs below give an idea of our activities :-

### **Winter**

Although there is less to do during the cold winter months, there are tasks such as clearing leaf fall into the leaf composter (built by Sean) in the Den area, and watering pots and planters during dry spells.

### **Spring**

Activities start in earnest during the Spring, with staking and tying up, tidying up of the flower beds, and scattering of compost from our compost bin. As

## **Web Site Report 2010**

The St Mary's website, [www.stmarybalham.org.uk](http://www.stmarybalham.org.uk), is a brilliant way for the church to communicate with the parish and Balham's local community. It has recent information about room hires and church fees, as well as information about services and upcoming events.

In 2007 the website had a major redesign both internally and externally. Since then, visitor numbers have continued to grow as it becomes a great way for anyone to find out a little bit more about the church on the high road.

Traffic has obvious peaks over Easter and Christmas with Easter 2010 recording the highest visitor count of any month so far, 526 in total. 2009 saw an average of 260 visitors a month, this is lower than 2008's average because traffic over the holiday period was lower than previous years.

It is evident that the website needs to be kept up-to-date with new information as it becomes available, and all PCC members have the ability to post notices and pictures via the member's area. If you are not on PCC and want to make a contribution to the website, or if you have any comments or questions, please email me at [webmaster@stmarybalham.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@stmarybalham.org.uk).



*Charles Gray*

Some of the trees on the north side of the church will be trimmed back by Treecare on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> April. This should ease the problem of leaves blocking the vestry guttering, and two trees will be removed completely which are currently adjacent to Irene House and could cause root damage.

There is currently a leak through the stone dome of the Hull Chapel after heavy and prolonged rain, and we intend to get in a stone specialist to examine this. We are still trying to find a plasterer capable of doing the lime plaster repairs to the kitchen stairs.

There has been ongoing communication with the builders of the new vicarage regarding the party wall along the Oasis Garden, fixing of new railings, and damage to plants and shrubs.

### ***Heating and Maintenance***

The Heating Schedule for the winter months, using the time clocks in the narthex and vestry, has tried to balance having the nave or narthex warm for events and lettings, while turning off the heating when not required. Maracom carried out their annual maintenance of the heating system in October. The Invalifts service of the lift was carried out twice yearly, in June and January. The RG Jones service of the sound system was carried out in January, and the ACE service of the fire alarm system in February. We currently have an estimate for testing the lightning conductor, and inspection of fire extinguishers is due.

### ***Governance Arrangements***

We have also looked at improving our governance arrangements that relate to the use of the church building and fabric so they are better protected.

In October a start was made on the Fire Safety Risk Assessment for the church, in line with HM Government requirements. This includes a Fire Safety Audit of the risks in the building, and action which can be taken to minimise those risks. A Fire Evacuation Procedure has been produced, and a Fire Safety Leaflet for use in the church. Fire Wardens have been nominated, and a Fire Drill will be carried out in the summer.

We also reviewed our Letting Contract, making it more formal and introducing some additional obligations to protect the church whilst in use and

to recover losses if damaged. This was signed up to by all hirers in March and at the same time we made arrangements for the locks to the church to be changed and new keys issued. We would like to thank Pat for all her hard work in helping with this.

We also developed a new Cleaner's contract to ensure that areas of the church were looked after properly.

Security however remains an issue, as there have been thefts from the narthex boiler room and the vestry, and improved security is currently under review.

### ***Diocesan Obligations***

In October and November we carried out the Annual Congregation Count, and returned the details to the Diocese. In February, St Mary's hosted a meeting about Parish Fairer Shares, and we are currently carrying out our survey of incomes, with a view to returning our Questionnaire to Trinity House by 5<sup>th</sup> May. The Annual Inspection of the church's records and Articles of Enquiry questionnaire was carried out by the Area Dean of Wandsworth on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> March. The Terrier is currently being updated.

### ***Services***

In the summer Trinity St Mary School celebrated its 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, and we welcomed both the Mayor of Wandsworth and Bishop Tom to their two services in church. In March we were also visited by Tooting MP Sadiq Khan. We have continued with the excellent autumn and spring concerts organised by Wilma, often with young musicians from Guildhall School of Music.

We endeavoured to help in the background with the practical arrangements for our services, and we would like to thank the stewards and head steward who have helped enormously to make Sunday morning services run so well.

We do appreciate, and are thankful for, Wilma our priest, Anzo our Treasurer, the other members of the Building and Finance Committee, and Pat our Administrator.

*Graeme Calf  
Victoria Gregory*

church in the years to come. We are always delighted to welcome church-goers to hear the children read, sing and perform. Please do get in touch with Tricia Burke at the school office (020 8673 4166) if you have any inclination to help us with these activities. We, the staff and the children do so appreciate your continued support and input. You will have a warm welcome at Trinity St. Mary's.

*Daniel Wiggin  
Chair of Governors*

### **Chestnut Grove School 2010**

Chestnut Grove is the large and vibrant comprehensive school in the heart of the parish. In principle, the School is committed to building links with the local community, and St. Mary's seeks to maintain contacts with members of the teaching staff to see if there are ways we can work together. In June 2009, the school's steel band provided a programme of cheerful music for our Summer Garden Party, and we hope this can be repeated, again this year. In February this year 90 year 9 pupils came to the church on a fact finding mission on diversity, as part of the Citizenship curriculum.

*Sally Nicholls*

The atmosphere at Trinity St. Mary's is as healthy as it could be. The extension of the kitchen has proved extremely beneficial, with all children and staff commenting on the vast improvement in the quality of dinners. We also have a certificate for being a healthy school with regard to food.

At present, we are renovating the garage to the front of the school which will become the new Site Managers office. We are preparing to knock down the old portacabin complex next to the car park in order to create further vehicle spaces for staff, etc. We are very grateful to the "Eco Warriors" who, due to lack of allotment space, have been kind enough to spend their time clearing, renovating and producing special areas of horticultural interest for the children including a recycling/compost area, vegetable gardens and sensory patches. I was there last week and had great fun weeding with the reception class and touching and talking about worms and other "creepy crawlies".

There is an ongoing programme of refurbishment for the outside school areas. We are very much hoping to create more colour and interest by the introduction of new planting of flowers and shrubs. We are keen to retain and expand the grassed areas so that they can be used by the children both for recreational and educational purposes.

We commissioned a wonderful stained glass window to mark our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the school's foundation and this can be seen in the assembly hall.

We are told by Wandsworth that we should expect a two form entry next year due to the intense competition for places within the borough. This is not something that we feel comfortable in doing within the present school buildings as we will have to create a second class out of one of the original large classrooms. We will, however, rise to this challenge and due to our increased status within Ofsted we are now experiencing a waiting list the first time for many years. This is good news for the school as a whole but we must continue to provide an education at the highest possible quality for all children who wish to come to us and our aim is to follow on from the successes that we have achieved in the last two years.

We are hugely grateful to Mother Wilma and the church for all their support both pastorally and spiritually. We are proud that we are part of Trinity St. Mary's and we look forward to an ever increasing partnership with the

## **Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary Report 2010**

In addition to being involved pastorally in the life of St Mary's, I also do some work beyond the boundaries of the parish. Two years ago I joined the Chaplaincy staff of Brixton Prison and have been working there as a volunteer every Monday.

When I first started I was involved with a group called Time for Friends and families. This was a course which ran for six weeks for the inmates and their partners; it was about communicating, parenting and finances, and provided them with insight and information on how to work together as a unit despite one being in prison. Unfortunately the course was discontinued due to lack of funds.

Now my role is visiting men on the wings, mainly to see those who are on what is called ACT'S. This stands for Assessment Care in Custody Team. These are men who are vulnerable, they are either suicidal, self harming, have drug related problems or suffer from some form of mental illness such as depression.

My role as a SPA is to offer support in a caring and compassionate way; to be a good listener and not be judgemental. I'm not there to deal with whatever crime was committed, when you meet the men and speak with them they express their emotions, fears and anxieties about being locked up, and the difficulties of dealing with the confines of prison, about their families and what the future holds. Many just want someone to sit and talk with them. Sometimes I'm asked to pray or read a passage of scripture, maybe help to fill in a form or to contact a relative. Of course I have to obey the prison rules where contact is concerned.

It's surprising how many ask for bibles or rosaries and you can hear from discussions that many of them were brought up in Christian families. Our role in the chaplaincy is to be caring, supportive, understanding and compassionate; to remember that God is always present and that he will give them the strength and comfort in their time of need.

*Daphne Clarke*

## **Building and Finance Committee Annual Report 2010**

The Building and Finance Committee of the PCC met 6 times during the year, with committee members Graeme Calf, Anzo Francis, Karen & Martin Gray, Victoria Gregory, and Rev Wilma Roest. Victoria was Chair, and Graeme was Secretary.

The purpose of the Committee is to oversee the financial and physical resources of the Church by :-

- Looking after the Church buildings and grounds
- Reviewing budgets, income and expenditure, stewardship and giving

Some items are considered in more detail in the Churchwardens' Report.

### **Building**

- Disposal of redundant organ parts
- Considering the Quinquennial Report and devising a Building Action Plan for maintenance and repairs
- Organising Working Party days
- Considering electrical testing and rewiring, lightning conductors, maintenance of fire alarms, extinguishers, heating system, and disabled lift
- Carrying out a Fire Safety Risk Assessment for the church
- Managing the Oasis Garden, trees and other flower beds
- Liaising with vicarage builders over boundary wall
- Overseeing lettings policy, contracts, cleaner, Safeguarding Policy
- Considering security of Church, keys and locks, insurance risks
- Completing the Development Project, including new balcony chairs
- Approving Table of Parochial Fees

### **Finance**

Anzo has continued as our Treasurer, assisted by Keith Mitchell, preparing the annual budget, monthly financial statements, and the Annual Report and Accounts. The Church has continued with an annual turnover of around £85,000.

The biggest expenditure is the Ministry Fund quota, paid to the diocese to pay clergy salaries and accommodation. Insurance, heating and lighting, and boiler maintenance are also big expenditures.

Incomes, in order of size, are stewardship, use of rooms, tax recovery,

## **Trinity St Mary's Church of England School 2010**

Trinity St. Mary's has had yet another very successful year. I have been delighted to take over from Sarah McDermott as Chairman of the Governors and I know that all the other Governors, past and present, together with all staff at the school wish to thank Sarah for her tenure of 10 years looking after Trinity St. Mary's. She has left us in the very best of places and it is entirely due to her good works that we are in such a position of strength. We are extremely grateful for her quiet counsel and advice and are also very pleased that she remains on the board as a foundation governor continuing to support the school in every way she can.

Last year's report touched on our Ofsted inspection in March last year. We were awarded a "good" school with "outstanding" qualities. This was an enormous achievement both from the staff and the children and our SATs results reflected this, being 87% in Maths and in English and 100% in Science. I am very pleased to report that our Head Teacher, Julie Davey, was invited to Number 10 Downing Street at the beginning of this year to attend a reception given by the Prime Minister for the 100 schools in the country that have improved the most. Pictures and details of this are on our website (<http://www.tsm.wandsworth.sch.uk>). In the light of this, Julie, Marc Thorpe, the Deputy Head Teacher, and I were invited to appear in front of the Wandsworth School Standards Committee in February this year. We had a pleasant meeting with the committee who congratulated the school, staff and pupils on their success and wished us well in continuing to improve throughout this year.

We have also been asked back to Wandsworth Council in April in order to receive a certificate recognising the school's achievements.

I can also report that UNICEF inspected the school in February and we are very pleased to say that we have obtained a level two of the Rights Respecting School award. We are the first school in Wandsworth to achieve this and only the fourth in London, so a very big well done to everyone for that.

The Governors hosted an informal party for the staff in early March to congratulate them on their achievements. This was a very jolly affair and something which we hope to repeat every term.

## **Sacristans' Report 2010**

We have had our usual busy year and there have been several changes to our members. We are very sad to say “goodbye” to Ruth Williams who has been a stalwart of the team for many years. Like everyone else at St Mary’s we will miss her gentle humour and boundless energy for “getting the job done”. Somehow she was always ready to help with whatever needed doing and often did it before we realised it was there to be done. But we are delighted that she has settled into her new flat and we wish her every happiness there, always remembering that she has a “home” at St Mary’s whenever she wants to visit.

It has been good to welcome three new members of the team – Chris Serbutt, Alex Russell and James Morton, each of whom is bringing their own talents and experience.

Alan Bartlett has continued his sterling efforts in ordering all the consumables needed for services, dealing with the splendid displays of candles at festivals and also making new lavebo towels, all these being over and above his regular slot on the duty rota.

Thanks go to Graeme Calf for continuing his commitment to the Sacristy despite the added burdens of being Churchwarden.

Finally, as always, we thank Sarah Collier for very necessary help with the laundry.

*Penny Holloway*

## **Junior Church 2010**

In 2009 Sunday School became Junior Church, to reflect that when our young people meet they are church too. Anzo, Helen, Susanne and once a term Mtr Wilma take turns to run Junior Church. The programme is unique to St Mary’s, and reflects the lectionary and what is going on in our church. If anyone would like to assist with Junior Church or would like to know more, please contact one of the leaders.

fees and parking, and social/fundraising events. Stewardship levels have risen slightly, despite the economic situation – thanks to everyone. Income from lets has however remained steady.

The Church managed to transfer £5k to reserves during the year.

Future planned large expenditures are rewiring, chancel restoration, and making the Church more attractive and welcoming.

*Graeme Calf, Secretary*

## **Parish Safeguarding Officers 2010**

We would firstly like to express our thanks to all Junior Church Leaders for ensuring that all new attendees are given a registration form for completion by their parents, and for filing these in the appropriate folders.

St. Mary’s and St. John the Divine Safeguarding Policy was presented and accepted at the PCC meeting in September 2009.

The number of children attending Junior Church has been consistent.

Application for renewal of CRB’s whose disclosure is 5 years old or more must be completed before end of April 2010, as no renewals will be processed between June 2010 and April 2011. From June 2010 the new combined ISA/CRB form (Independent Safeguarding Authority) will be implemented.

Suzanne has completed part 1 of the Safeguarding Officers course (PSO1) on the 16<sup>th</sup> February 2010, and will completing part 2 (PSO2) of this course on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2010.

Elaine has attended PSO2 on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2010. After both of us complete the above courses we will make arrangements to meet with all Junior Church leaders and assistants.

With best wishes

*Suzanne Hinkson-Marks  
G. Elaine Joseph*

## **Tooting Deanery Synod Report 2009-2010**

St Mary's is currently entitled to three Lay Members of Deanery Synod who are each elected for three year term. The lay members elected for this period are Alice Brown, Hetta Norman and myself who attend meetings with Wilma.

Our new three year term started in 2008 and will continue until 2011 although Hetta has sadly decided to step down this year and we will be looking to recruit an additional person for the remaining year of the term.

Tooting Deanery Synod has met twice this year: in October 2009 and in March 2010. At the October meeting we said good bye to our then Area Dean the Rev. Kevin Parkes with thanks for his leadership and support and in March we welcomed our new Area Dean our very own Rev. Wilma Roest! Wilma was given a very warm welcome and has invited the Archdeacon to attend the next meeting in October this year to have a discussion about the role and function of the Synod. This will be hosted at St Mary's.

In addition to this important changeover of leadership we have continued at the meetings to share with each other about the activities and developments of our communities and Churches and we divide into mixed groups and give feedback to one another.

In addition, we have had external speakers: In October we heard from The Revd Caroline Clarke from Trinity Hospice who gave a talk entitled "Dignity or Dignitas" who gave a very sensitive and informative talk of "what is a good death?" and in March we had a talk and presentation from the Bible Society who provide free or subsidised Bibles to communities around the world.

The next meeting is scheduled for 13 October 2010.

*Victoria Gregory - Deanery Synod Rep*

## **Readers and Intercessors 2010**

Once again a few words of thanks to all those who participated this year. Many of you will have been doing so for a long time, others more recently, but your contribution is greatly valued. It's good to see some newcomers on the rota. We are always in need of them as people come and go, especially in respect of the prayers, where some advance planning is needed in the week prior to the service.

It would be good to have a special training event, say on a Saturday morning, in which we could address some issues such as voice projection, use of the microphone, and how we might improve on things as they are. I feel that all of us would benefit significantly from this.

Perhaps you could let me have your ideas, or talk to a member of the ministry team, then we can get something moving.

Otherwise, keep up the good work.

*Rose Harley*

## **Servers' Report 2010**

Dear Friends. I took on the role in October and thank Suzanne for all her ongoing support as exiting Head Server. We have a wealth of experience in the team and everyone is very helpful in sharing this and supporting one another.

The team is growing with Chris, Nick and Sarah joining us. Jade and Sophia have progressed from boat girls to acolytes. Sarah, Chris, Jamie and I have been trained up to MC and sub deacon.

There is plenty of opportunity for new people to join the serving team so please let me know if you would like to give it a try. It may be daunting at first but I have found that serving offers me a new perspective on worship which brings me closer to the Gospel.

I would like to say a very heartfelt "thank you" to everyone on the team for all their hard work in enhancing the liturgical life of St Mary's as a vibrant faith community.

*Alex Russell*