

APCM Report 2011

PCC REPORT

Members of the PCC for 2010/2011 were:-

Revd Wilma Roest (Chair)

Martin Gray (Churchwarden)

Keith Holmes (Churchwarden)

Olu Agbalaya

Alice Browne (Deanery Synod)

Graeme Calf

Sarah Collier

Helen Cowen

Anzo Francis (Treasurer *until August 2010*)

Victoria Gregory (Deanery Synod)

Karen Gray (Deanery Synod)

Suzanne Hinkson-Marks

Elaine Joseph

James Morton

Alex Russell

Revd Eileen Serbutt

Tatiana Stevenson

The PCC was elected at the APCM on 25 April 2010 and has met 6 times this year. We also had an “Away Day” in October when we visited two churches to look at their worship space. We came home to St Mary’s enthused and energised and full of ideas.

Meetings take place in the Narthex or the upstairs meeting room. We start at 7.45 with an opening prayer and Wilma makes sure we always finish by 10.00. In addition to the day-to-day matters – lettings, maintenance, security, finance – we always have a report on Deanery Synod and Churches Together in Balham & Tooting, as well as an update on the electoral roll, Trinity St Mary’s school and the work of our Safeguarding Officers. Social and fundraising events are discussed and the church calendar quickly fills up. New items are brought up under Any Other Business and any items of expenditure are carefully considered.

If you would like to join the PCC and help in some of the decision-making at St Mary’s, please speak to one of the Ministry Team or a PCC members.

Sarah Collier, PCC Secretary

CHURCHWARDEN'S REPORT **FABRIC AND ORNAMENTS 2011**

When I became Churchwarden this time last year after a gap of over 20 years I felt that I was taking on a role on a very well run ship. I would like to thank all the safe pairs of hands that have gone before me and I hope I am doing my bit to keep it ship-shape.

I am able to report that the liturgical South Porch still has a damp problem and we are monitoring this and we are trying one or two options recommended by our architect. There is further damp in the Narthex toilet and now in the Narthex itself. This has been caused by a rainwater hopper and downpipe and a repair has been made and it will be monitored further.

The re-siting of the organ console is still pending as is the removal of the remainder of the old organ. All the visible pipework will remain untouched.

Following Wilma's induction last December the Vicar's Board has now been updated.

A lightly more favourable quote for the necessary rewiring has been accepted but we are still awaiting Diocesan approval. We anticipate that this work will be completed early this summer.

Unblocking toilets and drains still features highly in a Churchwarden's life, not to mention changing light bulbs. My thanks to Martin for climbing ladders that I am not so good at any more.

We had rainwater penetrate the Baptistry Dome this year, the Dome has been cleaned, repointed and waterproofed and we will continue to monitor the situation when the heavy rains return.

During the Archdeacon's visitation this year we agreed to make a comprehensive photographic record of the church silver which will be kept in the safe, and off site, and also on computer. This we will do this year.

Speaking of computers – the church has undergone a computer upgrade and we now have wireless internet access. Wireless is something my father used to rent from Radio Rentals but I think things have changed slightly. Our thanks goes to Susan Hinkson-Marks for the donation of a new screen.

Talking of screens – the Narthex screen is showing signs of wear and tear and a comprehensive service has been arranged.

Speaking of services – you will have noticed we have new collection bags to replace the old baskets that have been “on trial” for the last 20+ years. Our thanks to Diane and the Brownies and Guides for their generous donation.

There is a recurring problem with the Fire Alarm that will be attended to in the near future,

Our next major project will be to restore the wall and ceiling paintings and mosaics in the Sanctuary and Chancel. We have commissioned a full report and specification by professional conservators which includes testing paint samples which will take place this summer and it is possible the work may be done in 2012.

Finally, my thanks go to Wilma, Martin, the PCC and other individuals who will go un-named for their help in making my job as easy as possible.

Keith Holmes
Church Warden

Building and Finance Committee

I would like to start by thanking the committee members Victoria Gregory (chair), Martin Gray, Rev. Wilma Roest, Sarah Collier, Robert Stevenson and Keith Mitchell. Special thanks to Anzo Francis who stepped down as treasurer and PCC member, after over 18 years, on the 31st August.

The purpose of the committee is to review in detail matters affecting the financial and physical resources of the Church and to advise the PCC on appropriate action by means of regular reports.

Building and fabric of the Church

We have been involved with the following;

- Usual maintenance including - heating; electrics; clock; office computer and broadband; fire extinguishers; narthex screen and sound system.
- Ongoing repairs including repairs to dome; broken windows; damp areas and plastering of the staircase leading from the kitchen.
- Tree pruning and maintenance of the church grounds.
- Completion of the balcony.
- Completion of the new vicarage which was delayed and caused the vicar to be 'homeless' for a few weeks.
- Planning the rewiring, restoration, repairs and decorating of the chancel and altar area. This will make the altar area more accessible to everyone. It will also make the electrics safer and more efficient. Work will commence when the DAC have given approval. Funds for this work will come through fundraising and from applying to charitable organisations. We have already raised a large amount through the auction of promises event which we held recently.

Finance

The church building is owned by the Church of England (Southwark Diocese), but all the running costs have to be met by the congregation through stewardship and fund raising activities. It costs about £85,000 per year to run St Mary's. Tax can be recovered from deeds of covenants and gift aid donations. Other sources of income are from: parking; grants and bequests; donations; collections; use of the church rooms; fairs, and other fund raising events.

Since Anzo resigned as treasurer Keith Mitchell has continued to monitor monthly income and expenditure as well as taking on working on the budget and annual accounts. The Churchwardens and a select group of volunteers are involved with other financial tasks.

This year we registered as a charity and the PCC members became 'registered' trustees.

Karen Gray

Building and Finance Committee Secretary

Lettings report for APCM

The Lettings Committee met four times this year

We had one new let starting in September 2010 – Steve Roe – Hoopla Drama Workshop.

We still have the following regular hirers who are very pleased with their lets:

Jeremy Colledge	Chi Gung
Lucy Paul	Yoga
Lucy Quick	Perform Children's Drama Group
Jessica Pointon	Kundalini Yoga with Sat Charan Kaur
Sonia Forde	Pilates
Yohannes Asmelash	South London Refugee Association
Phyllis Osei	The United Church of the Messiah

In addition to the regular lets rooms are also hired out for occasional lets, among others CAB, Festival Chorus, South London Community Choir.

Our lettings income for 2010 was slightly up on income received for 2009.

Car Parking stayed the same with 6 spaces rented out.

Pat Nevard

Lettings administrator

Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary report

Combined with my pastoral work at St Mary's I attend Brixton Prison every Monday as a member of the Chaplaincy Team.

Although the two main religions are RC and CofE the chaplaincy caters for all religions so that whatever the faith of the inmates; there is always someone there to meet their spiritual needs

role is visiting the men on the wings mainly those who are on the ACTS (Assessment Care in Custody Team) are those who are suicidal, self harm, drug abuse, some form of mental problem.

I'm given a list of approx 20 to 25 my day entails meeting and chatting with these individuals discussing various topics, which can range from their fears, anxieties, issues, difficulty in coping with prison life religion and also life after prison.

We do have some meaningful debates at times.

I'm often asked to pray and read scripture passages especially if they have a court case pending.

My ministry continues to be one of, understanding, caring, and most of all a good listener, not be too quick to give advice not to be judgemental; to remember that God is our heavenly Father and he cares for each one of us whoever and ever we are and that through Prayer he will give them strength, comfort and support in their time of need.

Daphne

SPA

Director of Music

As this is my first contribution to an Annual Report, may I start by thanking everyone for the warmest of welcomes since I arrived at St Mary's last August. I felt instantly at home, and have much appreciated the kindness and support I've experienced since.

Thanks especially to Keith and Stuart, who continue to give freely of their time and talents and whose experience, advice and support is invaluable. We're lucky at St Mary's to have such a dedicated team, not least the members of the choir who turn up week-in and week-out and give of their best to lead and complement our corporate worship.

My key aim over the last year has been to ensure that the musical content of our services is both appropriate and enriching, while binding together the choir and congregation. I've also tried to develop the capability and musical range of the choir, challenging a little along the way but always with the intention of fitting the musical offering to the resources we have available, rather than being over-ambitious and falling short. That way, our musical offering can be sincere and worshipful, rewarding to those who make it and those who hear it.

Over the coming year, I hope to continue the steady development, with your support. But alongside moral support, actual musical support is greatly welcomed. I would like to expand the choir in the coming twelve months, and this should start from within the existing congregation. I have therefore invited all who attend St Mary's to think prayerfully about whether they can make an offering of any musical talents, great or small. It needn't mean joining the choir every week, perhaps only a regular contribution on an agreed pattern which enables us to plan ahead. Please come and speak to me if you think you may be able to help in any way. I also have plans in train which may in time lead to the appearance of a junior choir alongside our dedicated team of adults - more about that in due course.

One thing is certain: I didn't come to St Mary's to see the musical life of the church stand still, and with your support and encouragement I believe the coming year could be one of growth and renewal.

David Fawcett - Director of Music

Tooting Deanery Synod 2010-2011

Tooting Deanery Synod is entitled to three lay members and this year they have consisted of Alice Brown, Karen Gray (who kindly stepped into the vacant place left by Hetta Norman who sadly decided to step down last year) and Victoria Gregory. The APCM marks the end of a three year term period and the beginning of a new three year term with the membership up for election.

The Deanery Synod met twice this year: 13th October 2010 and 29th March 2011.

The October meeting was hosted at St Mary's and we warmly welcomed The Venerable Stephen Roberts, Archdeacon of Wandsworth in an exploration of the role of the work of the Synod and its members. He provided the Synod with the Church of England guidelines which provides the legal framework of responsibility but gave illustrations of how different Synods did and could work within the wider Church. The Synod then broke into groups and discussed what it would like our Synod to do and what topics/speakers could be discussed/invited at future meetings.

It was a tentative yet brave step into a more dynamic space to properly consider issues that concern the wider Church and 9 key points were set out of how we wanted to move forward:

- Have debates on key General Synod issues (e.g. women bishops, lack of paid clergy)
- Be braver more political and dynamic with links to General Synod to take forward raised points
- Change format of the evening very passive at the moment
- Frequency of meetings – more active
- More debates
- Diocesan Synod needs to stimulate debate and listen
- Share problems and successes
- Have some kind of clearly defined responsibility and purpose
- Foster collaboration across churches

Topics and speakers were requested to cover: Assisted dying, Church's role in a "cash strapped" society, local issues such as Springfield Hospital, tackles local and national issues of drugs and youth and finally, firming up the link in reporting to Diocesan Synod.

There is a lot to do in the next three years and the October meeting appeared to set the framework and was an important meeting. I think it's safe to say that Rev Wilma has brought some much needed dynamism to the proceedings!

The March meeting invited a The Reverend Nigel Stone, Diocesan Olympics adviser on the London Olympics to present and speak about the forthcoming Olympics. He highlighted the importance of legacy being a key aim and what that meant in terms of the Church and illustrated how the education programme, business networks and volunteer programmes were getting involved.

He focussed on "More Than Gold" a network of 40 Christian agencies from across the world which helped be a catalyst for ministry inspired by or in response to the Olympics. It has experience in being involved in past Olympics and is a champion of the Church in a sports setting. It helps Churches prepare for the Olympics and encourages outreach work in particular a scheme where Christian families provide a home for athletes families who would not be able to afford in the host City, London being so expensive many athlete's families would be able to see their loved one compete if London families do not open their homes in support.

More than Gold also provide pastoral support for all competitors and there is space for worship of all faiths at the main sites. There were words of warning for Churches who wanted to put on an Olympics event with caution about licensing and permission and being officially recognised. They are encouraging every Church to nominate someone to have an Olympic contact to sort these issues out and get help at an early stage.

Both the October and March meeting had the usual space for members to talk about what was going on in their respective Churches and to share experiences and both meeting also dealt with and agreement by the Synod for each Church to pay £25 per year its running.

The next meeting is schedules for 21st June 2011 at All Saints Tooting.

Victoria Gregory – Deanery Synod Rep

Serving Team Report

This year has been another excellent year for the serving team and I believe we can look forward with justified confidence.

Following our team meeting on 12 March it has been decided that we will be holding full training sessions at least twice yearly with additional ad-hoc training taking place for individual services as and when required. Mtr Wilma and I are also in the process of preparing to issue a booklet of formal guides for serving at St Mary's which we hope will help to consolidate our collective practice as a serving team even further in the future.

However, I am only too aware that our serving albs are becoming increasingly shabby and some are now in such a threadbare state that they should no longer be used. We are in the process of discussing possible ways to raise funds to enable us to buy a new matching set of albs in time for our Patronal Festival.

I am pleased to say that we have been joined by several new members this year, Aina,, Nick, Sammy-Jayne and Sofia. However even with these additional members, it continues to be a little challenging to put together a full serving team for every 10.30 Sunday service. If you have never previously served at St Mary's but would like to or you would like to know more about what it involves, please do come and speak to me after any 10.30 service.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the serving team for their support and dedicated service to St Mary's.

Jamie Morton
Head Server

Sacristans' Report 2011

The team of sacristans is Alan Bartlett, Graeme Calf, James Morton, Alex Russell, Chris Serbutt and me and we work together very harmoniously. Although we are each technically on duty once a month, in practice we all help with clearing up after the service if we are in church and our turns are always highly negotiable as unexpected social events disturb Alan's beautifully organised rota.

In case you don't know what we do, our job is to care for all the "consumables" (wafers, wine, candles) that are used as part of the services and we are also responsible for vestments, as well as the sacred vessels and altar linen. We order wine, wafers, candles incense and charcoal and any other small incidentals that are needed for the sacramental parts of the services. Before any Eucharistic service we ensure that the altar frontal is the correct liturgical colour for the season, set out matching vestments for the priest and prepare the chalices and wafers, incense and candles, as well as any special requirements such as the font, oil and baptismal candles. We also mark up readings in the altar book. After the service we remove everything that has been used and clean it.

We try to keep linen and vestments in good repair but with every year, our linen becomes increasingly fragile and the altar frontal used in the Holy Family chapel is in particular need of attention, as are several of the frontals in use on the main altar. **If anyone feels they can help with any sewing projects, please see Wilma or me.** With the help of Sarah Collier we launder the linen. We are very grateful to Sarah for taking on this task, but would **welcome other volunteers** so that we are not trespassing on her good nature too often.

Penny Holloway
Sacristan

Readers and Intercessors report

Once again thank you to all those who have contributed to this very important part of the service. It can be easy to take them for granted; that there will always be people available, but in reality the designated person sometimes cannot be there, despite rotas and reminders, so others often have to step in at short notice where it has not been possible to find a replacement. Thank you for being so flexible.

For the benefit of those who are unaware, we recently spent two Saturday mornings with Eileen, for both readers and then intercessors. These were very useful refresher events, ideas and thoughts were exchanged, and they served to remind us how we should approach and deliver both lessons and intercessions. I think that we do a good job but there is always room for improvement and development. We could all make greater use of silence for example when leading the intercessions.

There will be more of these mornings so those unable to attend last times can benefit. I think that this is something that we need to keep re-visiting. Things change and we need to be mindful of our response to this.

Last but not least, welcome to Nick Cady who is now a part of the intercessions team.

Rose Harley

Safeguarding report

We would like to thank all Junior Church Leaders and Helpers for ensuring records are maintained according to Policies, Procedures and Guidelines as set out in the "A Safe Church Manual".

Both Suzanne and Elaine attended PSO2 training sessions last year and has held two meetings with Junior Church Leaders and helpers.

At our first meeting in November important issues raised resulted in re-designing the attendance form so that the 'Leader and Helper initials be included and to be presented to the group at the next meeting.

The provision of a book and guidelines for recording Incidents / Accidents.

All present agreed to renewing attendance records in September instead of November to coincide with the start of the school term.

In January 2011 the "A Safe Church Manual" was updated with additional inserts received from the Diocese.

At our second meeting in February we looked at "Risk Assessments".

We all completed a Risk Assessment Form, looking at what could pose a risk to the children leaving the church and prior to arriving in the balcony room. Many thanks for an interesting discussion. We now have completed "Risk Assessment Forms" in our Record Folder.

We also had a brief discussion about parents accompanying children, our responsibility and expectation.

Finally, three CRB Applications were made and Disclosures received. Awaiting Disclosure from two further Applications. A special 'thank you' to those who returned their forms without much prompting.

On behalf of Suzanne who is away and myself Elaine, thank you 'Junior Church Leaders and Helpers' for your on going work and valuable contribution at the meetings.

G. Elaine Joseph

Suzanne Hinkson-Marks

Trinity St Mary Church of England Primary School

Trinity St. Marys School is going through a huge metamorphosis at the moment. I am sure that most of you remember my last report to you in the annual parish church magazine of last year where I chronicled the huge improvements and great steps forward that the school has made. I am pleased to say that this year is no exception and we have built on our great progress from last year to such an extent that the Head Teacher, Mrs Julie Davey, was asked to Downing Street to meet the Prime Minister. She was representing the school as being one of the top most improved schools in the country.

We are the first school in the local authority and only the fourth in the country to gain the UNICEF rights respecting Level 2 award. We are now one of the top three mainstream schools in the local authority for improvement at Key Stage 2 and this year we are in the top 100 schools that have been most improved in the whole country. Our results this year show that we are within the top 10 primary schools in the borough and within the top 75 primary schools for the whole of the central London area. We were visited by the Ministers of State for Education, Sarah Tether and Nick Gibb last term. They were there to inspect our great results and our UNICEF award.

Mother Wilma continues to be an enormous inspiration to both the staff and pupils and together with the Head Mistress and the governing body, the school is driving forward and reaching new heights. We have a very happy band of pupils at TSM who are looked after extremely well and are given the best opportunities that the school can offer. The governing body is focused on the job at hand. It is proactive and is a permanent presence at school. We have an efficient internet system between us and a very good line of communication into the school. We are always there to deal with not only the problems but also to celebrate the achievements. We have an enormous asset in our Head Teacher and staff and we communicate on a regular basis.

Trinity St. Marys continues to support the church in every way it can. The governing body, Mrs Davey and Mother Wilma have a very happy Trinity and it just goes to show what can be done when everybody works together for a common goal. Again, as last year, we would be delighted to see as many of you as possible at the school so please do not hesitate to ring the school office on 020 8673 4166 should any of you wish to come and enjoy the great things that Trinity St. Marys does. It is a very happy place where we strive to make every child's aspirations come true.

Daniel Wiggin
Chair of Governors

Chestnut Grove School 2010

Chestnut Grove is the large and vibrant comprehensive school in the heart of the parish. 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 2010, 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. Ninety year 9 pupils came to the church on a fact finding mission on diversity, as part of the Citizenship curriculum.

For 2011 we hope to welcome the steel band again at the Summer Garden Party and also the Gospel Choir of Chestnut Grove School at one of our services.

Sally Nicholls

Gardening Group

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. Sarah Collier 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!

Because we did not spend much on the gardens in 2010, our annual budget for 2011 has been reduced from £500 to £250. With that, 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, and very popular with the target groups – young mums with tots, senior citizens, shoppers and lunchers, as well as summer evening meetings.

The first task in 2010 was to restore the Oasis Garden long bed after damage caused by the Vicarage works, which included re-planting the apple trees moved aside for safety. The early summer was very hot and dry, and the Oasis Garden required much watering to keep shrubs and plants alive, especially those in pots and planters. Nevertheless, the garden yielded a good crop of tomatoes. In June the Oasis Garden was used again for the annual Summer Garden Party.

Trees on the north side of the church were trimmed back or removed in 2010, in order to reduce leaf fall blocking our gutters, and to prevent root damage to Irene House. Replacing/repairing the log edgings to the north and front flower beds remains an ongoing task. Other outstanding tasks, now planned for 2011, are to build a trellis screen to hide the water butt, and insert a hatch in the bottom of the leaf mould bin in the Den area.

Sarah Collier took over as Garden Coordinator earlier this year, and if you would like to help in the garden, please speak to her.

Graeme Calf

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

**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