

*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

*Reaffirmed by PCC in March 2013*

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



**APCM REPORTS**

**APRIL 2013**

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We, the family of St Mary's Church Balham, Parish Church and community, enter the next twelve months in joyful expectation.

May God bless us all.

*Mtr Wilma  
10 April 2013*

### **2102 Data for Occasional Offices:**

Baptisms	21
Admission to Holy Communion	4
Confirmation	5
Marriages	1
Funerals	12 of which 2 in church

- May I also thank Karen and Diane for their support to their husbands as they fulfil the calling of Churchwarden and for their friendship.
- Thanks also to the Deputy Churchwardens, Daphne and Diane, who ably assist.

My work as Vicar and Priest is also shared with the Ministry Team:

- This year it has been a joy to welcome Fr Iain to the team as our Non Stipendiary Curate. Many of you have already enjoyed and benefitted from his pastoral care and we look forward to working and learning together.
- Eileen and Bill provide wonderful support with services and also share their wisdom. Thank you both for your generous sharing in ministry.
- Susanne who as our licensed reader preaches and inspires but also takes a lead on Fairtrade, and maintains links with various groups outside church.
- Daphne who gives pastoral care to people at Brixton Prison, but also in her calm and compassionate way to many of us and for that we thank her from the bottom of our heart.
- Chris is a tower of strength to Eileen, but also a true friend to many of us. Without him the pew sheet and so many other things would not happen.

As a Parish Church we are part of the Church of England and that brings both joys and sorrows. It was an immense joy and privilege to be asked to host the ordination service at St Mary's in September 2012, where amongst others Iain and Sarah Jackson were ordained deacon. Earlier in the year we rejoiced with Catherine Tucker at her ordination to the priesthood at the church where she serves her title.

In November we shared in a sense of sorrow over the voting over Women Bishop legislation as General Synod.

It all forms part of the rich tapestry this makes us Church.

## **PCC REPORT**

Members of the PCC for 2012/2013 were:-

Revd Wilma Roest (Chair)  
 Martin Gray (Churchwarden)  
 Keith Holmes (Churchwarden)  
 Graeme Calf  
 Nigel Collier  
 Sarah Collier  
 Victoria Gregory (Deanery Synod)  
 Karen Gray  
 AJ Haseley  
 Pauline Lacey  
 Keith Mitchell  
 James Morton  
 Alex Russell (Deanery Synod)  
 Christopher Serbutt (Deanery Synod)  
 Revd Eileen Serbutt  
 Revd Iain Faulkner (*since Oct 2012*)

The PCC was elected at the APCM in April 2012 and has met 6 times. Each member serves for 3 years after which time they can put themselves up for re-election; this means there is a good turn-over of members bringing new ideas, energy and enthusiasm. Meetings take place in the narthex or the balcony room; we start promptly at 7.45 pm and tea, coffee and biscuits keep us going. We always finish by 10.00 pm.

Our agenda covers all aspects of life at St Mary's. Reports are made by the various committees – Buildings & Finance, Chancel restoration and Lettings - and we are brought up to date with the Deanery Synod and Churches Together by our representatives.

This year, as before, there has been much discussion about building and maintenance. Our Safeguarding Officer and Electoral Roll Officer keep us informed of news and changes and it is always good to hear local news from Wilma, especially the strong links being built with local schools.

*On behalf of our PCC Secretary*

## **Electoral Roll**

In 2012 the roll was 141.

The roll was revised before this APCM and now (5 April 2013) stands at 130.

## **CHURCHWARDEN'S REPORT: FABRIC AND ORNAMENTS 2013**

Martin and I are now in our third year of working together and church life this year has been much like any other.

Some jobs are urgent and some are less urgent. Many revolve around toilets and light bulbs. We seem to have an arrangement. Martin does the light bulbs.

This year we have replaced a soil gasket in the old disabled toilet and fitted a new seat in the gents cubicle. We have replaced the flush handle and valve in the narthex toilet and this now functions fairly well.

It is no longer possible to get locked in the narthex toilet and it is no longer possible to get locked in the corridor outside the other toilets. Such glamour.

Following a health and hygiene inspection we will be replacing the hand towels in the narthex toilet and in the upstairs toilets with paper towels and providing hooks on the doors.

Water ingress is still a major problem especially over the south Porch and in the Baptistery. This is still in hand and as we have a Quinquennial Inspection this year our architect is fully aware of these problems and hopefully they will be dealt with as part of a larger repair programme.

On a happier note, the silver candlesticks on the high Altar have been fully restored and with the improved lighting they positively 'glow'.

During the year the organ console was resited making the chancel far more practical for the dignity of the choir moving in and out of this area.

At this important meeting I would like to acknowledge the debt of gratitude we owe to each other:

- to those who beautify our worship – our choir, organists and servers, our sacristans, our sidespeople, our flower arrangers, our cleaners;
- to those who work with our children and young people, through Junior Church, Junior Choir and Mary's Little Lambs;
- to the countless helpers who deliver postcards at Easter and Christmas; to the concert helpers;
- to our Parochial Church Council who share decision-making on behalf of St Mary's, to Sarah who is a wonderful and wise PCC secretary and will be hard to replace;
- to the finance team, led by Keith, for ensuring we live within our means.
- to Pat who ensures all our lets pay on time and are happy with the space they use, and who in addition to all that does most of the church's photocopying;

All of these people are volunteers.

St Mary's employs 2 people. They deserve our gratitude too for what they give to the Parish and for going way beyond their contractual obligations:

- to David, who provides us wonderful leadership in music and who tirelessly gives of himself so that we have a choir which not only sings well, but which knows that it is loved and valued
- to Nicky, who keeps the public parts of this church which are used by many looking spotless;

My work as Vicar is shared with all of you, but your two Churchwardens share more than most of the statutory business.

- Martin and Keith have given and given of themselves over the past year. Often their work is unseen and behind the scenes. Usually their work is tedious and unexciting – wrestling with architects and insurance companies. St Mary's could not exist without the work they do.

sure and also challenge. St Mary's has been blessed as we have recognised that within our congregation there is a wide range of theological and political conviction.

This isn't always comfortable. The blessings we have received have come, not from trying to be all things to all people, but by valuing our differences and sometimes that is difficult.

The second calling we have is to be of service. Often unseen by most of us on Sunday mornings, people serve beyond the confines of the worshipping congregation: the Around the Table Men's group, Mary's Little Lambs, the gardeners, the concert support group, all welcome and reach out to people. And they do this not 'to try to get people into Church', but simply because they value people.

There are individuals too who serve the wider community in the name of St Mary's: our School Governors, the leaders of 5<sup>th</sup> Balham Brownies and Guides. There are people such as our Safeguarding Officers who help us fulfil our duty of care to all, but most especially to the most vulnerable people. We shouldn't forget either the service we give at a distance, as it were: our commitment to Fairtrade generally; the yearly involvement with Christian Aid Week; the Box on the High Road.

In all these ways we seek to live out our vocation to be a Parish Church. We do that in the knowledge that we are loved by God, and that knowledge is sustained by the worship we share. The worship of God is our core activity. From that worship flows our calling to witness and to serve.

Each one of us plays our part in our life together; some are able at the moment to do more than others.

We have reached our target for the Green Memorial Altar Frontal and are in the process of design and manufacture although it is not too late to add names and contribute to this project if you still wish. Sadly, just recently, we have a break-in and we lost four windows; one in the meter cupboard in the porch, one in the narthex (not the painted glass thankfully), one in the porch door to the stairs and one in the parish office. No access was made into the office and the miscreant left empty handed.

As I write, just after Easter Day, we no longer have a bell rope (doesn't anything last longer than 25 years these days?) and the organ doesn't work. Here we go again!

*Keith Holmes  
Churchwarden*

### **Building and Finance Committee**

The Building and Finance Committee is a sub-committee of the PCC which deals with the day to day matters of maintaining the building and finances on behalf of the PCC.

Members of the committee were

Wilma Roest - Vicar

Martin Gray – Churchwarden and Chair

Victoria Gregory – B+F Secretary

Keith Mitchell –Treasurer

Nigel Collier – PCC Member

### **Building**

Throughout the year we have continued to monitor our 'regular' contracts for gas, electricity, water, telephones, broadband, insurance, fire extinguishers, fire alarms, boilers, sound system, timber floor polishing and lift, seeking to ensure we comply with legislation and keep the building safe for all to use in a cost effective way. In addition we have a programme of working through our quinquennial building report undertaking the works identified as required. A new quinquennial inspection is due in 2013.

We have undertaken work of a 'routine' nature throughout the year including:

monitoring and attempting to solve damp ingress at places within the building.

- The Chapel Dome: the repair undertaken in 2011 has not worked and when persistently wet (like much of last summer) the rain comes in again. We have asked our architect to investigate and see if there is an 'easy' solution.
- Damp to the porch and family chapel. This is proving problematic. We have previously undertaken rainwater pipe repairs and some associated brickwork repairs. This has not eased the damp so we have appointed our architect to assist us in resolving this on-going problem. Hopefully progress will be made this year.

Previously damp in the narthex toilet: We have made adjustments to the external rain water pipe and it seems that this has been successful. This area is now available for repainting.

The tower staircase walls and ceiling have been re-plastered and is now ready for repainting.

Following the replacement of the two lead roofs stolen in 2011 and replaced early 2012 a significant amount of damp had penetrated into the entrance porch and staircase areas. We have been letting these areas dry out before undertaking re-decoration, particularly for the staircase. These are now dry enough for repainting.

We had identified a leak on the incoming water main which has been repaired.

Annual maintenance tasks such as unblocking toilets, drains and gutters have been on-going.

A separate committee has now been formed to manage the chancel restoration.

### **Finance**

The main audited finance report for the year to 31 December 2012 is available elsewhere.

The finance team is now working well with a dedicated group dealing with weekly matters such as paying bills out and monies into the bank

### **Vicar's Report to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2013**

In the Church of England's understanding, the purpose of a Parish Church is to be there for everyone who lives in the Parish (and of course for those who live beyond and who choose to make it their own). This is the Anglican way of affirming God's love for a hugely diverse group of people; people who have little more in common than the area in which they live. St Mary's is called to be Church for everyone who lives here in two ways.

Firstly, we are called to be a place, a congregation, a focus of Christian worship and prayer which is open to all. No-one is to be intentionally excluded. Second, we are called to be of service to all who live here. We are called to do that as a sign of God's love for them, without any agenda or advantage of our own.

There are encouraging signs that, by God's grace, we continue to move in positive directions.

St Mary's has been enriched by welcoming people from other Christian traditions: through Churches Together in Balham and Upper Tooting, through being a place where people in reader training can come for placements, and through working more closely together with churches in our area. St Mary's has also been enriched by holding links with the South London Refugee Network, by our continued involvement in the Balham Town Centre Partnership, by our links with many local schools and by offering our building as a place for concerts for our local community.

St Mary's has been blessed by the presence of people who are getting older, through Golden Years, through the Holiday @ Home project, through faithful attendance at services. St Mary's has been blessed because we have cherished our younger people, through Junior Church, the trial Summer Holiday Club, Mary's Little Lambs and our work with Trinity St Mary's School. St Mary's has been blessed as we have offered ways of worshipping which both reas-

Since switching over to the new host in October 2012 the visitor numbers have been around 350 unique visitors a month, comparable to the same period last year. In the future we hope to add more pages to the website.

If you want to make a contribution to the website, or if you have any comments or questions, please talk to Martin or Wilma, or email me at [webmaster@stmarybalham.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@stmarybalham.org.uk).

*Charles*

### **St Mary's Film Club**

About eight or nine members of the congregation have met once a month on Wednesday afternoons, to watch a wide range of feature films. As well as offering entertainment, the Film Club has provided a good opportunity to get together socially during the autumn and winter months.

### **Mary's Little Lambs**

2102 saw the start of a St Mary's parent and toddler group on Wednesday morning, 10—11.30. The group calls itself Mary's Little Lambs, and they even have their own song which is sung every week at the end of the session.

Mary's Little Lambs is run by the parents, with support from Moira and Mtr Wilma. On average 10 'Little Lambs' attend each week with their mum or dad. Resources from the church crèche area are used and donations of unwanted toys have been much welcomed.

All baptism families are given an invite to Mary's Little Lambs and new members are always welcome.

on a weekly basis. Keith Mitchell produces a variety of cash flows and forecasts for PCC throughout the year as well as drafting the PCC's annual budget and accounts. For that work we are very grateful.

At a time of national austerity we have been delighted to find that your financial dedication to St Mary's has remained robust. We began 2012 with a planned budget deficit in part because of the need to fund the roofing works, and with concerns that our income may fall. We are delighted to reach the end of the financial year in a healthier state than anticipated. We are well aware that this happy state of affairs is not typical as a large number of parishes that have struggled financially in the past few years. As the work to resolve the damp issues falls into the current financial year we are again expecting to have a budget deficit for the year, however the early signs of 2013 suggest that your continued support may make this less painful than anticipated.

On behalf of the Building and Finance Committee I wholeheartedly thank you for your continued generosity.

God Bless

*Martin Gray  
April 2013*

### **Chancel Restoration report 2013**

Only 18 months ago, the first meetings were held to consider what was required to restore the Chancel and how much money and how that might be raised.

The formal launch was on Saturday 3 March 2012 with a concert by Chromata, taking the choice of works from the mosaics of the Chancel.

We have been raising the money with other concerts, events and individual donations - including 4 in excess of £1000 each; we are very grateful for all donations to this appeal.

With a small sum left over from the earlier works, we already have over £20,000 for this new phase of the overall restoration of St Marys church building after the 1998 fire.

Activity has slowed though and the new PCC will be looking at taking this forward - confirming the specification of works, updating the estimates of cost and making applications for grants.

If you have any fundraising expertise or ideas or want to get involved in this project, please let us know.

### **Lettings report for APCM**

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

Sonia Forde-Pilates

Shekiba Habib –Merton & Wandsworth Asylum Welcome

Phyllis Osei-The United Church of the Messiah

There is one change to our regular lets and that is Steve Roe – Hoopla left us in March 2013. We are currently looking for a replacement.

We also hire out occasional lets for Festival Chorus Rehearsals. Ravenstone School Charity Concert was held at the church without charge. The church is also used by other schools in our parish.

Our letting income from:

January 2011-December 2011                      £15,193.25

January 2012-December 2012:                      £21,588.26

Car Parking stayed the same with 6 spaces rented out.

*Pat Nevard*  
*Lettings administrator*

### **Golden Years**

The group started in autumn last year and has held 4 interesting and successful meetings to date. We have heard about the Gobi Desert, Guyana, town and country, Australia and New Zealand and learned how to decorate a cake. The group meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month immediately after the 12.30 service. It is open to all those people who have time on their hands.

*Daphne Clarke*  
*The Revd Eileen Serbutt*

### **The website report for this year's APCM**

The St Mary's website has had a major redesign in the last year to help the church better communicate notices, services, events and other information to the parish and Balham's local community. The redesign also involved the website being hosted by a new company, Linode.com, as there had been issues with the previous host's reliability and support.

The new website can be far more easily updated, meaning the site can expand much easier over time as required. The main focus of the home page is now on the latest news: with notices, Twitter and Facebook taking centre stage. A What's On box shows all the public services and church events that anyone can attend in the next 7 days, as well as a link to a full monthly calendar with all public Church and other events happening over the next three months. The home page is very fresh, with new information being posted every couple of days.

The room hire booking system has also been redesigned from the ground up to make managing the church's bookings as easy as possible. The new system uses Google Calendar to keep track of bookings, with the website only showing publicly available events - a very similar setup to the previous system, but with a lot less hassle.

## **STEWARDS REPORT APRIL 2013**

At present there are 10 people on the stewards' rota. On most occasions two of us have been on duty at the 10.30 Sunday Eucharist. There have been times, however, when more stewards were needed: for example at the Festival Services, Palm Sunday Procession and the Ordination Service which was held last September. We are grateful to the Church Wardens and their deputies who have helped us out when there have been gaps in the rota or too few of us available. If you are interested in joining the rota, which usually involves a duty about once in 4 weeks, please let us know.

Pat stepped down last April but in reality has continued as a 'behind the scenes' steward on Saturday morning by assembling the hymn books with the Order of Service Booklets and pewsheets inserted at the first hymn, in preparation for the Sunday Morning service. Thank you Pat!

Graeme is taking a sabbatical after the APCM. We would like to thank him for his time on the Stewards' rota and hope he will return. Wendy Newall and Janet Jones joined us last year and we look forward to Nicky MacKenzie, Marsha Burnett and Andrea Ellis doing so on the next rota and Pat is returning.

Victoria has agreed to be 'a floating steward' and will assist at special services and at other times when necessary.

The crèche area, where we have responsibility for assembling and tidying toys etc. on Sunday mornings, has been greatly improved and stocked by 'St Mary's Little Lambs'. Anna Stevenson has taken on this duty for a 3 month period as part of her Duke of Edinburgh Award activities. Thank you Anna.

*Gillian Bannerjee*

## **Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary report**

I continue to share my pastoral work between St Mary's and Brixton Prison.

The prison caters for every religion so that whatever faith the inmate requires there is always some one there to meet their religious needs.

My role in the prison remains the same, that is visiting the men who are vulnerable eg those who are suicidal, self harm, drug abusers, or have mental health issues.

Most of my work in the Prison entails meeting and chatting with the inmates discussing issues that concern them such as family problems, their fears, anxieties, frustrations, also the difficulty with being locked up, sometimes the discussions can be quite challenging especially when it comes to religious issues.

As SPA of St Mary's, I visit housebound people, visit people in hospital and take Communion to those who request it. Together with the Ministry Team we share in pastoral care for all those who live in our parish.

My role as a SPA, both at Brixton Prison and at St Mary's is to be supportive compassionate and caring, not to judge and to always remember that GOD our heavenly father is a God of love and forgiveness and that he loves us all regardless of who or what we are, and that through Prayer he will give us the comfort strength and support that we need in difficult times.

*Daphne  
SPA*

## Director of Music

As ever, this has been a busy year for those involved in leading the music at St Mary's, and I'd like to thank all those who so generously give their time and talents, organists, conductors and singers, and for the support of Mtr Wilma and the Ministry Team.

We've seen significant developments during the year, but also faced more than once the frustration of moving one step forward and one backwards. A lot of time and effort was put into recruiting the beginnings of a Junior Choir from TSM. For a time we had six young recruits. But it proved difficult to secure the continuing commitment of the children's parents to get them to church week by week. Without an ongoing core of children in the choir, it is hard to attract and retain new recruits, as there is no sense of a "club". We will need to try again this year, perhaps focussing more on the children of our own congregation rather than on TSM children without a current link to the church.

Among the adult choir too, we were active in recruitment and for a time it looked like we might fill the choir stalls. But relatively few of the several expressions of interest turned into bums on seats, and some new members have had to step back for perfectly understandable personal reasons. In terms of numbers, we end the year much as we began, with the same core of loyal singers but without the security that comes from a group of strong confident voices in each section.

I look forward to more of those who consider joining the choir following through on that good intention, and for my part will try to do more to make it easy for them to join. Otherwise, the choir has continued to develop steadily and find its own distinctive voice and style. Our general approach has been to find the right music to fit the choir that we actually have, and perform it sincerely and to the best of our ability. In some cases, this has meant composing or arranging music which is specifically tailored for the resources available to us. Within this approach, there is room to challenge. The services of Holy Week, including a great deal of unaccompanied plainsong and choral music, provided ample examples that the choir is prepared to rise to such a challenge and to lead with

## Serving Team Report

For those who may be unsure about what the servers do, as servers we seek to assist the clergy in presenting and offering the worship of Almighty God and in so doing, we aim to enable the congregation to share in the liturgy and we aspire to do so with dignity, reverence and respect.

I am very pleased to be able to say that we have been joined by two new members this year, namely Lawrence Marks and Aderyn Agbalaya-Mason. However even with these additional members, it continues to be challenging on occasion to put together a full serving team for every principal service.

It is an enormous privilege to be able to serve at the altar and whilst the ministry of servers is a quiet one and often goes unnoticed, it makes a significant contribution to worship. If you have never previously served at St Mary's but would like to or even if you would simply like to explore what this essential role in the service of God involves, please do not hesitate to speak to me after any 10.30 Sunday service.

Finally, I would like to thank all members of the serving team for their continued support and dedicated service as well as for their flexibility and willingness to step in at the last minute whilst we are relatively few in numbers, particularly during Holy Week this year.

*Jamie Morton  
Head Server*

## **JUNIOR CHURCH**

Junior Church continues to educate the younger members of our congregation in a way that is appropriate to their ages and abilities, which is vast.

The leaders and helpers do an amazing job both planning and delivering the sessions each week. A huge thank you must go to all who help in any way with Junior Church.

Over the past few months the leaders and helpers have been in communication about how we can improve or change the way that junior church runs. Small changes have already taken place such as more ownership of the room with posters of the children's work and the setting up of a holy table with a cross, bible and the junior church candle. We also have a cloth on the table with the correct liturgical colour, to link the junior church room with the main body of the church below.

Over the coming months there is further work planned to amend our teaching plans and to engage, encourage and recruit more leaders and helpers. Your help would be invaluable.

*Fr. Iain*

integrity, sincerity and purpose. We hope that the whole church will give us active, enthusiastic support in the coming year as we aim to develop both in numbers and in the quality and fitness of our musical leadership.

*David Fawcett  
Director of Music*

## **Tooting Deanery Synod 2011-2012**

St Mary's lay member representatives for Tooting Deanery Synod are Alex Russell, Chris Serbutt and Victoria Gregory. This APCM marks the end of our second year of a three year term.

The Deanery Synod met three times this year: 26th June 2012, 16th October 2012 and 12th March 2013. At each meeting there was a presentation from a speaker and then news of each other's parishes was shared. At the June 2012 and March 2013 meetings clergy and lay members were opted on to Diocesan Synod including our very own Rev Mtr Wilma and Alex Russell.

### ***June 2012 Meeting***

There was a presentation on growing older and the world perspective on older people in our society. A panel of gave their comments on the findings of questionnaire that was put to older people in deanery churches which included:

- pastoral care for older people should not make assumption that older people are spiritually settled, they need support too.
- giving people opportunities to tell their stories, to be heard.
- work on inter-generational contact.
- not to forget the past.

### ***October 2012 Meeting***

The Chaplain of HMP Wandsworth gave a presentation highlighting that, despite of its forbidding appearance and strict discipline, God is found there and in other prisons like Wandsworth.

He explained the prison profile, a restorative justice initiative and the challenges of bringing meaning into the lives of prisoners through religion or faith. The role of the Chaplain and the Christian call to this particular ministry being found in:

- We are all made in the image of God
- We all have sinned.
- Christ ministry to the outcast
- Repentance, forgiveness and restoration
- Love and honesty
- Right living to God in the community
- Protection of the vulnerable –especially children and vulnerable adults

### **March 2013 Meeting**

A presentation was given by the Area Dean of Lambeth South about the outcome of the Signs of Growth questionnaire that completed by the congregations of Deanery members. The feedback was positive showing that people are growing in faith but that more work needs to be undertaken to support young boys to engage and to provide more spiritual support to older people.

*Victoria Gregory – Deanery Synod Rep*

### **5<sup>th</sup> Balham Brownies & Guides Annual Report 2013**

I am pleased to report that both these units are now fully subscribed with 24 Brownies and 24 Guides. We also have 2 new Assistant Guiders, Karen helping with Brownies and Helen with Guides.

The Brownies have continued to work on badges including Hostess, Friend to Animals and Agility. We also hosted the District Brownie Adventure Day and were delighted that Mtr Wilma joined us to sing songs from around the UK.

To celebrate the Jubilee, Guides and Brownies joined together for a party and Crown Competition and Mtr Eileen had the difficult job of judging.

The Guides have followed a very varied programme. Apart from knitting, cooking pancakes on baked bean tins, lighting fires, shopping on a budget and camping they have also had the challenge of Master Chef where each patrol has had to work together to produce a starter – humous, and a pudding – lemon and orange mousse. Each was judged on taste, presentation and the state of their work station!

At the end of the summer term they visited an Ice Cream Parlour for a special treat.

The Guides and Brownies have continued to do secret cleans of the church, deliver Christian Aid envelopes enabling us to raise over £1500 for this annual charity and take part in the very important Remembrance Service.

Guides once again raised over £100 for Crisis by making over 300 mince pies.

Most recently both units supported Comic Relief by holding a sponsored silence. The Brownies had to make paper planes, ice biscuits, blow bubbles and use chopsticks, whilst the Guides worked together to make a 1000 piece jigsaw puzzle. Jointly they raised £468.

Finally a big thank you to my 3 Young Leaders, Jo, our Assistant Guide Leader, Keith my facilitator and all our adult helpers.

*Diane Holmes*

- **NEW:**

The Diocese recently implemented “A Safeguarding Self Audit for Parish Safeguarding Policies and Procedures 2012-2013.

The above came into effect following a pilot scheme conducted by Jill Sandham , Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and a working (Reference Group) across a range of Parishes.

The Audit comprised of eight pages of questions taken from various sections of ‘A Safe Church Manual’, for completion between January and March 2013.

The questionnaire related as to whether we had met the criteria wholly, partially, not at all or not applicable and were colour coded.

The Audit was carried out on Wednesday 27th February 2013 by Mtr. Wilma, church wardens Martin and Keith and Elaine. The findings / results were discussed at PCC on Wednesday 20th March 2013 for acceptance and to agree Safeguarding Action Plan for the following year, with clarity about who will take responsibility and with target dates.

Our overall scores were quite good.

Green - criteria wholly met	=	21 points
Amber - partially met	=	8
Red - not met at all	=	1
N/A -	=	3

All documents relating to the Audit and the table of scores form were to be received by the Diocese no later than the 31 March 2013. The Church Wardens will be required to answer questions on the progress of the Audit in the Archdeacons’ Articles of Enquiry.

Finally, a big thank you to Mtr. Wilma, Martin and Keith for the time spent completing the Audit. Well done.

Not forgetting all Junior Church Leaders and Helpers for the excellent work you do with the children, those supporting David and the Stewards who prepare the crèche area every Sunday morning.

*Elaine Joseph  
Suzanne Hinkson- Marks  
Parish Safeguarding Officers*

## **Sacristans’ Report**

This year we are sad to say “goodbye” and a hearty “thank you” to Graeme who is taking a well-earned sabbatical year after many years of sterling work but the rest of the team (Alan, Chris, Jamie, Alex and me) will be continuing. We are grateful to Sarah for the help she gave us with the laundry earlier in the year and our prayers and thoughts are with her for her recovery. Our thanks go to Diane and Keith for volunteering to launder the cumbersome large altar cloths.

With aging vestments and frontals there has been more repair work this year on individual vestments and frontals, with the hope that problems can be rectified before they become major disasters.

The most exciting development, however, has been the very real prospect that work can now begin on the new green Memorial Frontal and a report on this project is given separately.

*Penny Holloway  
Sacristan*

## **Readers and Intercessors report**

Training sessions have been held for both groups. They proved interesting and enjoyable. New readers have been recruited and all are learning to make themselves heard in a church where the acoustics can be tricky. Intercessors are coping well with thoughtful prayers spoken clearly and carefully and being heedful of elephant counting. Many thanks to all who contribute so much to our services.

*The Revd Eileen Serbutt*

## around the table

'around the table' is the St. Mary's men's group which meets approximately every two months to discuss issues of life and faith and what it means to be a man, and a Christian, in today's world. We have a guiding principle of confidentiality which means that we can share openly and freely together on a wide range of topics. The night puts everything in the context of God by concluding with Compline. All men are welcome to attend whether on a one-off or more regular basis.

For the next date just keep an eye on the pewsheet or have a look out for one of the postcards. If you would like to know more, ask Chris. (Or, of course, you could just turn up!)

*Chris Serbutt*

## Saturday Morning

Did you know that the church is open every Saturday morning even when there is no specific event mentioned in the pew sheet? If you want to pop in just to say hello, have a cup of coffee or just spend a few moments in peace and quiet, then everyone is most welcome. If you would like to share in morning prayer, then that takes place at 9.30am in the Holy Family Chapel.

## Safeguarding report

Parish Safeguarding Officers: Elaine Joseph and Suzanne Hinkson-Marks

We have been fortunate not to have had any reports of concerns, nor observed any incident that required intervention.

The Junior Church leaders and helpers continue to ensure registration forms are completed by parents of children attending Junior Church at the beginning of the school term (September).

- Risk Assessments:

Risk Assessments for Junior Church are due to be reviewed in April. Elaine will arrange meeting with junior church leaders and helpers.

Risk Assessments for the crèche area are due to be re-visited by Suzanne and myself by the end of April. The number of children playing in this area has increased over the last year and additional safety notices need to be in place.

Risk Assessments to be carried out on the area used by 'Mary's Little Lambs'. Elaine will work with parents identifying risks.

It is vital we complete the above to the best of our ability, since the PCC is responsible for ensuring the Parish's Insurance provides adequate cover in the event of something going wrong.

- Changes to CRB:

The Disclosure & Barring Service Forms replaced the Criminal Records Bureau forms (CRB) from January 2013. There is no change in the colour of the form which is still purple, except a logo above its title in the top right hand corner.

In March 2013, we processed one new application and one renewal using the new forms. Both applicants have received their disclosure number and will offer support to David with junior music club. Another applicant is awaiting her disclosure number. A further two are due for renewal this month.