



# APCM Report 2017

## **PCC Report**

*Members of the PCC for 2016/17 were:*

Rev'd Wilma Roest (Chair until 3 July 2016)

Nigel Collier (Vice Chair)

Keith Holmes (Churchwarden)

Pauline Lacey (Churchwarden)

Rev'd Eileen Serbutt

Fr. Iain Faulkner

Susanne Mitchell

Keith Mitchell (Treasurer)

Christopher Serbutt (Deanery Synod)

Victoria Gregory (Deanery Synod)

Alex Russell (Deanery Synod)

Graeme Calf (Deanery Synod, part year)

Bruce Knight (Deanery Synod, part year)

Laura Campbell

Charlie Dyer

Anzo Francis

Joan James-McGowan

Delroy McGowan

Janet Jones (part year)

Rosemary Kennedy (part year)

Martin Gray (part year)

Daphne Clarke (part year)

Rhea Newman (PCC Secretary)



The PCC was elected at the APCM in 2016 and has met seven times in the last year. Each member serves for one or three years after which time they can put themselves up for re-election. After the APCM in 2016, the PCC was delighted to welcome Charlie as a new PCC member and to welcome back Anzo and Janet who had been re-elected as well as Pauline and Keith elected as Churchwardens for 2016-17.

PCC agendas cover all aspects of life at St Mary's. A key agenda item for the PCC is St Mary's Mission Action Plan and this is regularly reviewed by the PCC to ensure we are on track for achieving our mission priorities. The PCC receives reports from different committees including Building & Finance and Lettings and also receives updates on the activities of Churches Together in Balham and Upper Tooting, Deanery Synod and Trinity St Mary's. Other key agenda items over the last year have included discussions on replacing the organ, stewardship and social events.

The PCC was very sorry to see Mtr Wilma move on in July but are grateful to Nigel for acting as Chair of the PCC during the vacancy. Much of the focus of PCC meetings has been on the vacancy and on 20 July the PCC was joined by Archdeacon John Kiddle to discuss the process for recruiting a new vicar. The PCC would like to take this opportunity to thank Daphne and Martin for stepping forward to act as Parish Representatives and for agreeing to be co-opted on to the PCC to be able to fulfil this role. We are hugely grateful for the hard work they put in to guiding St Mary's through the vacancy process and are looking forward to welcoming Rev'd Robert Tobin and his wife Olivia to St Mary's in September.

In August Pat Nevard retired after 12 years volunteering as the Parish Administrator at St Mary's and the PCC would like to thank Pat for all her generous hard work over these years. The PCC have had a number of discussions about the role of Parish Administrator and appointing a new administrator will be a key priority once Robert starts. In the meantime, we would like to offer sincere thanks to all those who have taken on extra responsibilities to cover the vacancy and particularly to Diane and Keith for taking on so much of the administrative work.

The PCC was sorry to lose Graeme Calf and Janet Jones partway through the year and thank them for all their work as PCC members and for all they continue to do for St Mary's. We were fortunate that Bruce Knight and Rosemary Kennedy kindly stepped forward to replace Graeme and Janet and thank Bruce and Rosemary for bringing in new ideas and enthusiasm.

On behalf of the PCC, thank you to everyone who makes St Mary's such a special church to be part of. If you ever have questions about the role of the PCC or discussions at PCC meetings or simply wonder what it's like to be a PCC member then please don't hesitate to talk to any of the current PCC members.

*Rhea Newman, PCC Secretary*



### **Electoral Roll Officer's Report**

Since the 2016 APCM, we have added 9 new names to the Electoral Roll which now has 151 members. The Electoral Roll is updated as and when we receive a compliant application form. As a general rule, anybody over the age of 16 living in the parish or anybody over the age of 16 not resident in the parish but who has regularly attended worship at St Mary's for six months is eligible for enrolment on the Electoral Roll. The Electoral Roll is fully revised every six years but we did not need to prepare a new roll this year.

*Laura Campbell, Electoral Roll Officer*

### **Churchwarden's Report: Fabric And Ornaments 2016/17**

This is an official report on the present state of the fabric and ornaments of the church. This includes buildings, land, furniture, fabric, candlesticks, church plate etc. Inevitably there will be some duplication with the Building and Finance Report but this is cannot be avoided.

I can report that there has been no change in church plate or candlesticks this year.

A lot of what we have achieved this year has been fire or health and safety related. Whether you live in a flat or a house and whether you rent or own you will know there is always some sort of maintenance to be done. This building is no different except that it is very much larger and the bills are a lot bigger.

Before Christmas we decided we could postpone the floor coverings no longer as they were becoming dangerous. They ranged in age from 30 years to 60 years and to 110 years. We settled on a like for like replacement, grey in the pews and blue in the rest of the church, and the work is now completed and paid for partly from donations and partly from fabric reserves. My wish list for improvements is getting longer but we have to prioritise as our income cannot allow us to do everything at once.

We've had a run of ageing taps, door handles and locks needing replacement. Not only in the old toilet block but even in the "new build" narthex and balcony areas.

Routine maintenance has been carried out to ensure safety for all church users including portable appliance testing, lift maintenance, fire extinguishers inspection and we propose to update some of the electrics.

We have ageing seamless aluminium gutters but they have to be joined at angles and these joints are now deteriorating.

We have replaced two dangerous ladders, one for the light bulb fitter, triple section with stabiliser and one for the sacristy with safety treads and handrails. A new handrail was fitted on the very steep staircase to the clock tower in time for Christmas so we could get the candlesticks down safely.



Our priorities now, in no particular order, are security floodlighting for the front of the church, handrails to the fire exit on the Irene House side of the church and a major overhaul of the old toilet block.

At no cost at all the small balcony room has been reinstated as a meeting room available for lets and by church groups for up to 4 people by prior arrangement with the administrator.

My thanks again to the entire Building and Finance Committee. The work they do is essential for the existence and maintenance of a building this size and its content.

The coming year will be another very busy one and an important year in the life of our St. Mary's family as we welcome the arrival of our new vicar Robert Tobin and his wife Olivia.

*Keith Holmes, Churchwarden*

### **Building and Finance Committee**

The Building and Finance Committee is a sub-committee of the PCC formed to deal in depth with the day to day matters of maintaining the building and finances on behalf of the PCC. We report to the PCC where our recommendations are sanctioned.

Members of the committee for this year were

Martin Gray – Chair

Pauline Lacey – Churchwarden

Victoria Gregory - B+F Secretary

Keith Mitchell -Treasurer

Nigel Collier - PCC Member

Janet Jones - PCC Member (part year only)

### **Building**

Matters on the building front have been much quieter this year with most of the jobs being small in nature as we had expended most of our annual budget on the Narthex water heater and other boiler repairs early in the winter 2015-16.

However throughout the year we monitored our 'regular' contracts for gas, electricity, water, telephones, broadband, insurance, fire extinguishers, fire alarms, boilers, sound system, timber floor polishing, movable partition maintenance, refuse collection, lift servicing and gutter maintenance, seeking to ensure we comply with legislation and keep the building safe for all to use in a cost effective way.



We continued with our gutter maintenance company and they came and inspected and cleaned out our gutters at the end of 2016. Their work includes a full report with photographs identifying some work required in those inaccessible places we cannot get to ourselves.

During 2016 we worked on deciding and obtaining quotations for the renewal of the deteriorating floor finishes throughout the nave and transepts. With PCC approval we were able to place orders for a replacement carpet through-out the nave, transepts, pews and choir stalls before the annual price increase in January 2017. The work was then progressed early in 2017 and was substantially complete in time for the parish visit by the shortlisted candidates for our new vicar. With the resulting minor snagging having been resolved the work is now complete. We trust you like the finished result and that it is safer for everyone as well.

Looking ahead slightly we are currently obtaining quotations for an update on the electrics and renewal of the floodlighting to the front which should also improve security. Something for us to action later this year.

## **Finance**

The main audited finance report for the year to 31 December 2016 is available elsewhere.

The finance team continues to work well with a dedicated group dealing with weekly matters such as paying bills out and monies into the bank. The treasurer 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.

The stewardship working group has been quietly raising awareness of items of expenditure (most recently the carpets) and gently raising the need for regular planned giving. More on this will follow in 2017 as we have lost a number of regular givers and need to consolidate that income for future plans.

The 2016 accounts include the £19k cost of the carpets, partially funded by drawing on the Fabric Reserve. We are now fundraising towards a replacement organ, for when the present electronic organ stops working completely. The options of another electronic organ or to install a pipe organ are not yet decided.

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

God Bless

*Martin Gray*



**Annual Report on Lettings**

The Lettings Committee is a sub-committee of the PCC which manages church lets. Members of the PCC who sit on the Lettings Committee are Anzo Francis, Keith Holmes and Joan James-McGowan.

St Mary's Church has successfully continued to develop its community of organisations who share use of the church's space during the working week. The following activities take place:

<b>Tue 6.30-7.30pm</b>	<b>Thu 9.30-11.30am Fri 9.30-10.30am</b>	<b>Mon 6.30-7.30pm</b>	<b>Tue 10.30-12am</b>	<b>Tue 3.30-6.00pm</b>	<b>Mon 7.45-8.45pm</b>
<b>Catherine Drake-Wilkes</b>	<b>Sonia Forde</b>	<b>Isabel Hubner</b>	<b>Lucy Paul</b>	<b>Lucy Quick</b>	<b>Josephine Robertson</b>
Tuesday Exercise	Thursday & Friday Pilates	Monday Qi Gong	Tuesday Yoga	Tuesday Perform Drama	Monday Yoga

<b>Wed 7.15-8.30pm</b>	<b>Fri 11am-12pm</b>	<b>Thu 9am-1pm</b>	<b>Mon 9.30am-5.30pm</b>	<b>Mon 9.30am - 2.30pm</b>	<b>Fri 8.30-9.30am Sun 1-4pm</b>
<b>Greg Hobden</b>	<b>Emily Halton</b>	<b>Mark Barringer</b>	<b>SLRA</b>	<b>SLRA</b>	<b>UCM</b>
Wednesday group	Friday yoga	Thursday Language School	Monday Refugee Association	Monday Refugee Counselling	Friday & Sunday Church of Messiah

We also hire out the occasional lets for Festival Chorus Rehearsals, Trinity St Mary's School, Ravenstone School, Hornsby House School and Chestnut Grove Academy.

Our lettings income was as follows:

January 2014 – December 2014 £21,011.80

January 2015 – December 2015 £17,462.00

January 2016 – December 2016 £25,050.00

Car parking was unchanged with six spaces let throughout the year earning £3,027.00.

*Anzo Francis, Lettings administrator*



### **Deanery Synod**

The best way of describing Deanery Synod is that it represents the most local of the Church of England's hierarchical structure. Tooting Deanery Synod comprises 11 parishes with a geographical boundary that covers The Ascension, Balham Hill to St. Mary's, Summerstown. It also includes Wandsworth Prison, Springfield Hospital and St. George's Hospital. Its aims are essentially twofold – to be a source of information and decision-making to Diocesan Synod and, more importantly, a support to the parishes and other institutions within it.

We meet 3 or 4 times a year, sometimes discussing ways in which we tackle the mission of the Deanery and at other times having a guest speaker to present a topic which we think might be useful. In the past this has included speakers from SPIDIR, to talk about how we might find Spiritual Direction something useful to have, and Welcare, to talk about help available to families and children and need in Southwark Diocese. We also hold meetings that are open to everyone in the Deanery, whether Deanery Synod members or not.

For more information, please speak to Chris Serbutt, who is Lay Chair, or to one of St. Mary's 2014-2017 Deanery representatives – Victoria Gregory, Bruce Knight or Alex Russell.

*Christopher Serbutt*

### **Around the Table**

*A place where we can learn about our faith through discussion, sharing and listening and where all questions and opinions are equally valued.*

Around the Table is a faith study group which welcomes everyone wherever you happen to be on your journey of faith. It thrives on the discussion of differing opinions. We start with a passage of scripture and examine it in the context and culture of the time in which it was written. We then try to see what we can learn from it and understand what it means for us in our own contemporary society - and all over a glass of wine! We conclude each evening by saying Compline together.

In the first half of the year we looked at themes under the title of 'Sunday School (Unexpurgated)' exploring the parts of the stories about Noah, Elisha and Jonah that do not usually get told; in the second half of the year we are making a study of the some of the lesser known prophets of the Old Testament, resuming on May 10 looking at Micah

For more information have a look at the St. Mary's website under 'What's On' and then 'Around The Table', or speak to Chris.

*Christopher Serbutt*



### **Saturday Morning**

If you haven't popped in to St. Mary's on a Saturday morning then you're missing out. Ostensibly started as a way of just keeping the church open to the public, it has become a great time of fun, fellowship and coffee. So if you have time on your hands, or you just happen to be passing, why not come in?

*Christopher Serbutt*

### **Reader in Training**

It has been quite a year. Not just with learning all sorts of things, having to attend Monday evening lectures and Saturday Study Days (and writing essays!), but, more importantly, discovering during this time, that my calling to Reader ministry has been confirmed.

It has also been a real privilege to be able to share my ministry within St. Mary's, where my role is specifically to preach, take Evening Prayer and run Messy Church and Around The Table.

I would like to thank everyone in the congregation for all the support they give me. Part of my calling was that I very definitely felt called to minister to the people of St. Mary's and so this support has been *really* important to me. I feel very touched and very humbled by all that you all do for me.

If you would like any more information about what I am doing during my training, just come and find me.

Thank you

*Christopher Serbutt*

### **The Wednesday Club**

The Film Club and Golden Years have merged into the Wednesday Club.

We still meet on the fourth Wednesday of the month and watch films alternate months. This past year we have watched *Evan Almighty*, had a talk from Community Police about safety in the home and heard about various holidays abroad with video. We also had an excellent Christmas dinner for which we contribute in advance.

All are welcome. You just need to have free time at 1.15 on fourth Wednesdays and enjoy a light lunch and companionship with some entertainment thrown in.

*Eileen and Daphne*





### **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 over the last twelve months the team has grown in numbers and individuals have developed their skills by taking on additional serving roles. However, 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.

*Alex Russell - Head Server*

### **Messy Church**

*Explore God and discover something new by inspiring your brain, your heart and your funny-bone.*

Messy Church is not about being untidy, more about being a little less formally structured than the sort of church service you might come to on a Sunday. If you like, it's more about a hands-on approach to encountering God, and it's about being able to do this together in active and creative ways. It's not about making craft, although you can do that if you like! You can come on your own or with somebody else. You can come once or as often as you like. Whoever you are you, and whenever you come, you will be warmly welcomed.

The next session is on Saturday May 13 we will be looking at what we can learn about faith through the life and teaching of Julian of Norwich.

For more information:

[stmarysmessychurch@btinternet.com](mailto:stmarysmessychurch@btinternet.com)

[stmarybalham.org.uk/whats-on/messy-church/](http://stmarybalham.org.uk/whats-on/messy-church/)

*Christopher Serbutt*



### **5th Balham Brownies and Guides Annual Report 2017**

Both units continue to flourish with 20 Brownies, 16 Guides and 5 Young Leaders.

2016/17 has been a year of parties. Firstly we celebrated the Queen's 90th birthday with crowns and cake and gained a special badge. The Senior Section also celebrated their 100th birthday so another excuse to party!

Some of our Brownies joined with Upper Tooting for a day at London Zoo. We also hosted the District Adventure Day themed around Storytime.

Alex, one of our young leaders took part in the Cenotaph Parade for Remembrance with other members of Girlguiding.

Added to the usual badges, crafts, games and fun we delivered Christian Aid envelopes and made mince pies for Crisis, secretly cleaned the church and helped in the removal of all kneelers before the new carpet was laid. The Guides planted daffodils in the Oasis Garden by torchlight as part of Community Service and now the girls have made bird boxes from scratch and one has been put up in the garden so we await the arrival of little tiny wings! We also had a fun Sports Night ending with ice creams.

Sadly our Assistant Guider, Jo Laycock, left in the summer to get married and live in Seattle.

I am very grateful to my other leaders, Helen, Karen and Anna, parent helpers, church volunteers and Keith, my facilitator.

*Diane Holmes*

### **Stewards Report**

Pauline, Pat and Andrea 'retired' from our duty rota after the APCM last year but thankfully Joyce, Debbie and Marcia then joined us and we have therefore continued to be a group of 13 stewards.

Some of our group now have additional commitments on Sunday mornings (Junior Church, Sacristan etc.) and therefore it is not always possible to maintain the one in six week rota which we prefer. We are seeking new stewards! If you would like to join us please let us know.

From time to time we arrive on Sunday morning to find that the hymn books/ pewsheets etc. have already been put together and the crèche area arranged. Thank you kind person /persons!

*Gillian Bannerjee*



## **Choir**

The number of regular attendees in the choir has been steady all year, with some extra singers occasionally joining for larger services to help swell the numbers. We've tackled some new anthems and hymns, especially for the Carol Service. We sadly lost Stuart Payne as our third organist in January this year, but still have a team of Lizzie and Keith to lead the music life of the church. We have continued the quarterly 'Come and Sing' Evensong services with great success and hope to continue these.

The organ project is still in the early stages, but already gaining support from funds being donated from various church events.

*Lizzie Hayward, Director of Music*

## **Report for Little Lambs**

Little Lambs, our very own playgroup, has gone from strength to strength, so much so that we have had to make some changes. We were getting as many as 40 children attending and so had to turn people away. In order to try to accommodate this number we decided to store the buggies (of which there are many!) at the back of the church rather than in the baptistery, which thus opened up a new space for the children.

However, having this number of children even with increased space did not feel safe and so we have agreed to cap our numbers to a maximum of 35 children. In order to be fair to the children who have been regular members of Little Lambs we have stopped taking any new registrations for the time being, but are keeping a waiting list for people who we have to turn away.

We start at 9.30 and for the first hour the children enjoy free play and a craft activity. This is followed by half an hour during which time the children have a snack and then join in our story and song time, finishing at 11.00.

Before Christmas we organised a special service for current and past members of Little Lambs (thanks to Rosie for the inspiration and coordination) which was well attended and a great success.

We have a faithful team without whom this service to our community could not go ahead so thank you to Rosie, Aneja, Annette, Nikki and Derek, Julian and Diane and Keith who stand in if I am away. And thank you to our newest recruit, Alison Gent.

*Moira Hodgson*



### **Sacristans' Report 2017**

There has been quite a turnover of personnel on the sacristan team this year. Jamie's move to Richmond meant that he is no longer attending St Mary's, Chris is busy with his training to become a lay reader, and Alex is fully occupied with his other activities at St Mary's. We are very grateful to all three of them for all the work which they did whilst they were sacristans and wish them well as they continue their other work for the Church.

We are delighted that Charlie and Rob have come on board and are now fully trained and also that Graeme (who needed no training at all) has rejoined the team. I have come back on a temporary basis whilst we all adjust to these changes.

As always, Alan keeps everything running smoothly, from arranging the rota, ordering supplies and doing his full share of duties.

We are grateful to Keith and Diane for their sterling work on the difficult and time-consuming task of laundering the large altar cloths.

The sacristans are a happy group of people and would welcome new recruits. If you would like to know more about what they do, or are thinking about joining them, please speak to Alan or Father Iain.

*Penny Holloway*

### **Social events**

The social committee has held regular socials this past year which have been well and regularly attended. We have had a pirate themed movie night and a back to school quiz night and are looking to do more next year. We are lucky to have a lot of support from a number of people, providing their ideas, organisational skills and fabulous cooking and are looking forward to planning our next year of activities.

There have also been a great array of other socials throughout year kindly organised by Diane and Keith, with support from others in the church including the beetle drive, international dance night and harvest supper and the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Garden Party. And who could forget the Churchwarden's Christmas Party and Mtr Wilma's Leaving Party!

St Mary's continues to be a very sociable place to be and if you have any ideas for future socials please do let us know!

*Social Events Working Group (Alex, Charlie, Nicky, Maria and Rhea)*



### Junior Church Report 2017

The numbers of children attending our Junior Church continues to grow and this is a real blessing. It is unfortunate that during the vacancy we have not been able to sustain our senior Church through lack of teachers. The junior Church leaders decided this year as a group that they only want to lead once a month. This will enable them to worship with the main congregation and receive the spiritual sustenance that they need. This is entirely sensible and has my full support but it does mean that we are always short of leaders.

The children learn about the same Gospel as the main congregation, but in a way that is understandable and accessible to them.

Junior Church continues to happen during the first part of the 10:30 am Eucharist, with the children and leaders returning for communion.

In March this year it was a delight to admit Harvey as a Saint Mary's junior leader. Harvey will, when on the rota be a third person, helping the adults teach the younger children and it was a delight when Harvey asked if he could undertake this responsibility.

Junior Church continues to thrive with the hard work and preparation of its leaders and helpers. On a sad note, with Chris having to stop leading junior Church to concentrate on his reader training and with a number of people feeling that this is not a role they are suited to or just that they have been a leader but now need a rest, **we are now desperately short of leaders and helpers**. It would be a real sadness if we are not able to nurture our young people in this way every week (with the exception of 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday when we all worship together). If you would like to offer to help with this vital ministry please have a word with me, I would be delighted to talk to you.

*Fr. Iain*

### Sparklers

During Lent 2017 three of our young people, Javon Blake, Benedict Long and Solomon Marks, prepared to make their First Communion on Easter Day. The initial focus was on belonging and growing deeper in to discipleship and then a careful look at what communion is all about. They made a table cloth which was displayed on Easter Day and each have a book of the materials we used. It has been a delight and privilege to work with them and to have the support of their parents who joined the sessions.

*Susanne Mitchell*



### **Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary Report**

There have been some changes to my pastoral role in the past year. I shared the post of Archdeacon SPA with Fiona for three years and this ended last June. That post is now filled by two new SPAs. It was a very interesting role as it gave me insight as to how the SPA Council worked, how decisions were made and also how to deal with difficult situations that may occur with SPAs and their incumbents. The role also included organising quiet days for reflexion and social events.

After nine years I decided it was time for me to give up my pastoral care in Brixton Prison, a role I thoroughly enjoyed. Recently, with changes of leadership, there were quite a few changes made and lots of courses have been put on hold. I do hope they will be reinstated. I miss the conversations and debates shared with both staff and inmates and I am sure that others will continue to give the men the support they need.

My Pastoral work now is mainly within the church, on outreach, visiting parishioners, administering home communion and assisting Eileen with the Wednesday club. My aim is to continue being supportive, compassionate and always aware of God's love for us, his children.

*Daphne Clarke*

### **Churches Together in Balham and Upper Tooting (CTBUT):**

After discussion and consultation with member churches CTBUT voted to take a sabbatical for a year to allow time to reflect on the importance we attach to working together as churches of varying denominations in our local community. Members have expressed the view that, although we have continued to meet together to worship and mark specific events, what has been lacking in our life as CTBUT has been outreach into the community in which we live.

So, during this time work has continued. We had an extremely successful Flower Festival in September, "Shakespeare in Bloom", hosted by Balham Baptist Church and attended by around 400 people. Many of these were people who came in from the streets, with no previous contact with "church". The opening was marked by a Gala Evening - a cheese and wine reception followed by an evening of entertainment on a Shakespearian theme - music, poetry, play excerpts etc.

From the enthusiasm demonstrated by people who had had no previous involvement in CTBUT, it has become clear that people respond to being engaged in activities where the various churches work together for our community. So, when we reconvene in July this year I anticipate that we may well decide that this is where our emphasis will be.



[It was agreed that the Good Friday Walk of Witness would continue apart from the sabbatical. It is increasingly difficult to marshal safely and some have commented on the nature of our witness when we are silent and sombre. There is much to consider in July]

*Moira Hodgson, Chair CTBUT, Susanne Mitchell CYBUT to BATCA and Rose Harley St Mary's Rep on CTBUT*

### **Report from the Stewardship Working Group**

Stewardship is a way of showing that we care about God's kingdom and recognition of the fact that all that we have comes from God. It follows, then, that the Church encourages its members to give time, skills, talents or money to the church and other efforts to support, nourish, sustain and grow God's kingdom. At St. Mary's, many members of our congregation give generously of their time and talents, many make regular financial donations and many do both to support the work of our church. For this reason, the PCC decided that it was time to start up a working group to lead on stewardship at St, Mary's.

The Stewardship Working Group (Rhea, Eileen, Anzo, Charlie and Laura) has met several times to discuss ways of raising awareness of the broad nature of stewardship in our church and to break the misconception that stewardship is just about money. Did you know, for example, that your donations or weekly giving help to pay the utility bills? Did you know that members of our congregation care for our garden? You may have seen notices in the pew sheet about ways that you can give to St. Mary's such as signing up to easyfundraising or funding a piece of the new carpet. Equally, you may have seen people standing up at the front of church during the notices asking for help with junior church, serving, stewarding at the Good Friday Walk of Witness. All of this is stewardship as it means that we are giving something however big or small to serve God!

A final word: thank you to all of you for the generous gifts that you have given and continue to give to St, Mary's. It is very much appreciated and does not go unnoticed!

*Laura Campbell and the Stewardship Working Group*



### **Report from Trinity St Mary's School**

This year has been a year of change and much success at Trinity St Mary's School.

Julie Davey, our previous headteacher left last summer. Lynn Anderson is leading the school forward as our acting headteacher. We have been advertising for a new headteacher but did not appoint at the first attempt. We advertised again and have interviews at the start of the summer term. Please pray for the governors as we interview to appoint the best leader for our local church school.

Ofsted visited us on 21 March for a one day inspection. It went well but as this church report goes to press the final outcome is not yet public. We will issue an announcement at the beginning of the summer term.

Trinity St Mary's had outstanding national test results in summer 2016. Wandsworth has awarded the school for being

- one of the top five schools with the highest proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in KS1 reading, writing and maths
- one of the top five school with the highest average progress score for KS2 reading, writing and maths combined
- one of the top five school with the highest proportion of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected KS2 standards for reading, writing and maths.

The school was also presented with a special award for being one of the highest performing schools nationally for above average progress for disadvantaged pupils.

Ironically, despite excellent academic achievement, the school roll is falling. We need to keep pupil numbers up to ensure our income. We have set up a special public relations committee to promote our delightful and very effective small school. The admissions criteria have been widened to increase the number of families from the local area. Please spread the word about our very special church school.

St Mary's continues to have strong links with Trinity St Mary's with input to assemblies, religious education lessons and visits to the church. Your church governors are Janet Jones, Sarah McDermott, Robert Stevenson, Diane Holmes and Penny Holloway. We are currently in the process of filling two vacancies for church governors.

We look forward to the next year when we will have a new headteacher and a new vicar to work well together for school, church and community.

*TSM Church Governors*





**Associate Priest Report- APCM 2017**

Dear reader,

As you read the reports in this booklet and see what has been going on over the last 12 months, hopefully you will appreciate and rejoice in what a busy year it has been in the life of Saint Mary's.

Of course, I could not begin this report without mentioning the fact that our Vicar, Wilma moved on at the beginning of July 2016 after 9 ½ years. I know that for many of us, this was a huge event, beyond which some of you could not see a future. We did, what we have always done so well at Saint Mary's, we rejoiced with Wilma, we sent her on her way to Richmond with an amazing and joyous party and a substantial gift as a token of our thanks for the wonderful things that have been achieved during her incumbency. We then grieved as is right and proper, but then we did the most important thing in the life of a Parish Church, we got on with things.

**TSM**

We have been very blessed that we have continued, although more limited in terms of time, to build on our relationship with the school. They too have and are going through a period of change and transition. The Foundation governors have worked extremely hard over the last year and remain actively involved in the life of the school. I am indebted to Susanne for going into school regularly and for other local Christian ministers for going into TSM to ensure that the round of weekly worship continues. For me, the highlights of the school year included being able to be involved with both the leavers service and the Christmas service. It is a delight to see that TSM continues to be a school which is full of joy, of remarkable achievements, enthusiastic teachers and pupils, with a clear Christian ethos, a school of which we can all be very proud.

**Communication**

We continue to have an up to date and useful website for Saint Mary's. This is a really well used site and it is good to be able to share what we are doing with our followers. I continue to try and keep our church Facebook and Twitter accounts active and our number of followers continues to grow. All this helps to keep those within the church and within Balham informed of how much goes on at Saint Mary's every day.



## **Church Activities**

I remain both amazed and indebted to all those who help run and support Marys Little Lambs, our Wednesday morning children's group. The numbers continue to grow, to the stage where sadly we have to close the doors because we are so full. What a joy to be so well supported. This group continue to provide a link with the Sunday worshipping community and an accessible way for new comers to Balham and to the Christian faith to access Saint Mary's. We are blessed that a number of our "Little lambs" have then come for Baptism, and a good number then become members of our worshipping community.

The Wednesday group continues to provide fellowship to those who are a little less young and I know is appreciated by all those who attend their varied activities.

Around the table, our theological study group for all continues to provide a much needed discussion and learning environment for those eager to seek questions and answers in a more relaxed learning environment.

As I am sure you will have noticed that the choir continues to go from strength to strength under the directorship of Lizzie and the substantial support of Keith. We were sad when Stuart announced that he was to take up a director of music post in Godstone, but rejoiced with him in his appointment. There is so much planning and hard work that happens behind the scenes with our music and I am indebted to all involved for the wonderful contribution our music makes to our liturgy. It has been a joy to welcome new members to the choir recently to swell our numbers.

## **Ministry Matters**

The joy of being part of a ministry team is that none of us have to do everything all the time. I feel very blessed to have Eileen, Bill, Susanne and Daphne as well as the Church Wardens, Pauline and Keith as part of the ministry team. I rejoice with Chris, also a member of the ministry team as he continues his reader training. I pray that his experiences and training will give him the opportunity to formally exercise the extensive gifts and talents that we already know he possesses.

## **Thank you**

As ever, there is an extensive but by no means exhaustive list of other people to thank. To those who work with our young people through Little Lambs and Junior Church. Those who set up and clear away the crèche. Those who play the vital role of providing a welcome at the door of the Church. Those who work so hard on PCC with all the extra responsibility of covering a vacancy. To Pauline and Keith our Church Wardens who have worked so hard,



again more than usual due to the vacancy and of course for those who support them. To our serving team, who work so hard not to be noticed but to enhance the beauty of our worship.

And.....to you all, each and every one of you. During this past year the whole congregation has come together as the Christian family that we are, to support and grow our Church and this is an immense blessing. All the things I was told would happen during a vacancy have not happened. We continue to grow in so many ways, financially, numerically and spiritually. We have continued to offer a full set of services throughout the Churches year, in fact we offered more this year, with the wonderful Little Lambs carol service and our All Souls Solemn Eucharist. We have continued to offer a selection of Advent and Lent groups and groups for our young people such as Messy Church.

I hope and pray that everyone reading this report knows three things for sure;

- 1) We will have our new vicar Robert with us from his licensing on September 4<sup>th</sup> 2017.
- 2) Saint Mary's have a very bright and Blessed future.
- 3) I am delighted and indebted to every single one of you for making this Church the wonderful, fun and Holy place that it is.

God bless us all.

*Fr Iain*



## ***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 May 2015

Registered Charity Number 1139488