



Parish of Nork with Burgh Heath Annual Report 2019

Vicar's Report

When we had our last APCM, I began my speaking part of the meeting, saying 'I've been here two and a half weeks and it has been totally brilliant!'.

Now, almost 18 months later, re-writing my original report for an APCM intended to be in March, having been engulfed by a global pandemic and holding the meeting instead in September... I can honestly say that despite all the challenges we have faced together... The Parish of Nork with Burgh Heath is still 'totally brilliant' and there is nowhere I would rather be than here with you all. I love you all more than I could possibly say!

Reading through this report, from 2019, it is wonderful to remember how the different ministry areas have progressed in that first year - and since...

Despite some of our ministries being on hold, through the many Zoom get togethers, shared worship and shared prayer events recently; as well as our newly combined and massive pastoral care team for the parish during COVID-19 times,... we have come so much further and closer together as a church family - 'One family, two churches'. We are learning to truly love one another and it is a joy to behold.

I am also so thankful that, since August, we have been able to resume some of our worship and activities in the churches and things have begun to move forward more tangibly in the parish again.

There are so many things I could mention in this report, but the main thing I wish to do is to say a huge THANK YOU. To everyone who has contributed to the report - and to each and every church family member for the way in which you all contribute. We are family and EVERY person is an essential part of making us that family.

I would like to express particular thanks to:

- our wonderful wardens, Chris & Amanda, for their extraordinary work this last year
- our Standing Committee - Chris, Amanda, Tomos Davies & Piers Clark,
- our PCC,
- Fiona Ellingam & Andrew Shaw our Licenced ministers in the parish,
- Steve Bottom who has been standing in as temporary operations manager on a part-time basis, following no appointment being made to this role back in January,
- George Drewitt who (most people don't know this) saved us £1000s and time in giving St. Paul's church and hall a full electrical review and then addressing all the necessary follow-up works himself in both buildings last year, as a gift to the parish and...
- everyone else who holds key roles in our parish.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR WHO YOU ARE AND ALL YOU DO TO LOVE AND SERVE GOD HERE!

Some new items which are published with this report are the Mission Partner Announcements: Following the Mission Partner Proposals sent in by 16 of you earlier in the year, the PCC have chosen 6 mission organisations to be full mission partners for the next two years, several other organisations to be prayer partners, and a number of organisations to offer one-off gifts to. Please see the section on Mission Giving, we are really excited about this.

I was delighted to lead the parish in the Worship Review back in the summer of 2019, which has led to so many new developments at both churches - including the evolution of a new family service as a main Sunday morning service at St. Paul's, 'Community Alive'. At the last service before lockdown, we had 44 children & adults at this service, comprising of 7 families and others. It was really taking off - and it has been wonderful to

resume this service in September, with the baptisms of Isaac and Imogen Bone. The next one is this weekend, October 4th!

Our Nursing Home outreach has grown, under the wonderful leadership of David Wright - and our outreach to schools has also increased considerably. Messy Church have held their own worship review and are busy implementing the developments from this... and our JAM and MOSAIC leaders continue to faithfully serve the children who attend both services on Sundays.

2019 saw the launch of Puzzling Questions, run by Fiona & Robin Ellingham, which was a great success at both churches - and TimeOut, Thirsty Thursdays, Refresh@10 and our charitable & community events have all continued well.

In the Autumn Term, Piers, myself and the standing committee worked hard to produce our first parish budget - both churches have had budgets before, but this was the first one for the parish... and was a real challenge (as well as exciting!) to put together - thank you very much Piers.

And two leaders' days and several other events culminated in the development of a parish development plan which has been published (in its new coronavirus-altered form) with this APCM report. This document is a 'working document' and has been published at the stage we are at - but is intended to be regularly updated and adjusted, having items ticked off and new ones added, as we all progress forwards together.

As I finish, as reminder of Ephesians 3.20-21:

'Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.'

... and my biggest thanks of all: **Thank you our wonderful Lord God for your goodness to us all** - your faithfulness to us in the hard times and the good. May we never forget the depth of your love and all you have done for us!

Alex Stevens

Church Wardens' Report

It is 12 months since we welcomed Alex Williams our vicar to the Parish of Nork with Burgh Heath following 18 months of waiting and discerning God.

It has been an absolute privilege to support Alex as she has settled into the parish and her role. She has united us as one body in Christ and at the same time become immersed within the community especially in local schools and care homes. It was our prayer in 2018 that God would lead us to the right person to take us on the next phase of our journey and He most certainly has done that and we are thankful.

2019 has been a busy year and a lot has been achieved including –

- Forming a new standing committee
- Forming a new PCC
- Carrying out a full worship review

- Introducing new services and times
- Setting up of the mission team
- Transferring the balance of funds from St Pauls Howell Hill to the parish.
- The carrying out of 2 Quinquennial survey reports on both Church worship centres.

We would also like to thank each and everyone of you for supporting us this past year.

With regards to the fabric of the church buildings we have continued to repair, replace and upgrade our buildings including–

St Pauls

- New boiler installed in the church hall.
- Main church entrance refurbished.
- Kitchen hot water heater replaced.
- All electrics were made compliant and safe.
- New lights installed in the church.
- Hall floor repaired.

St Marys

- New boundary fence installed.
- Replaced the garden field path.
- Re lamped the church.

As well as caring for the church buildings and making them warm and welcoming we have also focussed on making our church safe for all. We are so grateful to all our helpers and volunteers for our services and the many other groups and activities for completing the necessary safeguarding and DBS checks.

The Terrier and log have been signed and will be presented at the APCM.

As always there are countless tasks carried out with regards to maintenance, cleaning, service planning and leading, musicians, gardens, hospitality, catering, flowers and many more jobs by a very committed and hardworking team.

Thank you to everyone involved for their part in making it all happen.

There are two people we would like to draw attention to who have stepped down from their roles this past year and we would like to say a massive thank you to.

- Kathy Williams (St Pauls) who stepped down in August having managed the bookings for the church halls for the past 25 years and did an amazing job.
- Sue Wharton (St Marys) who stepped down as Operations manager after several years in the role keeping us all in order and ensuring all the logistics and administration was up to date.

As we look forward to an exciting year ahead it is our prayer that we all continue to prayerfully and practically support Alex as she leads us into the next stage of our parish.

Treasurer's Report: 'Finance Matters'

For our Treasurer's report, please see the very comprehensive 'Trustee's report and financial statements' compiled by Piers Clark and his team, which is being distributed with this document.

During the meeting, Piers will also provide a brief overview of our financial situation to date.

Fiona - Update on ministry training

I am now approaching the end of my initial training, a 7-year course which has been overseen by the Diocese of Guildford. I have continued to attend the evening study sessions once a month where we have been privileged to have some thought-provoking and inspiring speakers covering topics such as the environment, walking alongside the dying and the importance of engaging with schools. All of which have helped to shape my ongoing ministry.

My title post (the first post after ordination) will be completed in July 2020 and currently my portfolio, comprising of almost 40 reflections written over the last 4 years is complete. Alongside this the final appraisals from the Churchwardens and Alex are being finalised ahead of both being sent to the End of Curacy advisor on 18th March 2020.

The arrival of Alex has brought not just stability to us a parish but also for my training and I look forward to serving under her leadership as God leads.

Fiona Ellingham

Andrew - Update on ministry training

Report for the year 2 ending April 2020

Now in my final year of training to be a Licensed Lay Minister (LLM), I am very much aware of the enormous privilege it has been to study with Guildford diocese. Our training has been rigorous but enjoyable, with lots of opportunities to question, experiment and experience different ways of doing theology, worship and reflection. Foremost amongst these is the placement I have experienced at St. Mary's Ewell, where I have had the opportunity to preach, lead and sing with the traditional choir.

We have had a number of study days and weekends away, most particularly one in the autumn which looked at death, dying, and the ministry of funerals. The standard of teaching was exceptionally high for this module .

Meanwhile the demand for assignments continues unabated, with topics ranging from the significance of the Shema for today' Church, an examination of the Nicene Creed, to the relevance of Galatians for today.

Safeguarding Report

This has been the first full year of joint safeguarding since the joining of St Paul's Nork with St Mary's Burgh Heath with Alex at our helm.

I have been very fortunate in having had the support of Sue Wharton as operations manager until the end of last year when she retired. I have also been so lucky that Karen Quin has joined me as Safeguarding Officer covering St Mary's and I am grateful for her help, support and input.

The diocesan safeguarding policy was reviewed and adopted by the PCC during the meeting after the last APCM. We have a copy of the new Parish Safeguarding Handbook. The purpose of this is to distill all we as a parish need to know on a day to day basis about implementing national policies and good practice guidelines here. We also have a copy of "Know your Safeguarding Role", the national document which sets out the key safeguarding responsibilities of various church officers. I can provide this for circulation before the next PCC meeting so it can inform any discussion and safeguarding review that we undertake.

The online DBS service is working very well and processes our applications very quickly and efficiently. We need to be signing the Confidential Disclosure forms yearly and Alex has our Parish Safeguarding Audit well in hand. Sorting the paperwork now will make things so much easier in the future.

Alex and I attended a safeguarding course entitled 'Journeying Alongside Victims of Abuse' in September 2019. A bold subject for the diocesan Safeguarding conference and one to be embraced and built on. There were no simple answers and the subject matter was complex. It was so valuable to hear the speakers' views and those of the members of our group. I have a copy of my thoughts about the conference and also the thoughts of Rev Dr Stephen Cherry, Dean of King's College Cambridge, on the difficulties of forgiveness, if anyone is interested in reading them.

Again this past year, the PCC, together with Karen Q and I, have had due regard for safeguarding within the church. In February 2020, I attended and updated my safeguarding training run by the diocese at the Education Centre in Guildford. These covered leadership, safer recruitment and domestic abuse. We have put up posters in both churches regarding 'A Safer Church' with all the relevant contacts locally and one on 'Domestic Abuse'.

Parish training which should have happened in May and October this year, for obvious reasons have been postponed. I am however continuing to revalidate any DBS applications or renewals and thankfully managed to refresh all my training before lockdown.

As some of you may know, the Church of England commissioned a Past Case Review in 2007 to look at the handling by the church of all child protection and any other safeguarding cases. Following a 2018 review of the

effectiveness of the process a second Past Case Review is currently taking place in every diocese across the Church of England, over the next year. Our Bishop has written to Alex to ask her to complete a review to ensure all safeguarding concerns have been reported to the appropriate authorities. This is part of the remit of the Past Case Review 2, ensuring that our churches and church related activities are as safe as possible for children and vulnerable adults. Alex has contacted previous incumbents and safeguarding officers at both churches, to ensure she has all the information required and has submitted a report to the diocese.

I thought it might be useful for you to know that there have been changes in the diocesan safeguarding team recently. Jane Huttley has been appointed as Safeguarding Manager. This will involve the leadership of the safeguarding team as well as continuing to lead on the safeguarding policy and training for the Diocese of Guildford. The diocese are currently recruiting for a Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor and are pleased that Ian Berry has kindly agreed to continue in this role on an interim basis, pending the appointment of a successor, in addition to his role as DSA for the Diocese of Portsmouth. Ian will continue to be the primary safeguarding contact for our parish in the immediate future but this will change when a successor has been appointed. Linda Hayward is going to be retiring at the beginning of October from her post as DBS Manager. She has been a huge help to me for many years and I shall miss her very much. Julie Gadsby is taking over as DBS and Safeguarding Coordinator so I am sure that I will continue to be very well supported.

I have been asked and have agreed to be the Deanery Safeguarding Officer Representative for Epsom Deanery. The representatives will hope to provide a point of reference for new PSOs in the deaneries and to feed in common themes and concerns to the Area Dean, Deanery Synod and the diocese, in order to identify parish and deanery needs. They will also provide a coordinating link for neighbouring parishes. It is envisioned that it will involve 4-6 Zoom meetings annually. I have attended one meeting already that discussed safer recruitment and a second meeting is scheduled for 15/10/20.

As a church family we will endeavour to continue to provide a safe environment for all our parishioners and to review and update as necessary.

Karen Davies (Parish Safeguarding Officer)

Deanery Synod

Clergy and lay members of churches in the Epsom Deanery meet up to four times a year at one of the parishes. Each event is a useful forum to publicise activities and share ideas and best practice. This year there have been presentations covering a range of topics: from how to make church funerals more accessible and relevant to the public, to mental health first aid or the work of the Foodbank charity in this area. There have also been discussions about the role of the Deanery, the parish visitation process, and a consultation about term limits for deanery synod members.

The latest meeting has given us all the opportunity to meet the Archdeacon Venerable Martin Breadmore. Diocesan structures are being amended and the Deanery Leadership Team will identify major gaps in ministry and future opportunities. With the appointment of a new Area Dean the Epsom area will be considering more ways to improve cooperation between parishes whilst each retains its independence.

Banstead Five

The Parish of Nork with Burgh Heath is in covenant with 4 other churches / groups of churches in Banstead: St Ann's (Catholic Church), All Saints (Church of England), Banstead United Reformed Church and Banstead Methodist Church. These churches seek to carry out worship and outreach activities together across each year, to reach out to the local community.

Key activities in 2019 were Praise in the Park (for which there were a number of joint churches fund raisers), Holiday fun week for children of 4-12 years old and a pantomime. There were also several joint worship opportunities. The Open Door Cafe in Banstead is a Banstead Five initiative and Kathy Williams is a member of the team who run this.

Representatives from our parish who sit on the Banstead 5 Executive Committee are Tom Ellinor, Amanda Reed, Marian Bateman and Alex Williams.

Diocesan Synod

Diocesan Synod, comprising both the House of Laity and House of Clergy (House of Bishops comprises a membership of just TWO!) held three meetings in 2019 and I was duly present at all three. Each meeting includes an act of worship, not always a Communion service. Regular features include the Diocesan Board of Finance and membership of this synod includes membership of this board as well and the Presidential Address by +Andrew our Diocesan Bishop.

On 16th March 2019 - a Saturday morning - the venue was The Priory School, Dorking. It is a mixed senior school and it was the girls who were seen to be playing an active part in organising the refreshments, with the boys absent at football apparently. This was my first meeting after an absence of three years. Included on the agenda was a lively presentation and discussion on "Increasing Youth Ministry" so that young people become more involved in church life. We broke up into groups for discussion.

On 3rd July 2019 - a Wednesday evening - the venue was St. Paul's Camberley. It was a long way for an evening meeting - some 30 miles away from our part of Guildford Diocese. Anyway, St. Paul's Camberley is a reordered church, so that it became suitable for modern and contemporary worship. On the agenda was a presentation about possible changes to the organisation of Synod (both diocesan and deanery), including whether or not to put time limits on continuous length of service for members. It was outlined in great detail, about how the Diocese was to be administered from Church House, which has recently relocated to new premises in Guildford.

On 16th November 2019 - a Saturday morning - the venue was St. John's Stoke-next-Guildford, described as a vibrant Spirit-led church, the church has also been reordered for modern and contemporary forms of worship. Included on the agenda was a lively presentation of "Fresh Expressions", the term used for making "church" more inclusive and more meaningful in our modern changed society - an attempt to attract existing non-churchgoers. We heard from representatives of some three churches in Guildford Diocese, such as - St. Mary's Guildford; St Mary's East Molesey and Headley Bordon (I think), about the way each of those three parishes had taken up the challenge of this present day development.

The next meeting scheduled for one Saturday in March, belongs to next year's report.

Michael Rogerson (Diocesan Synod Representative)

Messy Church

Well, what a fun year we've had. It's been lovely to see our families really engaging with the service and partaking wholeheartedly in the activities. We have enjoyed seeing some of our more established families playing an active part in the celebrations, either doing the reading or leading our prayers, as well as welcoming new families.

This has been encouraging for the team as we seek to show how relevant faith in God is to our daily lives, and help people grasp just how much they are loved by God.

Back in the spring of 2019, 5 of us from St Mary's, including Alex, and 1 from St Paul's went to the international Messy Church conference. It was fantastic to meet so many people from across the world, and realise that our Messy Church is part of a massive global movement. We came back inspired and refreshed, and with a desire for the next one to be held somewhere like California!

As we move into another year we aim to implement many of the ideas that came out of the Messy Church Review in order to encourage our families as they get to know Jesus better. We also hope to reach out further into our parish and introduce Jesus to as many families as we can, but above all, to, in the immortal words of one of our younger members, keep it "funner than the park".

David and Sue Wharton (Messy Church Team Leaders)

Kids Alive - Transitioning into 'Community Alive' (our new family service at St. Paul's) in September 2019

2019 has seen a successful transition from a standalone service to the main Sunday morning service at St. Paul's. There are a number of local families enjoying the relaxed and family nature of the Community service. The light breakfast, video, talk, prayers, songs and craft format seems to be working well and the plan is to develop our ideas further.

The Giant Christingle went down a storm before Christmas.

Jo Matthews

Mosaic (Children's Provision at St. Mary's during services on Sundays)

The last 12 months have been both rewarding and frustrating for the whole team. Frustrating in that we rarely see the same children for more than a couple of consecutive weeks and sometimes even disheartening when there are no children at all .

However, this is easily outweighed by the rewards that come from the relationships that we are building, not only with the children, but with their parents. We work on the principle that as long as the little ones are happy, they will continue to want to come to St Mary's, and, as they grow, so will the opportunities for us to teach them more about Jesus, and lead them towards their own relationship with Him.

There have also been occasions when we have had a larger number of children because of a baptism. While these are often one-off visits, it has again given the team the chance to show the love of God, not only to the children, but sometimes, in the case of young ones, their parents too. We trust that, in His good time, God will feed and water the seeds that we have tried to plant.

We are immensely grateful to Alex for providing us with material to base our activities on, and are looking forward to the challenge of building on our relationships with all with whom we come into contact at Mosaic over the next year.

Dave Wharton

Jesus and Me (JAM)

We feel JAM is an important provision for families and children in the life of St Paul's and we aim to be accessible for children of all ages.

We have continued to use the Lady Chapel for JAM and with the glazed partitions and doors, we feel closer to the rest of the Church family during the service. The children enjoy being involved during the service for sharing the peace, collecting the offertory and joining the congregation for communion.

The children enjoy enthusiastically sharing what they have learned during the notices and we plan over the next year to improve our notice boards to display their good work for all to see.

We have seen some new children join us over the last year and we would love to see more families joining us regularly and pray that God will lead them to JAM.

George and Sophie Drewitt (JAM Leaders)

Toddler Groups at the Two Churches

Tea and Toast (the toddler group at St. Paul's) is open from 9.00am to 11.00am on Tuesdays during school term times and caters for children under 3 years with their mums / carers. Tea, coffee, cold drinks, toast and spreads etc are served. There is a bible story at the end of each session, followed by singing with the children. This ministry is led by Kathy Williams and Ann Honess.

Toddlers at St. Mary's has been established for over 15 years and meets every Thursday during term time. The group is held in St Mary's nave with 35 – 40 children attending each week with their parents and carers. There are large and small play toys, crafts, stories and a time for refreshments and chat during the morning. There is a team of leaders from St Mary's who welcome the toddlers.

Schools

Several members of our church family are teachers or teaching assistants, both at schools in the parish and beyond. In addition to this,

Warren Mead Infant and Junior Schools

Tomos Davies and Alex Williams are Governors at the Warren Mead Schools, attending regular meetings and contributing to the oversight of and planning for both schools.

Alex Williams carries out assemblies at both schools every half term and has joined in with 3 different RE days for years 3, 4 and 5, where the children learned about different aspects of Christianity.

It is always a pleasure to welcome the Warren Mead schools to St. Paul's for their Harvest and Christmas services.

Aberdour Prep School

Alex Williams takes assemblies at Aberdour Pre-Prep each half term and has been for several other meetings at the school.

Aberdour Pre-Prep

Catherine Shaw leads our link with Aberdour Pre-Prep and writes:

Assemblies at Aberdour Pre-Prep have only happened twice in 2019. The main reason for this is that 4 out of the 6 dates confirmed were cancelled, usually at short notice, by Aberdour themselves for various reasons.

There is a new member of staff who is keen to maintain the link with St. Mary's and has asked for suggestions of Assembly songs that the children might start learning.

I had been taking the Assemblies by myself after Priscilla left so it has been particularly good that Alex is now able to join me.

The Beacon School

It is hoped that we will be able to extend our links with The Beacon School soon, but it has been important to pace ourselves as a parish, committing to what is manageable and sustainable as we build our community relationships. It is hoped to link more regularly with The Beacon from September 2020.

Nursing Homes

During the last year we have continued with our monthly communion services at Rosedean and Montclair and the Carol Service in December was very well supported by volunteers from St Mary's.

Sadly we lost Beryl from Rosedean, the funeral being attended by all the other residents, staff and myself.

It has been a pleasure to see Dorothy regularly at our 9.15 and Community Alive services at St. Paul's.

Both Fiona and Alex have supported the services and we have started taking services at the new Banstead Manor Home which we hope will develop as we get to know the residents.

Alex has carried out pastoral visits at Fir Tree House and it is hoped to extend our links further there, as well as re-establishing the contact with Larchwood.

There was a Christmas service at Gardenfields, the assisted housing provision behind St. Mary's, and there are

good links with Gardenfields at other times in the year too.

It is great that we now have a team of people from the parish who are willing to join those of us already visiting the nursing homes.

David Wright (Nursing Homes Team Leader)

Mission Partners

During 2018 and 2019, during the formation of the new parish, money for mission giving in the parish had mainly been set aside to enable the choosing of new mission partners for the parish together.

St. Mary's had a long practice of setting aside 10% of giving for this purpose and in July 2019, it was agreed by the PCC that 10 % of the regular giving at St. Paul's - who had previously mainly supported charitable causes through fund-raising activities and will continue to do this - would also be set aside for gifting to mission partners and causes chosen by the parish in a similar way.

Over this time, approximately £24,000 was accrued for giving to missional causes, including a £10,000 gift from Keith and Rosie Ketchum to be donated to support others in mission - in gratitude for the support given to them by St. Mary's over the years.

A Mission Partners Committee was put together, consisting of Steve Bottom, Robin Ellingham, Deidre Jackson, Joan Norris and Alex Williams to consider our approach as a parish to deciding on the new mission partners for the whole church family.

A new parish mission policy was formed and agreed by the PCC.

Then in 2020, members of both churches were invited to make proposals for mission partners going forwards.

Proposals were made by 16 different people, some of whom proposed more than one mission partner, and others who overlapped, suggesting the same mission partners; and so 15 mission partners in total were put forward for consideration.

The Mission Partners Committee prayerfully and carefully looked at these together, creating information summaries and suggestions for PCC.

Having examined these suggestions, the PCC made the following decisions regarding mission partners for our parish:

6 organisations were chosen to be Full Mission Partners for the parish (receiving regular financial support, evenly distributed across each organisation each month, and prayer), which would be announced at the upcoming APCM:

- 1) The Baxter's African Children's School Educational Charitable Trust (an international mission partner)
- 2) Bridges Nepal, the projects which Sally & Yagya Singh work on (an international mission partner)
- 3) Open Doors, who support persecuted Christians across the world (an international mission partner)
- 4) Christians Against Poverty (a national and local mission partner)
- 5) Street Pastors (a national and local mission partner)
- 6) London City Mission (a local mission partner)

In addition to this, the following organisations were chosen to be Prayer Mission Partners (receiving regular prayer support from us):

- 1) Mission Aviation Fellowship - Keith and Rosie Ketchum
- 2) Barnabas Trust - Clive and Ann McIntyre
- 3) Tearfund

In addition to this, the following organisations were chosen to receive 'one-off' gifts from the parish:

- 1) The gift of £10,000, so generously given by Keith and Rosie Ketchum, to be given to The Baxter's African Children's School Educational Charitable Trust, in recognition of John Baxter's extraordinary service to our parish being interim priest on a voluntary basis at St. Paul's for two years
- 2) A one-off donation of £500 to 'Through the Roof' (a Christian charity, working to transform the lives of people with disabilities across the world)
- 3) A one-off donation of £500 to 'Let the Children Live' (a charity supporting children living on the streets of Columbia)
- 4) A one-off donation of £200 to 'The Tuesday Club' (for members of the local community with dementia, run at Banstead United Reformed Church)
- 5) A one-off donation of £1000 to support the work of Jean Watson and Prison Fellowship
- 6) £1000 allocation to children & families work in the parish - new resources are needed at both churches, and this had already been agreed as an outcome of the Worship Review process - mission within our locality
- 7) £3000 allocation to support work in the schools and nursing homes in the parish - mission within our locality

This leaves approximately £8000 still allocated to missional giving in the reserves, for the PCC to spend wisely - it was agreed that this was already a substantial set of decisions and time to think about the remainder of the money and see what causes arise in the coming year would be sensible.

Alex Williams

Puzzling Questions

Robin and I have greatly enjoyed facilitating this 6-week course to help people explore some of life's deeper issues using a DVD that presents each topic ahead of then discussing together what our answer may be. Both courses have provided space for people to wonder about: Who am I? What is God like? What happens after I die? How can I be happy? Why is there suffering in the world? What is the spiritual world and how does it impact my life?

The feedback from the course has been positive...

We found puzzling questions helped us to:

Be more grounded and expressive,

Open up more,

Voice our opinions,

Not to be ashamed or embarrassed about our feelings,

Listen to others and their views/ beliefs to open our eyes to other issues in life.

We felt uplifted by our soul searching.

Fiona Ellingham

Time Out

Time Out is a monthly evening event for ladies to meet together in an informal setting to inspire, inform and challenge. It has now been running for over seven years. It continues to attract ladies from the Parish and the community. In 2019 we had an average of nineteen ladies at our gatherings. The programme is very varied from overseas and UK missions: Christians Against Poverty and a report following a trip to Romania. We supported the Shoebox appeal and knitted muffs for people with dementia. Others shared their life experiences covering issues of adoption, talking therapy, lip reading, life as a local Councillor, photography and a Gardeners' Question Time. We got to know Alex better and had a lovely Christmas meal out. For 2020 we have moved to Heathside, Brewers Fayre. Please join us as you will be sure of a very warm welcome and a varied and exciting programme.

Hilary Latham

Thirsty Thursday

Thirsty Thursday is an opportunity for the men of St. Mary's and St. Paul's to gather together in social setting (a pub or a home) for a chance to chat about what's going on in our lives and the world in general and to spend time briefly looking at a relevant portion of scripture. We have met for a drink on the first Thursday of each month throughout the last year and, as has been our custom for a number of years, we used the first Thursday of December for a Christmas meal together at the Grumpy Mole in Tadworth. As always, this was the best attended Thirsty Thursday of the year, and it was particularly encouraging that so many men from our congregations and from Messy Church chose to join us.

Simon Parnall

REFRESH@10

REFRESH@10 meets on the last Saturday of every month at 10am, at St. Mary's. We welcome guests of all ages and of all backgrounds. The average number of guests, in addition to team members, has been 12. During 2019, we continued to meet at the Meeting Place along the parade of shops in Burgh Heath.

As a team of volunteers, we spent time thinking and planning for the transition from the Meeting Place to St. Mary's church building. We are now able to offer a lovely relaxing space for our guests with the capacity to grow and develop what we do together. So far, we have been encouraged by our guests' positive comments and our numbers reached 17 at our last REFRESH@10 morning together.

Discussions are currently taking place to introduce informal furniture that the whole church family can use. We will continue to find ways to engage with each other and to try different ideas as we meet.

Miriam Oakley

Operation Christmas Child

Tricia Peacock and Deirdre Jackson co-ordinate the collecting of shoe boxes for 'Operations Christmas Child' in our parish, Tricia at St. Mary's and Deirdre at St. Paul's.

This year we sent 67 boxes of God's love, due to the support from 'Time Out' and the wider church family.

Tricia Peacock and Deirdre Jackson

Other Fund-Raising & Collecting for Charities/ Missional Causes

In May we had two major charity fundraising events, one for Christian Aid, and one for the school in The Gambia which John Baxter supports. Geoff Marshall and Jill Bakker organised a very successful coach trip to Brighton, and together with the proceeds of a cake sale raised a total of £750 for this school.

Jan Goldsmith organised another very successful Christian Aid quiz, which meant we were able to send £927.36 to this very worthy charity.

At Harvest Festival a collection of food was made for the Food bank from both St. Mary's and St. Paul's, combined with collections made by Warren Mead Infant and Junior Schools.

A collection for the Poppy Appeal raised £30.54 from a box left at the back of church.

The Christingle services in the churches raised £520 for The Children's Society, and the Crib Service & Messy Church Nativity combined raised £378 for refugees.

Harriet Reed organised a collection from the parish, of clothes for women and children which were sent to Greece, and a collection of clothes for men which were sent to Calais. In total, I believe over forty sacks were sent.

Deirdre Jackson

Street/ School Pastors

Audrey Golding and Cherry Moore-Ceaton from St. Mary's volunteer with Sutton Street Pastors... Cherry writes:

Street Pastors have been part of the night time economy for the past 15 years, helping to bring down fear of crime by caring, listening, supporting and our reassuring presence with the pubs, clubs and shops. We are a team of 28 afternoon and 26 night time volunteers from different churches throughout the borough, covering 2154 hours of volunteer time, 185 shifts and 406 direct assists in 2019.

In 2013 we were asked to increase our presence in Sutton High Street which resulted in afternoon Street Pastors who go out Friday and Saturday afternoons while the evening shift does Friday and Saturday nights, 10pm to 3-3.30am depending on situations.

Our role now covers Sutton Station platforms, which we do extra training for, where we have now helped at least 3 people who were suicidal.

Sutton is changing with more residential dwellings being built and challenges with the high street footfall lowering, shops closing and less visible policing means the need for SP's is ever present.

We continue to look at how we should evolve, one thought is our presence in A&E. Recruitment for more Street Pastors continues with a training course starting in March.

In 2012 we went into Greenshaw School with SP's initially taking assemblies, in order to see more young people.

We are now a team of 19, going into 4 schools, Overton, Glenthorne, Greenshaw and Oaks Park, with a view of a fifth this year.

In the four schools in 2019, we helped 122 students with 253, 1-1 sessions and 82 resilience groups, helping with issues of self esteem, anxiety, friendships, schoolwork, behavioural problems, family circumstances, body image and social media.

Our work here continues with the ever need of pupil support.

Cherry Moore-Ceaton

Sutton Night Shelter

5 members of our church family supported the Sutton Night Shelter at the beginning of 2019 and plan to do so again this winter.

Pastoral Care

We have eight people on the St Mary's Pastoral care team and we aim to have two people available at each service to listen and pray (if requested) with anyone who wants to talk over any sort of problem or just have a chat. We don't give advice but quite often just listening to someone and giving encouragement makes the problem easier to resolve or to make the issue feel more manageable. Obviously these conversations are private and confidential. Just offering a hand of friendship brings a smile and we all do this at St Mary's and visitors often say how welcome they feel, so everyone is part of this team in their own way.

Other responsibilities of the team cover practical needs such as arranging and giving lifts to people in need of them and providing meals or shopping for the housebound members of our church. We ask members of the church to tell us if they realise that someone is missing for a few weeks so that one of us can make contact to see if they would like a visit. People often don't like asking for help so it is the responsibility of all of us to be aware of potential needs and tell Alex, Fiona or one of the team.

We are in the process of reviewing with Alex how to take the pastoral care provision forward now that we are a joint parish.

Music at St. Paul's

We are delighted to have Beresford Bell playing the piano once a month and are fortunate that he was able to transfer his previous commitment from 2nd to the 3rd Sunday of the month to accommodate the change in service times and the contemporary family service, since September.

As the organ has some electrical safety issues it is unable to be used in its present condition. Although a piano perhaps does not have the same impact as an organ might, Beresford's musical talents more than make up for this and we still can enjoy 'live' music monthly, on Holy days and the carol service. Something that I and members of the congregation are very grateful for. The communion settings change seasonally to reflect the church's calendar, most of these pre-recorded in church and are available on the ipod, one remains either unaccompanied or played on the piano when Beresford is present.

The music is also facilitated by ipod which does mean that it can be provided with a variety of instruments and styles. When the correct number of hymn verses are not within the track it gives us the opportunity to sing 'A Capella', something of a skill we have acquired at St. Paul's, music in its simplest forms to offer worship to God.

All hymns and incidental music are chosen with care to reflect the season, readings & themes and style of service: variety is also sought so that there is a mixture of old, contemporary, long, short and a sprinkling of reflective music and psalms at communion. It is such a great privilege to be able to select the music to accompany and facilitate our worship.

Morna Moore

Music at St. Mary's

St Mary's is blessed with a number of musicians who work together in various combinations to support our sung worship each week. We regularly use the organ, piano, guitar and - of course - our voices, sometimes where possible adding drums, violin, horn, clarinet and trombone - and several of our musicians take turns to choose music and lead the various bands. Our thanks go to Neil Thomas from St Paul's Howell Hill who has faithfully supported us as visiting organist once per month, and to Colin Miles, Matthew Parnall and Judy Parnall who support the band by operating the sound desk. Despite being clearly blessed already we all recognise that we are often stretched and we would really love to welcome new musicians, singers and PA operators to the team - so please don't hesitate to come and speak to us if you're willing to put a toe in the water.

Simon Parnall

Life Groups

St Mary's has 4 Life Groups that meet midweek to encourage people in their discipleship. The groups are organised around bible study and prayer and usually meet in the leaders' homes.

Coach Trips

Each year, Geoff Marshall & Jill Bakker lead coach trips for the parish - for our enjoyment and as fund raising activities for important causes. We greatly enjoyed the trip to Brighton this year... and we look forward to the next adventure with eager anticipation!

Film Evenings

During the last year we have held two film nights for the community, benefitting from the darker evenings in the Autumn and Spring and using a very large screen and powerful surround sound to create a truly convincing cinema-like experience, together with proper popcorn of course!. The two films we showed last year, free of charge, were Chicken Run in the Spring and Mary Poppins Returns in the Autumn - both of which knitted into the themes being explored in Messy Church - and in the case of Mary Poppins Returns we are incredibly grateful for the support and encouragement of the Burgh Heath Residents Association who distributed leaflets and actively promoted the evening for us. Both of these were truly magical evenings. We look forward to holding another film night in the coming months.

Simon & Judy Parnall

