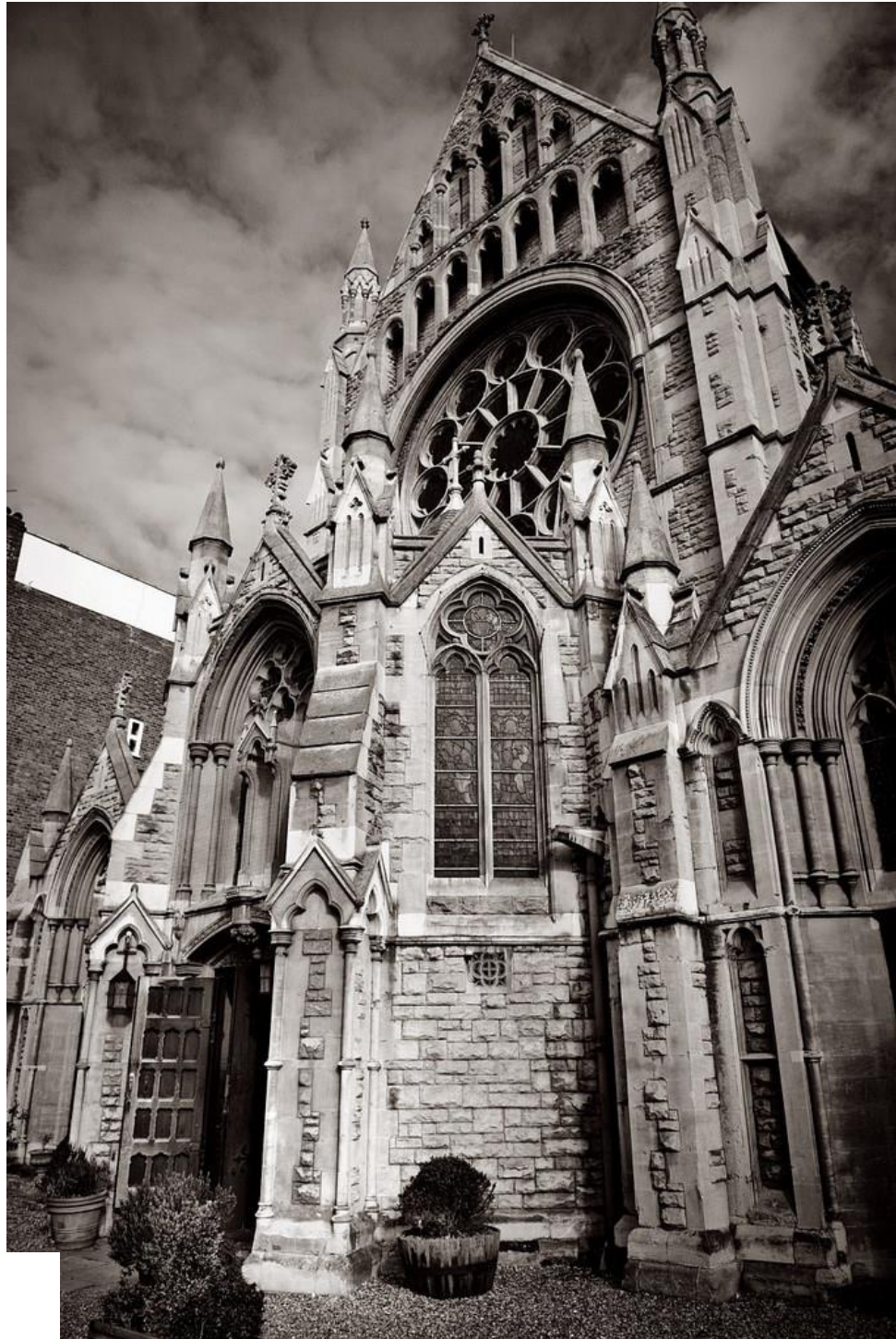


Annual Report 2017

St John the Baptist, Holland Road



St John the Baptist Holland Road

Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 December 2017

Administrative Information

St John's Church is situated on Holland Road in Kensington and is part of the Church of England in the Diocese of London. It forms part of the United Benefice of Holland Park. The correspondence address is St George's Church, Aubrey Walk, London W8 7JG. The Parochial Church Council constitutes a charity and this year was registered as a UK charity (no. 1169173).

The PCC members who have served from April 2017 until the date this report was approved are:

The Rev'd Dr James Heard	Chair
The Rev'd Neil Traynor	Associate Priest (from 1 July 2017)
The Rev'd Peter Wolton	Associate Priest (Curate until 3 July 2017)
Mrs Jenny Davenport	Churchwarden and Vice-Chair
Mr Jamie Priestley	Churchwarden and Hon. Secretary
Mr George Pasteur	Hon. Treasurer
Ms Kristin Corbet-Milward	
Ms Jessica Leslie	
Mr John Sen	
Mr Robin Price	

Structure, governance and management

The appointment of the churchwardens conforms to the Churchwardens Measure 2001. They are *ex officio* members of the PCC. The PCC members are elected as set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the electoral roll and stand for election to the PCC.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC has the responsibility for promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC also has maintenance responsibilities for St John's Church, and the surrounding land.

Achievements and Performance

The average weekly attendance, counted during October 2017, was 44, with an electoral roll of 21.

Four wedding blessings were carried out in this year.
The PCC met four times during the year.

Evangelisation

St John's is committed to the Gospel imperative to 'make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (Matthew 28:19), and to meeting the challenge of engagement in active evangelisation amongst all the peoples of the parish it serves.

Ecumenical links

As a catholic parish of the Church of England, St John the Baptist Church honours our Lord's High Priestly prayer that all Christians may be one as He and the Father are one (John 17:21), and seeks to foster its local relationship with Christians of the great communions of East and West in furtherance of the full and organic unity of the Church. To this end we play our part in the membership of the Kensington Council of Churches.



Report of the Priest in Charge

by James Heard

The year 2016 has been a year of consolidation. We continue to grow together as a United Benefice in which both churches – St John the Baptist and St George's, Campden Hill – offer differing and complementary services each Sunday. We also continue to work together very effectively, with six joint churchwardens meetings per annum, a joint PCC meeting once a year, as well as our nurture courses, which have included people from both churches.



The second series of **Why Me?** talks, given during Lent at St John the Baptist, have included people from across the United Benefice. Many thanks to Fr Peter who organises these. It has also been very encouraging to have seen more faces from St George's at St John's. Many thanks go out to those who have supported St John's phase 2 building project, which will totally transform the entrance, and provide small but well equipped community space. The full £455,000 has been raised and so the work will be starting very shortly. The vision of the PCC is to enable the church building to be used daily for community activities.

Following extensive discussions in 2014-15, a joint **Mission Action Plan 2016-2020** (MAP) was launched. Rather than the MAP sitting on a filing cabinet gathering dust, we have one or more areas brought to the attention of each PCC. Our list of sub-groups include: charities, pastoral visitors, children and youth, stewardship, music, finance, building and communication.

Our **charities committee**, led by Angela Lascelles, have been wonderfully active with a number of events throughout the year including a quiz evening and a harvest supper. In addition, a number of the youth and parents did our first ever 'sleep out' to raise money for the homeless charity Glass Door. More information on each charity can be found in the community space notice board at St George's.

We had John and Judy Barrett, from All Saints Fulham, provide our **pastoral visitors** with some training. They are able to offer home communion, pop in for a chat and cup of tea, as well as send cards to families on the anniversary of baptisms.

We had a variety of courses throughout the year as part of our **United Tuesdays** nurture programme. During Lent we used a film, *The Mystery of Everything*, and

book, as a springboard for discussion about the relationship between faith and science. The summer term included eight sessions looking at the Christian mystics. Each session had an experiential element of guided contemplative meditation, a talk by a variety of speakers and a chance to ask questions and discuss. For the autumn term, we had a course on 'Exploring Faith Through the Arts'. This drew in speakers from the United Benefice as well as others. It included reflection upon fine art, architecture, and music. These sessions were very well attended with between 20-30 at each. The courses and the Bible studies have been some of the most fruitful things we do as a United Benefice and has deeply enriched our common life.

We had 14 baptisms throughout the year and one confirmation, for which we went to St Paul's Cathedral. This is a great place to get confirmed. Do speak to me if you and/or your children are considering confirmation in 2017.

Many thanks are due to our churchwardens, Jenny Davenport and Jamie Priestley, for their support and encouragement over the last year. Thanks also to our wonderful Treasurer George Pasteur, particularly with the extra work required in gaining funding from Trusts. It is very encouraging to see our church finances in good order.

Victoria O'Neill, our Office Manager, is a star. She is the 'hub' in the office who holds together so many elements, most of them unseen, of parish life. It includes responding to enquiries about church/ community space hire, counting and banking the weekly collection, applying for Gift Aid, sending in annual returns to the diocese, calling the plumber or electrician to fix things. The list is much longer than this!

Many thanks go to our 'ministry team' of Fr Peter, Clare (our Licensed Lay Minister) and Margaret, our children's worker. In March, Margaret started a new job as the St Alban's Children's Enabler. This has meant that she is now only able to help on Sundays and other occasional events. Our children continue to adore her, as we do too!

Having enjoyed so much the Christian mystics course, I shall end with a quote about prayer and our identity as God's beloved children:

Prayer begins with the realization that I am loved by God as I am. God's love is based on nothing and, therefore, is the most basic and secure fact in my life. I simply let myself be loved by God. This is not so much an activity of mine but a passivity in which I let God's love soak in and permeate my whole being.

-- adapted from 'As Bread That Is Broken' by Peter van Breemen

Churchwardens' Report

by Jenny Davenport and Jamie Priestley

Churchwardens' report

2017 was an eventful year. We had: a fire, a major building project, a new sound system, an activity programme designed to encourage more visitors, the departure of our Eritrean congregation and the growth of the clergy.

To take these one at a time:

The Fire

The blaze happened some time on the night of the 6/7th February. We were first alerted by a phone call from the nursery in the crypt, telling us that the Church was full of smoke. Jamie Priestley arrived at the same time as the firemen at about 9 am. The Church was filled with smoke, so that it was impossible to see more than half-way up the aisle, and all over the Church were fragments of burnt material. The firemen quickly established that there was no live fire and once the smoke cleared we were left to inspect the damage. The curtain behind the high altar, installed we believe in the late 1920s, was completely destroyed, there was some damage to the reredos and soot throughout the Church especially in the Chancel. The fire brigade judged that the fire had been intense but short-lived, explaining why no wooden structures, including the high altar, were exposed to heat long enough to ignite. We are blessed indeed that the fire did no worse damage, in particular that the crucifix between the curtain and the reredos appears to be completely untouched.

Various specialists have given quotes for repairs and Ecclesiastical Insurance have agreed to fund the works, which we hope to start in April 2018 once a faculty has been granted. This will give us the opportunity to restore the reredos, clean the chancel and do some cleaning in the rest of the Church.



There will also be some allowance for clearing up the smoke damage to the organ.

The major building project started in March and continued beyond the end of 2017. The main elements of it were:

- Moving the font from the narthex to the spot in the North Aisle where Brooks had originally intended it to be
- Re-roofing and repairing stonework to the Narthex, including restoring the finials
- Repairing the stained glass including the pelican roundel in the St Saviour's Chapel
- Removing the portaloo stuck to the side of the Church and replacing it with two lavatories, one designed for use by people with disabilities
- Installing a new kitchen including full oven, hob, microwave, fridge and dishwasher
- Heating and lighting in the St Saviour's Chapel, enabling the space to be used more widely by the community as well as the Church
- Remodelling the paving outside the Church, allowing full wheelchair access.
- Installing a new glazed door inside the main oak doors, both for wheelchair access and to enable people to see the glories of the Church from outside.

The works were funded by generous donations from parishioners and neighbours as well as grants from Heritage Lottery Fund, Viridor Credits, City Bridges, Allchurches Trust, Garfield Weston and Heritage of London.

The works encountered various challenges, of which the most serious were the discovery of asbestos in the ducts used in a previous heating system and the need for expensive and elaborate foundations to support the font in its new position. It also proved impossible to purchase new slates of the right quality, so that second-hand ones had to be procured from a variety of sources. The new paving in front of the Church was also more demanding than anticipated, with the sloping ground and the fact that many of the York stone slabs were buried under up to nine inches of mud adding to the complexity of the work. We were grateful to our architect Roderick MacLennan and our main contractor

Michael Lock for their dedicated professionalism on this project. We are delighted with the results.

These works should enable the Church to be taken off the “At Risk” register and secure the fabric for another hundred years. The new facilities enable us to cater for Church social events as well as to offer the space to community groups wanting to hire it.

Sound system

Thanks to the organisation of Peter Wolton and several generous donations we have upgraded the sound system at St John’s. The main features of the improvements are

- More and better speakers, including in the transepts and chancel, where previously there were none
- A loop system – part of our improved provisions for people with disabilities
- A new microphone for the gospel ambo and radio microphones
- App controlled adjustments so that the sound can be amended during the services if necessary



Activity programme to attract more visitors

A condition of the grant from Heritage Lottery Fund was that we devised and carried through a programme to attract more visitors. This has proved an extremely useful exercise, which has so far resulted in

- A new brochure about the history of the Church, where Robin Price has built on the earlier version by Edward Hagger and where we have new photographs and a professional layout
- A children’s guide to the Church, with information about the Church and its use and activities. We hope to attract school groups as well as offering the guide to individual visiting children

- Further research in the archives, which Robin Price has undertaken. This has fed into the new brochure and will inform other publications and information for visitors
- Training in showing off the Church and encouraging more visitors, conducted by Becky Payne and Sarah Crossland on the 22nd November, attended by 11 humans and 3 dogs
- New photography for use in the brochure and for the website (which is still being worked on for 2018)
- Visits by groups from The Victorian Society and the V&A
- An open day showing off our new facilities

The departure of our Eritrean congregation

After twenty years we finally said goodbye to our Eritrean brothers and sisters. Although we have been glad to welcome a refugee community to share our space, and have been grateful for their financial contributions, the Eritrean congregation had grown too big for St John's and the wear and tear associated with their large numbers every Sunday and on other occasions through the week was becoming insupportable. The serving by the local council of a breach of a noise abatement order and intention to prosecute led to the arrangement being terminated in November 2017.

On 21 January 2018 the PCC of St John's entered an agreement with an Ethiopian congregation, the Debre-Genet Holy Trinity Church, who are now using St John's on Sunday mornings and other occasions by appointment.

Our intention is to make sure we carefully manage usage of the church so that St John's is valued by numerous communities – not just our own Anglican group and the Debre-Genet Holy Trinity Church. The early signs are encouraging.



Growth of the clergy

Perhaps the most important factor in the renaissance of St John's during 2017 was the expansion of its clergy. Since March 2015 Rev Dr James Heard had performed a remarkable feat, managing both parishes of the United Benefice without an assistant priest. With very welcome part-time support from Peter Wolton as curate, the burden on Fr Heard of running two parishes had nonetheless been considerable. But in July 2017 all this changed.

Rev Peter Wolton

Peter Wolton was ordained in the summer of 2014 after accepting the curacy of the United Benefice of Holland Park. This ended three years later in July 2017 when he was licensed as Associate Priest. His blend of rigorous organisation and kindness has made a significant contribution to the United Benefice as a whole and the parish of St John's in particular, bringing many practical changes – the sound system, the growth of the St John's Singers, the replacement of the Eritrean community, to name a few. Less tangibly, he has helped Father Heard build the confidence of the United Benefice, and the PCC of St John's now feels able to think ahead in years.

Rev Neil Traynor

Neil Traynor joined the United Benefice in July 2017 as Associate Vicar. That month his induction and Peter Wolton's licensing were marked at the same ceremony. His

appointment, on an initial contract of a year, followed an acknowledgement by the Diocese that, even with the part-time support of Fr Wolton, Fr Heard could not fulfil the mission of the United Benefice without an Assistant Vicar.

Well before the end of 2017 Fr Traynor was proving to be a great asset to St John's. First, Fr Heard was able share his administrative and clerical duties; for example it was Fr Traynor who led negotiations with the Ethiopian community about its new tenancy at St John's (which began in January 2018), and Fr Heard's sabbatical break (January to April 2018) was undoubtedly facilitated because the Benefice was able to count on Peter Wolton and Neil Traynor. In addition, Fr Traynor has brought deep expertise in liturgy and ceremony that he learned when training at Mirfield, as Bishop's Chaplain at Wakefield and then Curate of Wakefield Cathedral. This has helped St John's to give full expression to its Anglo-Catholic traditions.

Rev Traynor is funded by the United Benefice, not the Diocese.

Assistant Priests' Annual Report

By Fr Peter Wolton and Fr Neil Traynor

2017 was a special year for the United Benefice's two Assistant Priests. Father Peter Wolton completed his curacy and Father Neil Traynor joined the ministry team following the Traynor family moving to nearby Bickersteth House in Sheffield Terrace where Jull Traynor is the Warden of the Christian community.

A special service of Licensing and Welcome to the Assistant Priests was held at St. John the Baptist on the Feast of St. Thomas in early July with representatives of the two parishes bringing forward symbols of ministry, commencing with the Water of Baptism by Jaspar Crawley whose son Freddie had been recently baptised at St. George's. Angela Lascelles carried the Oil of Healing, Howard Evans the Bible, Tyrell Young representing the community who attends the service of morning prayer at St. George's on weekdays, carried the Book of Common Worship and Jenny Davenport, Churchwarden at St. John's Paschal Candle. Finally Charles Swallow presented the chalice and paten. The service was a wonderful start to a new phase of ministry at the United Benefice.



Father Peter Wolton writes:

I am learning of the huge range of activities, both spiritual and temporal, of the life of a Self-Supporting (volunteer) Minister, from gaining approval from the Diocese for small building and maintenance projects to parish visiting and taking baptisms and funerals as well as preaching!

One project was extending the paving on the west side of the church. We are very grateful to Graham Franklin for all the work he does in keeping the garden at St. George's looking so beautiful, including overseeing the laying of this new path. Another project was the substantial upgrading of the sound system at St. John's and special thanks are due to the parishioners whose generous donations made this possible.

During 2017 we had our third series of "Why me?" talks at St. John's during Lent when parishioners reflect on their journey of faith in place of the sermon. We follow the format used at the church I attended before ordination, St. Michael and All Angels, Bedford Park which has experienced great growth (spiritual and number of people attending) which the vicar believes is substantially due to the "Why me?" series which has run from the mid-1990s. It has also had four members of the congregation selected for ordination to the priesthood during that time. At our United Benefice, we are very grateful to Gill Rowe, Kelvin Roberts, Richard Davenport-Hines, David Buckley and Alexandra Taylor for their talks and hope that this series will have the same impact on the life of our benefice as it has had in Bedford Park.

The previous year, 2016, saw the monthly choir of the St. John's Singers become firmly established and 2017 saw it further develop, giving us a series of uplifting 6.30 pm Sung Eucharists. The Singers meet at 5.00pm to rehearse, singing for God and for joy on a volunteer basis, and can number up to 40. Huge thanks to Marina Abel Smith and to the Director, Quintin Beer for making all this happen. 2017 ended with the Singers leading community carol service with a full church of over 200.

Our "strapline" on our service sheets is "Two parishes worshipping one God." It has been a real joy over the last three years to sense the spiritual growth at both churches and the coming together of the two congregations, with each

retaining its own distinctiveness. I am very grateful for all the encouragement and welcome I receive. It is a blessing to work with Fr. James and Fr. Neil and the entire team at the Benefice and I am therefore very excited to be continuing my ministry here. Finally, with so many clergy due to retire over the next decade, we pray that the call to ordination may be heard in the United Benefice.



Fr Neil Traynor writes:

With an agreed working pattern of 24 hours per week, I was delighted to join the benefice on the 5th July 2017, with a welcome service at St John's. The parish generously supported me in covering the interregnum at St Thomas', Kensal Town until September 2017. Since then, I've been able to be much more visible on Sunday mornings.

I've been privileged to take a full part in the life of the parish, from Sunday mornings, to Wednesday, and Saturday Eucharists, morning prayer, and regular events such as the lunch club and toddler group. Much of my work seems to be 'behind the scenes', and working with all of my colleagues has been a pleasure. Christmas and Easter have both been highlights, and I'd like to thank all those who worked so hard to ensure that the liturgies were so memorable and prayerful.

I owe a great debt of gratitude to the Benefice in supporting my ministry in the two parishes, especially since my arrival was neither expected nor anticipated when setting budgets for the year. There has been such a warm welcome and generosity from all members of the congregations, and I look forward to the future.

Charities

By Angela Lascelles

The policy of the United Benefice is to raise money for four named charities, two local charities supporting the homeless, and two overseas. The local charities are Upper Room, based in Shepherd's Bush, which works with the most disadvantaged people in West London, including ex-offenders and homeless people.



We also support Glass Door, which operates the night shelters held in various churches in West London. Overseas, we fundraise for CSSI, which is an Indian charity concerned with education, and Christian Aid, which has activities in many parts of the World, but we have sent funds this year specifically for their relief work with Syrian refugees based in the Middle East.

We also supported the Bishop of London's 2016 Lent Appeal which helps persecuted Christians, particularly in Iraq and the Middle East.

In 2016 we raised more than £18,000 in total. We had much enjoyment in the process with a Quiz night in April and a Harvest Supper in September.

Those who gathered for the sponsored sleep out also found the experience very worthwhile, despite the rain at 4am and the unexpected appearance of a genuine homeless person.



Annual Report on Children's and Youth Ministries

by Margaret Houston, Families Pastor

Children and Young People



0-5s:

Thanks are due to Martina Sadovska and Tilly Culme-Seymour, who have been responsible for the Under-5s group on Sunday morning. They've been using the Diddy Disciples material, developed by Sharon Moughtin-Mumby - this is designed specially for babies and toddlers, to introduce them to the stories and rituals of church. Please do take a look at <https://www.diddydisciples.org/> to learn more. Welcome also to Annabel Tregoning, who has agreed to start working with this group.

The baby and toddler groups during the week continue to be run by Martina. This is a secular drop-in group, to provide social time, play, and music to children and their carers.

During 2017, we had fewer christenings than before - a total of 5 children under 5 were christened in the Benefice. We are working on joining up our christening ministry to the other work done by the church, and providing a pathway for christening families to feel welcome on Sunday mornings.

Attendance on Sunday mornings has also been sporadic, both in the 0-5 range and the 5-11 range. With Margaret only available on Sunday mornings and special events, we need volunteers who are able to help with the administration and organisation side of things - if you feel you would be able to help in this area, please do let Margaret or Father Peter know.

5-11s:

This group has been doing New Testament stories this year, after doing the Old Testament last year. We are also working on creating an ad hoc children's choir for All-Age services, which Jenny Thorn has taken a lead on, and several of our children in this age group also participate in our intergenerational orchestra. In 2017, we also had children of this age group involved in special events - our All-Age Services, Christmas Pageant, Holy Week services, Pancake Party, and more.

Father James does assemblies at Hawkesdown House School once a month, and we had a visit from two Year 1 classes in January 2018 as part of their RE lessons.

During this time, it is important for children to explore the main stories of the Bible and to begin to take leadership roles in worship. Thanks to everyone who has worked alongside a child who is serving, singing, reading, doing sidesman duties, helping with coffee time, playing an instrument, and all the other jobs children do in church.

11-18:

We have a large number of teenagers now, who have grown up in St. George's and are lifelong friends - a few new teenagers have also come along in the last few years. Clare Heard has started a youth group which meets occasionally in the Vicarage during the main Sunday Eucharist for discussion and Bible Study, and they have also participated in a number of special events - the Kensington Deanery Youth Weekend away, the church sleepover at Easter in 2017, the Glass Door Sleepout to raise money for homeless services, and more.

More help is needed to make the special events for both the 5-11 and 11-18 groups work smoothly - again, this doesn't need to be hands-on work with children, so even if you feel you're "not good with kids," you can be involved. If you can maintain a database, take charge of managing a rota, send out Mailchimp emails, write anniversary cards to christening families, publicise our events in schools and nurseries, make Christmas pageant costumes, or anything else, please do let us know.

Deanery Synod Report

by Howard Evans (Lay Chair, Kensington Deanery)

Deanery Synod Report to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
of 15th April 2018



St George's Kensington Deanery Synod Representatives in the House of Laity for this triennium, which began on 1st June 2017, are Clare Heard, William James and Natasha Tahta. I am a member of Deanery Synod because I am also a member of the Diocesan Synod. St George's Priest-in-Charge, the Revd Dr James Heard is *ex officio* a member of the House of Clergy. The Area Dean is the Revd Mark O'Donoghue, Vicar of Christ Church, Victoria Road, W8.

The Standing Committee currently includes only the Revd Dr James Heard, as well as the Area Dean and Lay Chair. An Hon. Treasurer, whose main task is to understand and encourage Common Fund contributions from deanery parishes, continues to be an important unfilled vacancy but also more laity would avoid over-clericism as is required by the Church Representation Rules.

'Anglicans in Kensington' continues to be the flag under which active cooperation and support can be encouraged within the deanery by all willing parties – not just synod representatives. These latter retain their legal and representational

responsibilities with, perhaps, two or three synod meetings per year but these meetings remain open to any interested parties.

The themes of last year's synod meetings have followed the threefold strands of the diocesan Capital Vision: Confident, Compassionate and Creative.

At the meeting of 9th March 2017 at St Helen's North Kensington, the Ven. Luke Miller, Archdeacon of London, and the Revd Charlie Skrine, Associate Rector at St Helen's Bishopsgate, gave an account and encouragement to creative and incorporative prayer from their very different church traditions (catholic and evangelical).

At the meeting of 21st September 2017 at Christ Church, Victoria Road, W8, the Revd Joe Moffatt, Area Dean of Hampton, explained the various ways that ordinary daily church outreach from baptisms to funerals could improve connection with the parish neighbourhood.

And at the meeting of 21st November 2017 at St Barnabas, Addison Road, W14, several church-connected charities/projects from debt counselling to food banks explained how they began and grew to a several 'break-out' groups within the session.

The eleventh Deanery Garden Party was cancelled as it coincided with the immediate aftermath of the serious fatal fire in the Grenfell residential tower of 14th June 2017.

An informal network of support and assistance was provided by other deanery churches and parishioners to the parishes local to Grenfell, notably the most affected - and effective - being St Clement's and St James Norland, whose long involvement in the community through its school and university supportive charity, enabled an excellent prompt humanitarian response that the manifest weaknesses of the local authority, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, could in no way match.

The customary Common Fund meeting of deanery treasurers, incumbents and, nowadays, church wardens or other principal PCC members with the Archdeacon, the Ven. Stephan Welch, and the Area Finance Adviser, Mary Spredbury took place at St John's Church, Ladbroke Crescent, W11 on 16th May 2017. The purpose was to thank for previous and current Common Fund commitments and

adumbrate the plans for the following year, in this case 2018. I am conscious that the content and tone of this meeting failed to address some of the concerns of St George's officers.

During the past year, the implementation of the Deanery's Common Fund policy and encouragement to parishes to follow it generously has remained a principal background activity of the Area Dean and Lay Chair (acting as Hon. Treasurer). Though still some way from fully covering its costs in total, progress has continued towards that end in some of the commitments for 2018 – although unwelcome signs of insufficient effort occurred in one or two parishes. However, a pleasing, if unanticipated, outcome was that all the Common Fund commitments made for 2017 had been fully paid across the deanery by 31st December 2017.

Music Report

After many years of loyal service, Saint John's said farewell in 2017 to Paul Joslin our Director of Music. Paul has been the mainstay of a huge variety of musical activities at St. John's over the years. In addition to accompanying the weekly mass, Paul has promoted the participation of Saint John's in the London Sangerstevne festival, set up a choral evensong series for visiting choirs 'SJB@5', and was latterly one of the founding forces behind the Saint John's Singers. We have all enjoyed his fine hymn and psalm accompaniment, as well as his varied solo organ repertoire, often including the works of his illustrious predecessor Healey Willan.

As custodian of the historic Gern organ, Paul has an unparalleled knowledge of the instrument's history, and he has been a tireless champion of the instrument, putting it forward for a Grade II Historic Organ Certificate in 2008. Paul's familiarity with the organ loft was enormously helpful in the aftermath of the chancel fire in assessing the extent of the damage caused to the instrument.

Paul has given generously of his personal time, frequently opening the church for visitors, providing choir scores from his personal music library, and enthusing his singers with stories from the annals of Anglican church music. Underpinning all of the music making has been Paul's determination to involve the congregation in services as much as possible, and to perform music to the best of our ability to the Glory of God.

We also note with much gratitude the assistance of Gwen Joslin, who provided countless sustaining choir teas. Both Paul and Gwen are greatly missed by the St. John's community and we wish them the very best for the future.

In the interregnum following Paul's departure, we have been fortunate to have the services of Mark Denza who has stood in at regular weekly mass. We have all enjoyed his playing, and occasionally even some singing from the console!

The condition of the Gern organ continues to be a concern, with the apparently splendid sound that accompanies our services not doing justice to a long list of faults that make the actual operation the instrument difficult for the organist. With the last serious expenditure on the organ taking place in 2001, there are now some urgent repairs needed that we plan to tackle in 2018. These entail patching the bellows, restoration of a missing note on the swell organ, and re-leathering parts of the mechanical action. Next year, we will also repair the damage that occurred during the chancel fire, and we are grateful to Ecclesiastical for their financial support on this matter.



Finally, it is a pleasure to report on the continued success of the St. John's Singers, our mixed ability, voluntary choir that meets once per month. Meeting at five o'clock for an hour's rehearsal, followed by an extensive tea in the new community space, the choir has embellished and enriched the evening mass with introits, anthems,

psalms and soaring descants. The musical repertoire has ranged from the Fauré Requiem, to Gibbons' This is the record of John, and John Philips' Ascendit Deus. The choir is open to all-comers, and we find has been particularly popular with people in their twenties and thirties who have sung previously at school or university. The Saint John's Singers would not be possible without the tireless work of its co-ordinator Marina Abel Smith who fixes all the singers each month and whose enthusiasm makes the experience of singing with the choir so enjoyable. We are also very grateful to Quintin Beer who conducted the choir in the second half of the year. We are lucky to have such a talented conductor, and we have all enjoyed his calm leadership and musical insights. We continue to try to be liberated from the 'tyranny of the barline'! And lastly, we thank the Saint John's Singers themselves who have sung beautifully on so many occasions.

George Pasteur

Treasurer's Report

by George Pasteur

General Fund (Unrestricted)

Overall the general fund generated a surplus of £23,490 (2016: £47,995 surplus), with the smaller result this year attributable to investment in church maintenance and a non-recurring bequest in 2016.



Our gross incoming resources decreased to £88,358 (2016: £97,997), reflecting a one-off bequest in 2016 and slightly lower rental income.

After adjusting for bequests, voluntary income was £6,545 higher than prior year due to a small increase in the number of parishioners donating on a planned basis (2017: nine, 2016: six) and higher average giving. Loose collections of £9,335 were also slightly higher than prior year, in line with rising general attendance.

Receipts from activities for generating funds decreased to £61,200 (2016: £65,840) due to the ending of our rental arrangement with the Eritrean community in November. Rental income from the Pooh Corner Kindergarten in the crypt remained stable.

General resources expended by the unrestricted fund increased to £64,868 (2016: £50,002), primarily driven by expenditure on an upgrade to the sound amplification system, for which we note the generous support of two anonymous donors. Our largest expenditure item was the Common Fund contribution which in 2017 amounted to £26,300 (2016: £25,900), followed by the building insurance premium, which rose to £11,542 (2016: £10,142) on account of the restoration works. Other expenditure headings were largely in line with prior year.

Transfers of £116,421 were made from the General Fund to the Restricted Fund during the year to meet the cost of the community space project.

Restoration Fund (Restricted)

Income on the restoration fund was £258,047 (2016: £37,303) reflecting grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Viridor Credits, Garfield Weston, the City of London and the Listed Places of Worship scheme. Expenditure of £374,468 (2016: £65,996) related to the building works at the west end to repair the narthex roof, and to install new community facilities in the St. Saviour's Chapel.

Balance sheet

During the year total fund balances decreased to -£17,889 deficit (2016: £75,042 funds). The deficit position was reversed in January 2018 on receipt of further funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Total cash and short term deposits at the end of the year were £4,276 (2016: £101,416).

The PCC would like to thank all those who have supported the church financially during the year.



