



Mary the Virgin, Bletchingley

THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

## ANNUAL REPORTS

2021



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## **Parochial Church Council Members 2021**

|                                       |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Rector</b>                         | The Rev'd Phaedra Pamphilon Green |
| <b>Churchwardens</b>                  | Richard Fowler                    |
|                                       | Jeff Marks                        |
| <b>Hon. Treasurer</b>                 | Bill Alexander                    |
| <b>Hon. Secretary</b>                 | Valerie Muller                    |
| <b>Elected members</b>                | Bill Alexander                    |
|                                       | Pamela Cock                       |
|                                       | Trevor Dawson                     |
|                                       | Kate Doody                        |
|                                       | Vickie Gillespie                  |
|                                       | Chrissie Markham                  |
|                                       | Jackie Puleston                   |
|                                       | Clemmie Sellick                   |
| <b>Deanery Synod</b>                  | Richard Fowler(ex officio)        |
|                                       | Sandie Hooper (ex officio)        |
|                                       | Jennifer Hyde(ex officio)         |
| <b>Verger</b>                         | Cyril Mighall                     |
| <b>General Synod</b>                  | April Alexander (ex officio)      |
| <b>and now chair of Deanery Synod</b> |                                   |

**Independent Examiner** Anthony Cock

**St Mary's Bletchingley**

**Annual Parishioners Meeting and Annual Parochial**

**Church Meeting 2021**

**held on Sunday March 14<sup>th</sup> 2021.**

**Preparation**

Sadly due to the Covid-19 Pandemic it was not possible to hold either of these meetings in 2020.

This year, 2021, it was decided to hold both meetings on 'Zoom'.

Advanced notice of these meetings was circulated to everyone on our Parish distribution list, ie everyone who has agreed to be on our GDPR, on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, followed by notification on the website on February 23<sup>rd</sup> together with a notice on the noticeboard in the entrance porch to church. It was made obvious that this meeting would be on Zoom and the details of the Zoom link were posted on all the above sites on Tuesday March 9<sup>th</sup>.

In the event over 40 people attended these meetings and all are active members of the congregation. Everyone was told at the beginning of the meeting that the meeting would be recorded, and that the recording would be kept for a year.

## **Minutes of the ANNUAL Parishioners MEETING held on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

The meeting opened with prayer led by the Rector

**The Minutes of the 2019 Vestry meeting** were circulated prior to the meeting in the Annual Report of 2020 were taken as read. The Meeting agreed them as being a true account of the 2019 meeting and they were signed by the Rector.

### **Election of Churchwardens**

Richard Fowler was proposed by Valerie Muller and seconded by Sandie Hooper to be elected for a fourth term in office.

Jeff Marks was proposed by Jean Price and seconded by Cyril Mighall to be elected for a first term in office.

There were no other nominations, so they were duly elected.

The Rector thanked April Alexander, the retiring churchwarden, saying how much she appreciated April's support and care. She had worked very hard for the parish and we are all very grateful to her. There was a show of hands indicating our appreciation of her.

There were no nominations for Deputy Churchwarden.

## **St Mary's Bletchingley**

### **Minutes of the ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH meeting held on Sunday 14th March 2021 held on 'Zoom'**

The Rector welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for their contribution to the life of our parish. Despite the Pandemic the life of St Mary's is flourishing, even if we can't meet each other.

**Apologies for absence:** Gill Black, Sandie Hooper, Alison Horlock, Angela and Nigel Price, Jackie Puleston, Clare Sturgeon.

**Minutes of the 2019 APCM** were taken as read as they had been circulated in the Annual Report prior to the meeting. The Meeting agreed them as being a true account of the 2019 meeting and they were signed by the Rector.

**Matters Arising.** There were no matters arising

#### **Reports.**

**The Electoral Roll.** There are now 120 names on the Electoral Roll, which includes 4 new names.

**Other Reports.** All the other reports are in the Annual Reports for 2019 and 2020 which have been widely circulated.

**The Rector asked if there were any matters arising from the Annual reports.** There were none. She thanked all those who had contributed to the report.

## **Financial Statement 2019 and 2020.**

The treasurer presented Financial Statement for both 2019 and 2020 together as all the figures for 2019 are on the 2020 statement.

Finances in a reasonable state, much improved from a couple of years ago.

Stewardship campaign highly successful.

Now have reserves equivalent to 3 months income, £25000.

Despite not being in church for much of the last year income has remained steady

Collections, fees from weddings and funerals are down but expenses have been lower.

Elaine was furloughed. Lisa Swan was thanked for managing the payroll and submitting the claim for Elaine's salary through the Furlough scheme.

Other costs included a Solicitors bill for £4000 due to receiving a DSAR and the Quinquennial Inspection was carried out in September.

Money has been transferred to the Central Board of finance where it will gain a 'little' interest and, in case of need, is readily available.

The treasurer thanked Anthony Cock for his work and assistance as our Independent financial Examiner.

Bill Alexander was thanked for his hard work in looking after the church finances.

The meeting agreed to adopt the Financial Statements for both 2019 and 2020.

## **Elections**

### **To Deanery Synod**

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <b>Richard Fowler</b> | nominated by April Alexander<br>seconded by Pamela Cock |
| <b>Sandie Hooper</b>  | nominated by Valerie Muller<br>seconded by John Buck    |
| <b>Jennifer Hyde</b>  | nominated by Valerie Muller<br>seconded by John Buck    |

### **To PCC**

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Trevor Dawson</b>    | nominated by April Alexander<br>seconded by Ed Muller      |
| <b>Rosa Diacon</b>      | nominated by Richard Fowler<br>seconded by April Alexander |
| <b>Chrissie Markham</b> | nominated by Ed Muller<br>seconded by Richard Fowler       |
| <b>Jackie Puleston</b>  | nominated by Cyril Mighall<br>seconded by Valerie Muller   |

**Electoral Roll Officer` Clare Sturgeon**

**Appointment of Independent Financial Advisor**  
**Anthony Cock**

As there were no other nominations for these posts the meeting elected everyone en bloc.

## **Rector's Report and Closing remarks.**

The Rector's full report is in the Annual Report 2020.

She re-iterated her thanks to the many people who have worked hard to maintain the life of our parish over the last year. We have much to be thankful for, we are looking forward to a positive year as we welcome new members to the PCC, new churchwardens and we begin to plan to go back into church.

She closed by quoting from Colossians

*And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.*

She concluded with inviting everyone to join in the Lord's Prayer and sharing The Grace with one another.

John Buck thanked Phe for her very hard work and her on line services which have been much appreciated. April also said thank you to Ian Skipper, our organist, whose musical contributions to our services have also been really appreciated. There was general applause.

Phe replied by saying how good it had been to work together as a team, we have so much to be grateful for.

## CHURCHWARDENS REPORT 2021

We entered 2021 in a period of lockdown, having reopened the church in 2020. When church services resumed, we continued with social distancing and sanitary measures.

During the summer, the Churchwardens and the Rector discussed how to make the Holy Spirit Chapel more ‘private’. The option trialled was to turn the flower arranging cupboards around so that they closed off the arch between HS Chapel and north transept, making the HS Chapel more defined. This, in turn, provided a separate space in the north transept (near the organ pipes) for meetings. To hide the rear of the cupboards we were blessed that Averil Trott kindly offered to make a tapestry. This was installed in the autumn.

The Churchwardens went through the recent Quinquennial and Electrical reports, as well as one from our insurers, to come up with a list of projects that we could work on with the Fabric Committee. One of these was the problem of the font cover lifting mechanism – it is required by Lifting Equipment regulations to be annually inspected, but the insurers intimated that it could alternatively be fixed permanently lifted. We chose to lift the cover permanently and secure the chain so that no annual inspection was necessary. We have a lengthy list of other works, many of which we can do ourselves and will work through this when the weather improves in 2022.

The Tower roof has been leaking for some time and our usual builder is unavailable for some time, so we contacted another builder who concentrates on conservation work and the work for this has been scheduled but not yet started.

We are very grateful to the team who keep our churchyard maintained throughout the year.

Jeff Marks & Richard Fowler, Churchwardens

### **WORSHIP and CHURCH ATTENDANCE at ST Mary's**

There were 6 baptisms (0 in 2020), 4 weddings (2 in 2020) and one blessing after a civil wedding. The Clergy conducted 4 funerals in church during the year.

The impact of Covid continued to be felt throughout the year, with the spike in infections towards the end of the year impacting particularly on church attendance over Christmas. Attendance data therefore has little meaning until the restrictions and/or concerns due to Covid have gone.

Following the installation of a wifi connection from Church House to the church shortly before Christmas a trial of live streaming was run. Some improvements in the quality of sound transmission are needed to make this an ongoing practical success.

Thanks to those who give regularly by standing order, the income has been largely maintained, allowing us to make our full contribution to the diocese as pledged. This has provided support to parishes who have not been in such a fortunate position.

## PCC SECRETARY'S REPORT 2021

The Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure states, the principal function of the PCC is “promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.” In a year when restrictions due to the pandemic have gradually eased and life is returning to a ‘near’ normality, the PCC have continued to work very hard to achieve this.

The PCC has met 6 times during the year, several of these meetings were held on Zoom, as was the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

We have spent time considering the following

- maintaining a safe covid church
- becoming an eco friendly church family and building (some members of the congregation attended the Prayer Vigil at Southwark Cathedral for COP26)
- the need to have a long term vision of how we might use our church building in years to come, including replacing the heating system, installing a refectory. (Sadly this has not progressed as much as we would have liked as it has been difficult for the working party to meet due to Covid restrictions.)
- giving serious thought to becoming an Inclusive Church
- how to resume some of our social activities within a covid-safe environment
- issues raised involving Safeguarding and Data Protection, which although without foundation, are still presenting problems

Towards the end of 2021 we were able to hold 2 social functions.

- A Harvest Lunch in the Village Hall was very successful and everyone seemed very happy to be socialising again.
- We marked the beginning of Advent with a ‘Light the Christmas Tree’ evening in church, enjoying supper together, and with a light musical entertainment provided by Ollie Green and Ellie Stocks. An enjoyable time was had by all.

The Nine Lessons and Carols in church was an ecumenical service with the a deacon from the local RC church helping to lead the service.

We have been very fortunate to have a very hardworking team leading us through these challenging times.

The churchwardens have done so much to keep us all safe and our Rector has done an amazing job keeping our church together spiritually. Thank you all so much.

Valerie Muller (Hon PCC Secretary)

## FINANCE REPORT 2021

(See attached)

The results for 2021 show another very creditable surplus of just over £4,000, albeit some £3,000 less than the figure for 2020. The base of our success in 2021 was stewardship, in which nearly all members have maintained their donations and some have even topped them up with very generous one off payments. However, we did lose a number of regular donors which contributed substantially to a reduction in 2021. Overall, when the donations which attract Gift Aid are combined with those that do not, stewardship was down £4,000.

Collections were down again but, in a very welcome change from 2020, fees were up mainly from hosting several weddings.

Expenses, overall, were very similar to 2020, but there are differences. The diocesan pledge was increased during the year, as we had intended to do, from £65,760 to £67,440. The emergence of the parish administrator from furlough and the restoration of the parish room rent resulted in increases. On the other hand there were no fees for a quinquennial inspection or solicitors.

It should be noted that without the £9,600 donation from the Thomas Chapman Charity we would have sustained a deficit of more than £5,000. Some major repairs have become necessary for the Clerks House and as a result we do not expect any donations from this source during 2022 which will have a commensurate effect on our finances for 2022. As a result the budget for 2022 shows a deficit of £12,000.

I have altered the layout of the front page to include the appeals and donations made by St Mary's -they used to be confined to a note at the back of the accounts. The total was less than last year but still a creditable sum. It should be noted that the donations are greater than the collected sums due to the claims for gift aid.

Three successive years in surplus have allowed our unrestricted reserves to grow to more than £29,000 which can be seen on the Balance Sheet and which is greater than the objective identified in our Financial Policy. However the expected deficit in 2022 will erode this total. A sum of £5,000 was transferred from our CBF deposit account, leaving the balance at some £35,000 and giving a sufficient sum in our current account for the day to day running of the parish. Cash can be transferred between the two accounts at short notice if

needed.

In the Restricted Funds, there was no movement in the Fabric Fund or the Training Bell fund. The Christmas Appeal and the Mission Events funds were both extinguished, the former, which was in deficit, by claiming the gift aid on the donations and the latter by using the funds for buying the boards for the Easter Trail. The WiFi income fund was used to purchase the WiFi in 2022.

The Hungry Hermit, which resumed operations during the year, managed, to its credit, to collect more than £600 leading to an accumulated surplus of £548 which is available for donations.

Our thanks are due to Anthony Cock for inspecting the accounts and to Lisa Swann for managing the payroll and ploughing through the bureaucracy to make the furlough claims.

Bill Alexander ( Hon. PCC Secretary)

### SAFEGUARDING REPORT

There were no incidents to report in 2021.

Jeff Marks, Safeguarding Officer

### JUSTICE, PEACE and INTEGRITY of CREATION (JPIC)

After a quiet year in 2020, 2021 was a much busier year for the JPIC committee. There is a summary of what we have been doing below.

**Harvest Festival** was used as a time to raise awareness of the COP26 conference that will take place in November in Glasgow. At the harvest lunch, Kate Doody helped us out by organising the making of prayer boats from recycled paper and then arranging

for these to be sent to the world leaders at Glasgow at the beginning of the conference.

**Chapel of Reconciliation** – information boards explaining why we have this chapel in our church and what JPIC stands for. We are now working on a plan to have a series of themes linked to JPIC which we would like to update monthly.

**Anti-Slavery Sunday** – Mark Tantam and Jennifer Hyde spoke about modern day slavery, focusing on what we will see, why it is slavery and what to do about it. This is part of the wider mission that the Reigate Archdeaconry Social Justice Focus have to ensure that as many people as possible know about modern day slavery and what to do if they see something that does not look right.

**Net Carbon Zero in Betchingley** – Richard Fowler, Val Muller and Ed Muller had booked places on a webinar organised by the Church of England which aimed to help parishes consider how they could encourage/become net carbon zero and how this might be part of an Eco Church goal too. Sadly, the webinar was cancelled as the speaker was ill. It will be reorganised and we can book places again.

**Prayer Vigil for COP26** – a small group from Betchingley attended the prayer vigil at Southwark Cathedral to focus our attention on COP26 and pray that world leaders will feel emboldened to act decisively and cooperatively now. Despite the cathedral experiencing a power cut (interesting, given the theme of the day) we enjoyed the time to listen to/join in with the Iona Community singing chants for creation as well as taking time out to join in some guided meditations.

**Eco Church** – the next stage is to get working on more of the work that is needed to get St Mary's outward looking and engaging in

local, national and international moves to improve our world, reduce climate change and fight injustice. Expect to see more invitations to get involved!

**Charitable Giving** – the PCC asked the JPIC committee to research charities that St Mary's could support; the following has been agreed by the PCC for support in 2022

Local – Welcare

National – A Rocha

International – Christian Aid

Other charities that we arranged collections for in 2021 are:

Renewed Hope Trust – Midnight Mass collection and Christmas Day

Children's Society – Christingle service

Collections at Harvest went to Welcare

Jennifer Hyde ( Chair of JPI Committee)

## CHILDREN'S WORK

2021 started with continuing our virtual Sunday club sessions on Sunday mornings before the main service and ended with Sunday Club running back in person twice a month in Church House and a Christingle Service, with Easter celebrations and a Light Party in the middle! We welcome children aged three and upwards to join us in Church House for Sunday Club on the second and fourth Sunday of each month.

My personal highlight of the year was Easter when we started the week with an Easter trail on Palm Sunday, where 28 children hunted for the trail boards around the Churchyard. Each board told part of

the Easter Story and most contained a challenge or something for the children to think about. Once all ten boards had been found and ticked off, the children claimed their prize, which of course included chocolate eggs, as well as a booklet of the Easter Story in rhyme. Rev. Phe and I then took the Easter Trail to Bletchingley Village School where we took each class from year 1 to year 6 around. The children were so engaged and came up with some brilliant questions. We ended the trail with a chocolate egg and Easter booklet for everyone. Then, on Good Friday we held an outdoor service where adults and children alike had fun playing catch with an egg (amazingly with no breakages!), making crosses with sticks, planting seeds and putting together jigsaw puzzles. We all shared a hot cross bun (or, in the case of my children, two.... or three...!!) together afterwards. Whilst it certainly wasn't back to "normal" last year, Easter week really did feel special and it was fantastic to see so many children having fun together outside. The rain held off and being forced to be outside gave us a real opportunity to engage with and appreciate our surroundings. In fact, we may even choose to stay outside this year!

Sunday Club returned to Church House in September and we are now running Sunday Club twice a month on the second and fourth Sundays. It is fantastic to be back together again, and really get stuck in with the Children. We are still keen to get outdoors when we can and spent one memorable morning making a bug hotel in the Churchyard one Sunday during Creationtide.

We held a Light Party this year, for which the children made pumpkins and decorations at the previous Sunday Club, and at which the children completed a treasure hunt in the Churchyard and spent the evening enjoying hot dogs and music. Many thanks to Sue and Michelle for taking charge of the catering. Our plans for the

Christingle service had to change at the last minute again due to Covid but we managed to have a successful service, which all enjoyed.

We continue to share our activities with the congregation after communion and keep the Sunday Club board updated at the back of the Church- do stop and look at our crafts and activities and ask the children about them, they love talking about what they have been doing and learning.

Finally, thank you to all of the Sunday Club leaders and helpers, and particularly to Max Diacon, who jumped in at the deep end last year and agreed to lead Sunday Club on one Sunday a month.

**Kate Doody ( Leader)**

### HUNGRY HERMIT

The Hungry Hermit, Village Café is held on Tuesdays from 10 till 12 on the lower ground floor of Church House.

The Café reopened in August 2021 having been closed through lock-down. We are currently serving coffee and cake and have not restarted serving light lunches at present.

We were eager to reopen as many had been missing a weekly morning outing and the opportunities for social interaction that the Café provides. We have a number of regular customers and often welcome passers-by.

The donations of our customers are sufficient to cover our costs, including a modest rent for the use of Church House. Many thanks to Geoff Markham our treasurer for keeping the books in order.

We have a wonderful team of 8 volunteers who help once or twice a month. A big thank – you also to our bakers; we have 3 or 4 delicious cakes each week. Coffee and walnut is the firm favourite at the moment.

We provide a convivial setting for friends to meet, and also to reach out in hospitality and allow new friendships to be made.

Ann Pressey and Sue Morris

### The ARK

The ARK is a regular group for pre-school children and their care givers. It meets in Church House on Wednesday mornings.

Having been in dry dock for 18 months we gratefully re-floated in October 2021. Friends and neighbours helped with publicity for the many babies born in lockdown. We have welcomed back a few families, but many are coming for the first time. We are encouraged by the enthusiasm and commitment shown over recent months.

Carers are expressing the isolation which they and their children have experienced since February 2020; and the serious lack of social opportunities for both children and their carers. It has been wonderful to watch reluctant anxious children grow in confidence and gradually start to interact with each other.

Huge thanks are due to the team, Peta Norman, Liz Berry and Chrissie Markham; without whom none of this would be possible.

A few people who could be available to help on an occasional basis would be brilliant – ***Could YOU Help***

*Sue Morris*

## CHURCH CHOIR

Even occasional worshippers will be aware that the choir is back in church and singing live and in person every week and it was a great relief to be able to do so after months and months of virtual choir recordings. At first we settled, socially-distanced, in the north corner of the church but are gradually moving closer together as well as singing some services from the choir stalls. We all undertake LFTs before we meet and have been largely Covid-free although your correspondent was struck down in January. That's not to say that we haven't had absence through illness. The Nine Lessons and Carols service last Christmas was the poorer for missing Pamela who was robbed of her voice by a heavy cold and we were grateful that Ellie Muller was able to step in to lend her support to Val and Sarah making the sopranos an all-Muller department at that service. I can report that Pamela's voice has returned to full strength; both for singing and speaking. We missed April for a while last year when she was out of action following a procedure to a limb. As I type, she is having a further limb operated upon. Ellie Stocks is cheerfully keeping our alto line going but we look forward to April's full recovery and return to us although I'm not sure how many original parts are left. I'd like to record my grateful thanks to all the choir members for their continued staunch support.

I am delighted that Robert has re-joined us since my last report. I think this was largely the result of lobbying from other choristers and local music lovers who could no longer bear the stand-in so Robert is our sole tenor. We would love to find a friend for him and remain open to offers from tenors and, indeed, all voice parts.

Lent is upon us and I recall a sermon in which it was suggested that

instead of denying ourselves during Lent we could take a proactive, positive stance and do something. Contribution as opposed to renunciation. Volunteering of time or resources. Joining something perhaps. Something like...oh, I don't know...a choir maybe. Well why not? I'm sure that there are people out there teetering on the cusp of coming along to see what it's like. Some choristers would have you believe that joining the St. Mary's choir is a penitential act well-suited to Lent as it borders on self-immolation but don't listen to them. We rehearse on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 pm for an hour or so and, although a reasonable commitment is anticipated, we accept that everyone has busy lives and we are content to dovetail as necessary. Anthony, for example, fits us in around dinner engagements. We are a hard-working bunch and, although from time to time I may complain that it's like working in a nursing home, it can be fun. The only criteria are the ability to read (words, that is – music-reading is a bonus), sing in tune and *love* singing.

So maybe this Lent, consider whether God is calling you to explore music-making with the choir at St. Mary's. Maybe that uncomfortable twinge that you have been dismissing as indigestion is actually something more serious!

Ian Skipper

February 2022

## FLOWER ARRANGERS REPORT

After many years of leading the team of flower arrangers, Averill decided it was time to hand over the reins, and in May I took over, with Jenny Davenport kindly agreeing to continue as deputy.

We have a great deal to thank Averill for, not least for her hard work and dedication, and I personally would like to thank her for her continued support.

The team has continued much as before, with some members on the regular rota, whilst others helping out at festival times. All their contributions are much appreciated.

Unfortunately, we were unable to have any flowers in Church for the first three months of the year, due to the restrictions in place at the time. Once those restrictions were eased, I am pleased to say the team were able to decorate the Church in time for Easter, and have continued to ensure there are fresh flowers in place each week.

I was keen that the flower arrangers looked at using alternatives to Oasis (floral foam). In December the team experimented with blocks made from wool, and 100% bio-degradable. Unfortunately, it was a disaster, and not fit for purpose. (I was not very popular at time!) So, for the time being we are using a semi bio-degradable block, and all flower arrangers are being encouraged to use different methods where possible.

I would also like us to try and use British seasonal flowers, but again this has proved not to be easy, as the nearest flower grower is in East Clandon. I will continue to seek alternatives.

Each member or the flower arranging team provide flowers at their

own expense, but sundries, such as oasis and tape come out of our very small flower fund.

Up to now, our funding has come mainly from weddings, and the odd donation, but last year there were very few weddings, and most of those opted to do their own flowers. As a consequence, the fund has been severely depleted. It now stands at less than £100.

Vicki Gillespie

## CHURCH BELLRINGERS

At the start of 2021, pandemic precautions meant that we were not permitted to ring, so we were especially happy to ring for the Easter morning service.. After a further few weeks of lockdown regular ringing resumed and with only a couple of breaks we have rung the bells for Sunday morning services and Wednesday evening practices ever since. Our large tower ringing room and plentiful ventilation mean that we can ring safely, whereas many other churches with more restricted space, were unable to start ringing again until later in the year.

However, our Wednesday practices did in fact continue during the lockdowns. The bellringers were meeting on Zoom. Using some rapidly developed software, we could simulate ringing together in a virtual “Ringing Room” (followed of course by the traditional, but virtual, visit to the pub. Sadly, the Whyte Harte has never really recovered)

### **More Bellringers needed Urgently**

**Partly due to the pandemic we have recently lost several of our ringers and with “social distancing”, we have been unable to teach new ringers. But we can now again welcome anyone who would like to**

**find out more about this very traditional and rewarding activity. If you are tempted, speak to any of our present ringers to find out more, to view the bells and to have a demonstration. We have up-to-date teaching equipment and bellringing is a very interesting and rewarding activity for all ages (over 10 years). St Mary's has one of the finest peal of 10 bells in Surrey, let's keep them ringing.**

Ed Muller – Tower Captain, March 2022.

## TANDRIDGE DEANERY SYNOD

### **Report of the meeting held via Zoom on 25 March 2021**

The main speaker was Nicola Thomas, new Head of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC). Nicola joined the Southwark Diocesan Mission Team in January from the Home Office where she had been Deputy Director of Refugee Integration and Vulnerability. She came with a wealth of experience of working on refugee issues, including creating the community sponsorship scheme.

A practising Roman Catholic, she wanted to engage in the wider range of areas offered by the Southwark role. Nicola said the Christian Church values communities and individuals uniquely well. It has a reason to do the right thing even when this is unpopular, working with the most vulnerable and excluded. Social and environmental justice, including climate change, are the same thing, and have the greatest impact on the poorest people. The Eco Church agenda was

something she did not know much about previously. There were questions and sharing of information on initiatives to help refugees, teaching English as a second or additional language and Eco Church, including the challenges we face with our buildings. Our churchyards can be more successful in showing a better side, with their wildlife and bees. Southwark is aiming to be an Eco Diocese and holds an Eco Church Surgery drop-in Zoom meeting on the last Monday of each month, from 1 - 1.45pm: <https://southwark.anglican.org/news-events/events/whats-on/eco-churchsurgery-drop-in-monthly-zoom-meeting-2/>

Becoming carbon neutral feels huge, but it starts with manageable steps, such as using draught excluders and changing to LED light bulbs. The environment is a very important issue for our youth in churches and it is the way to reach and keep them. Encourage them and their families to be your environmental activists and share things at church; they are very informed on the subject.

Jasmine Copp (St Mary's Oxted) encouraged everyone to come to the Modern Slavery webinar on Saturday morning 24 April. Book a place at <http://rasjmoderndlavery.eventbrite.co.uk/> - admission free.

Revd Helen Burnett (Chaldon) spoke about the proposed Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill, a private member's bill awaiting its second reading in the UK Parliament. This short film addresses why we need it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rrxRzLILTtI&t=35s>.

If passed, the Bill will enshrine in law the actions required to protect the environment. It sets an emergency pathway, echoing much that is core to our faith.

Please write to Claire Coutinho, MP for East Surrey, who, along with all other Conservative MPs, has not signed up to the Bill. Advice on

how to write to your MP can be found at

<https://www.ceebill.uk/writetoyourmp> and how to lobby her here: <https://www.ceebill.uk/resources>.

## **Business Meeting**

**Diocesan Synod elections** - are taking place this year. Deanery Synod members must propose, second and elect candidates, but anyone on the electoral roll of a parish can stand. The term is for 3 years, from 1 August 2021. Tandridge Deanery is entitled to 5 lay and 4 clergy representatives. Information will be sent to Deanery Synod members soon.

**New Faith in the Countryside leader** - Susie Williams, Rector of St Margaret's, Chipstead, hopes to revive the group. Anyone interested in joining, should contact Michelle [revmichelle@btinternet.com](mailto:revmichelle@btinternet.com).

**The Diocesan Synod** - approved an anti-racism charter for Southwark Diocese at its meeting on 13 March. The language is changing; BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) is to become UKME (United Kingdom Minority Ethnicity).

**New Diocesan website** - now launched. This should be more user friendly: <https://southwark.anglican.org/>

**Living in Love and Faith** - A national C of E programme about sexuality. There will be a focus on this at the next meeting. Bishop Jonathan is our lead and Tandridge Deanery has identified as its leaders Helen Burnett, Ian Whitley and April Alexander; the Diocesan team includes Anna Eltringham. Many resources are available here: <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/living-love-and-faith>

## **Report of the meeting held via Zoom on 30 June 2021**

This was effectively the first meeting of the new ‘triennium’ for the Deanery Synod. New representatives should have been elected by all parishes to begin a 3-year term in 2020. Due to the pandemic, this did not happen, with annual meetings being postponed or in some cases not held at all.

### **Living in Love and Faith (LLF)**

The Deanery Synod met, significantly, on the day that the Methodist Church announced the decision to permit same sex couples to get married in church, (with an opt-out for ministers). Three trained ‘in house’ facilitators, April Alexander (Blechingley), Revd Ian Whitley (Lingfield and Dormansland) and Revd Helen Burnett (Chaldon) presented the information to the Deanery Synod on this Church of England nationwide project in which we are all called to participate, as the church discerns how to proceed on matters regarding sexuality and marriage. You can find a short introductory video here <https://youtu.be/g7A3wt0jqZM> with other resources at <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/living-love-and-faith>.

The materials are designed to be used in small groups, organised in individual parishes or groups of churches, with the possibility of a course run by the Deanery in September. The Diocese is setting up a network of pastoral support. A hard copy of the course has been purchased for each parish in the Deanery.

April Alexander spoke about the long and painful background to LLF from 1967 when homosexual relationships for men became legal. Since then, the church has struggled to find a united and consistent voice and lead on the subject and despite an acknowledgement that

many clergy are gay, a ‘don’t ask, don’t tell’ culture has persisted. In 2017 a General Synod vote to ‘take note’ of a report from the House of Bishops about marriage and same sex relationships, was defeated by the House of Clergy and it was decided to widen the debate to allow everyone in parishes to make their views known. Hence LLF was born. These discussions will be difficult but we need to have them.

## **Business Meeting**

**New Lay Chair** - After 10 years, spanning four Area Deans and two Assistant Area Deans, Sue Mallinson is standing down as Lay Chair. Michelle Edmonds, Area Dean, thanked Sue for her strong leadership, her energy and enthusiasm. April Alexander was elected to take up the reins, with the possibility of the election of a Deputy Lay Chair in the future. Tandridge is the largest Deanery in Southwark and a Deputy could be helpful. Members were asked to reflect on this for the next meeting.

**Deanery Leadership Team (DLT)** - This is a new way of working for all Deaneries set out in ‘The Role of Deaneries and the Rules and Constitution of Deanery Synods’. The job of the DLT is to fulfil the Southwark Vision for mission and growth and take on the functions of the Standing Committee. It was formalised with the election of Revd Michelle Edmonds, Area Dean; Revd James Ashton, Assistant Area Dean; April Alexander, Lay Chair; Janet Harman, Secretary; Barbara Verco, Treasurer; Catharina Hickson and Susan Gibbin, Lay representatives; Peter O’Connell and Phaedra Pamphilon-Green, Clergy representatives.

**Diocesan Synod Elections** - Deanery Synod members form the electorate for the Diocesan Synod, and the following were elected to begin on 1 August: Laity - April Alexander (Bletchingley); Leonie Flow-

erday (Warlingham, All Saints); Susan Mallinson (Tandridge); Catharina Hickson (Oxted); Eleanor Stoneham (Limpsfield); Clergy - Michelle Edmonds (Warlingham Team); Anna Eltringham (Oxted Team); Lotwina Farodoye (Oxted Team); Helen Cook (Limpsfield).

**Deanery Arts Festival** - proposed for September 2022, with difference events in churches across the Deanery. Contact James Ashton with ideas or to get involved: 01883 380750,  
[james.p.ashton75@gmail.com](mailto:james.p.ashton75@gmail.com).

**Modern Slavery** - Following the successful webinar on 24 April, please contact [jennifer.hyde@btinternet.com](mailto:jennifer.hyde@btinternet.com) for a speaker to visit your church, or to get involved with something similar on mental health next year.

**Faith in the Countryside** - This group is being reinvigorated by new Southwark Faith in the Countryside Officer, Susie Williams (on sabbatical leave until 1 September). To join the conversation, contact her at [rector@smchipstead.org](mailto:rector@smchipstead.org).

**Pilgrimage Walk and Prayer Vigil for COP26, 23 October** - Travel from your place of worship on foot, by bike or on public transport to arrive at Southwark Cathedral between 2 and 3pm. More information at:

<https://southwark.anglican.org/news-events/events/whats-on/prayer-vigil-for-cop26/>

**Croydon Area Lay Conference 6 November** - For more information and to book a place go to:

[www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/inside-outthe-croydon-area-lay-conferencetickets-156085492911](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/inside-outthe-croydon-area-lay-conferencetickets-156085492911)

### **Report of the meeting held on Zoom on 20 October 2021**

#### **The Southwark Anti-Racism Charter (ARC)**

*Speaker: Revd Sandra Schloss, Vicar of St Luke's Church, Peckham and Camberwell Area Dean*

On 13 March 2021, Southwark Diocesan Synod voted unanimously to approve the Anti-Racism Charter, following a discussion led by The Venerable Dr Rosemarie Mallett, Archdeacon of Croydon and Diocesan Lead on Anti-Racism. Sandra Schloss began by showing a video of Rosemarie Mallett speaking on the BBC News about the report ‘From Lament to Action, published in April 2021 which you can watch in full here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WQ2jT0tWknQ>

The Charter is active and intentional. It says: *‘being anti-racist is not the same as simply not being racist. It is not enough as a Diocese not to be racist; instead we must actively counter, disrupt and oppose racial injustice. This isn’t an easy task, it takes introspection, as well as continued intentional action and is not a static description of ourselves.’* The pastoral principles of living well together are similar to those for Living in Love and Faith (LLF). We must: acknowledge prejudice, speak into silence, address ignorance, cast out fear, admit hypocrisy and pay attention to power. The Charter is not an overnight fix, but a living document to come back to, based on scripture:

*‘There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.’*  
Galatians 3:28

It was noted that BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) is no longer used and has been replaced by UKME (United Kingdom Minority Ethnic). In the ‘chat’ April Alexander commented: *‘UKME ordained women cannot be protected from the discrimination that all ordained women suffer. It is written into the legislation for women as bishops and priests that parishes can decide that they will not appoint a woman as a priest or invite one to preside. This discrimination can also be found, quite legally, in senior appointments including bishops.’*

The key principles of Southwark’s Anti-Racism Charter are:

An explicit theological understanding that God’s kingdom is multi-ethnic, and that it is through our baptismal covenant that we recognise and respect the dignity of every human being and our unity in Christ;

- An intentional focus in our theological studies, liturgy, teaching, prayer, word and work to take strategic and practical actions to combat racism and inequality;
- A clear strategy for increasing and sustaining diversity in our governance structures at Diocesan and parish level so as to ensure representation and participation of people from diverse ethnic backgrounds at all levels of our organisation.

As well as its three key principles, the ARC includes six Diocesan commitments and a 12-point action plan for leadership and development. Southwark Diocese is ahead of most other dioceses. Each diocese is its own separate entity and although the adoption of an ARC is recommended, it cannot be mandated.

Members were asked to consider possible ways of marking Racial Justice Sunday on 13 February 2022.

### **Business Meeting**

**Deanery Arts Festival** - proposed for September 2022, perhaps with a theme such as creation, jubilee or harvest. A variety of high quality events would take place across the Deanery over a month, involving music, drama, comedy, art, flowers etc. Regular parish events could be opened to the Deanery and there is money available from Deanery funds. Anyone with ideas or who would like to be involved in the planning should contact James Ashton:

[james.p.ashton75@gmail.com](mailto:james.p.ashton75@gmail.com).

**Welcome to Revd Linda Fletcher** - recently appointed Team Vicar for Warlingham with Chelsham and Farleigh.

**Congratulations to Helen Ainsworth** - member of St John's, Hurst Green, elected to the General Synod.

**This time tomorrow** - this may become a regular slot on the Deanery Synod agenda in future. Have a look here: [32](https://licc.org.uk/resources>this-time-tomorrow/</a></u></p></div><div data-bbox=)