

St. Mary the Virgin
Twickenham

Parish Reports

2011-2012

Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2012

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The Twickenham Almshouses, which were built in the 1930's are an attractive terrace of ten units set in lawned grounds in Amyand Park Road. The Twickenham United Charities which owned them was an amalgamation of some 29 small charities which had come into being over very many years. They were amalgamated in 1935 with the object being to use the income of the Charity for the relief in need of persons resident in the Ancient Parish of Twickenham who were in conditions of need, hardship or distress. This object was achieved by the provision of housing accommodation for elderly persons.

By 2007 it had become clear that unless some substantial financial assistance could be obtained there was a danger of the almshouses falling into disrepair and that the services provided to the residents were inadequate. Funds were limited with the only income being received from the residents' weekly maintenance contributions together with a little interest. There were no endowed funds or other income producing assets. There were no staff and the Trustees provided such support as was available.

The Trustees simply wanted their residents to be supported in the best possible way and with that in mind discussions began with the Richmond Charities Almshouses.

This is a large charity, again formed from the amalgamation of a number of smaller charities, with the object of providing housing accommodation for elderly persons who are in need, hardship or distress, with preference for those from the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and at least 50% of whom must have been brought up or instructed in the Protestant religion, with a preference for members of the Church of England.

The Charity owned over 100 almshouses in Richmond and had a staffing structure which could support the additional residents and funds to carry out essential repairs and an on-going programme of improvement. Accordingly on 17 December 2008 the two charities were merged and known as Richmond Charities Almshouses. In order to preserve the link with Twickenham, the Trust Deed provides that there shall be one nominated Trustee appointed by the vicar for the time being of the ecclesiastical parish of St Mary's Twickenham. The current nominated Trustee is Jean Love who was the Chairman of the Twickenham United Charities at the time of the merger.

Diana Wells

St Mary's Church Archives

Since succeeding two distinguished predecessors responsible for overseeing the Archives of St Mary's two years ago, I have continued to care for the records stored in the Vestry and Church Tower. Much of my work has involved responding to genealogical enquiries about baptisms, marriages and burials, which have come in via the Parish Office and the Twickenham Museum website, often from descendants of Twickenham people around the world.

I have continued the process of sorting and storing the documents and have catalogued the Parish magazines in the 20th century up to 2004, with the particular purpose of producing as complete a list as possible of the funerals and burials conducted from 1930

onwards. If anyone in the congregation has a pile of old Parish Magazines, I should be most interested to have them as there are many gaps in both our archive and that of the Local Studies section in Richmond Library. They are a fascinating record of all kinds of parish activities and, with PCC minutes, form the principal resource for much future research.

I am now addressing the need to preserve today's records as archives of the future, such as Sunday Newsheets, special service sheets and records of events, while beginning to consider current best practice recommended for preserving both paper and digital records. Any items such as photographs, event programmes, news cuttings, etc. that you have stored in attics and garages would also be most welcome.

Diana Wells

Bell Ringers

Our 8 ringers have managed to ring most weeks but with some members having other commitments it is becoming more difficult to get a band. We have managed to ring most Sundays but recently there have been a couple where there were only 2 ringers available so we had to cancel. We have one learner who is making great progress.

When we have weddings and other special ringing we have to ask ringers from other towers to help.

We do welcome the times when visitors come as this enables us to try new things.

The handbells have been used for special events such as the Summer Fete and at the Carol Service but time does not allow us to do any more.

We would welcome new recruits whom we will teach to ring so anyone interested should come along in the first instance on any Wednesday at about 8pm. Please contact Ann or myself by phone on 020 8941 5867

Norman Edwards

Buildings Group

Overall our buildings are in good order thanks to careful monitoring and maintenance over many years. A quinquennial inspection is due later this year.

Church

- We have been monitoring the sound system in church and have so far been able to avoid spending large sums on it.

- The yew trees at the front of the church were severely pruned. This has proved to be a popular move as it has made the church more visible and has made the pathway less slippery.
- The broken motor in the church clock was replaced.
- The annual cleaning of the church gutters took place in February. We have asked the firm to repair some netting to the louver where pigeons are getting in and causing damage.
- Slates have now been put up in the Garden of Remembrance on which plaques have been fixed commemorating those whose ashes are buried in the garden.
- We have not made the progress on the walls to the Garden of Remembrance which we hoped to do. Our first priority is the south wall fronting the river. A faculty application has been granted and the contractors will replace the damaged wall very shortly.
- Two members of the Group have been helping the architects as they develop the plans for re-ordering the church prior to applying for a faculty. The Group has also submitted to the architects some ideas (based on some imaginative work by a member of the congregation) on how the vestry area might be refurbished.

Hall

- We took the opportunity while the hall was not used as a day centre to re-seal the floor. If money permits we would like to improve the hall toilets during the coming year.
- The sound system in the hall was repaired.
- Members of the Buildings Group along with members of the Social Group and others (20 people in all) spent a morning in February clearing out cupboards and storage rooms. A large skip was filled.

Keith Robinson

Children and Young People

At St Mary's we continue to offer a wide range of facilities for children and young people, to develop their spiritual lives as part of our church community. We have a large group of volunteers who are committed to helping in all kinds of ways across all the age ranges, and we could always do with more! Our thanks go to all who contribute as we could not of course offer so much to the children without their time, skills and the real thought and consideration they offer. Rev Rosy has been marvellous in her engagement with our children and young people, and it is invaluable to have her as part of the St Mary's family.

Sunday School On Sunday mornings, we have continued to provide a crèche for babies and toddlers if they become restless during the service, as well as the popular activity table at the back of the church. In the Church Hall, the Sunday School has Scramblers (3-5) Explorers (5-8), and Adventurers (8-12). We continue to follow the Scripture

Union 'syllabus'. On most Sundays the congregation has had a 'show and tell' at the end of the 9.30 service, which gives a flavour of what we get up to over the road. On 3rd Sundays the children attend the family communion.

Before going to the individual Sunday School groups, the children and young people, leaders and helpers all meet together for joint worship led by Julie Hall. This enables the children to, for instance, understand Lenten preparation for Easter in a simple way, or be reminded about Mothering Sunday! We are also learning some of the hymns which are sung at the end of the 9.30 service, so that the children become more confident and are better able to participate. Some of the hymns have actions, so watch out for this in the coming year!

1st Communion before Confirmation Rosy and Lacy are preparing 8 children for their 1st Communion on May 20th. We hope that lots of the St Mary's church family will be there to support them and celebrate this very special step in their Christian pilgrimage.

SMG, our group for young people of secondary school age, is led by Robert Newbury, Tim Bowden, Katherine Cox and Rosy with welcome back up from Simon Shelley. A definite highlight of the year was when 16 of our young people (some also from the Adventurers), after thoughtful preparation, were confirmed by Bishop Paul. On the 2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays SMG have a discussion based on the Gospel or theme of the day. On the 1st Sunday there have been longer social activities after church eg a BBQ, trampolining at Lacy's home, football in the park, or watching a film. Young people are also encouraged to, and do participate in church activities, helping in church, and in the Christmas and Summer fairs.

In Church It has been good to see all these groups, and the uniformed groups as well, contributing to third Sunday family communion services through active telling of the Gospel, prayers and music, with the SMG members particularly leading worship. This all-age service now has a new booklet, Celebrate!, to guide worship. It also has a marvellous music group led by Liz Benedetto, enhancing our worship and enabling even the smallest to join in. Celebration Sunday and Pentecost joined forces for a wonderful all-age service, the bad weather counteracted by the colourful flames of the Spirit made in Sunday School and SMG. The Christmas nativity play, this year focusing on the 3 Kings and their journey, was a wonderful part of our Christmas worship, as ever thanks to masses of hard work behind the scenes led by Julie with many helpers, a new script by Robina and, most important, to the enthusiastic participation of the children who played their parts really well, with the older children giving very thoughtful performances.

Little Footsteps has continued to offer the youngest members of our Church their very own service on the 1st Thursday in the month, with Squawky the Toucan adding that extra touch to Bible stories and songs, ably assisted by Julie and Liz Goddard.

Minnows, our Tuesday Club for 0-2s with their parents/carers is now about 15 months old, and it has been a delight to see our first intake of young babies growing into active, delightful toddlers! We are constantly welcoming new families, and are pleased to include dads and grandmas as well as mums. This is an important outreach into the community and many of our babies go on to be baptised at St Mary's. Rosy begins each session with themed stories, rhymes and songs which weave in Christian aspects. Jean Austin from the Mother's Union keeps all sane with her calming presence and welcome cups of tea and coffee.

Messy Church is a wonderful outreach, hosted in the church, to infant age children, along with their parents and siblings. It takes place each half term on a Friday and the children enjoy worship, story telling, singing, a wide variety of crafts themed to a Bible story or

message, and refreshments. Many thanks are due to Gill Clark who, with support from Rosy and others, has led on the significant organisation needed for these events, both in preparation and on the day, and to the volunteers who support the crafts, refreshments and, not least, the clearing of the church afterwards! It provides a strong and popular link between St Mary's school and the church, where non-church and church-going families participate together.

So a big thankyou at the end of another church year to all the leaders and volunteers who have contributed with hard work and dedication. But above all, we should thank God for the vibrant and thoughtful way our children and young people participate in our Church in their worship and play in their exciting journey in faith.

Chris Britton

Cleaning Team

The cleaning team is going strong. This past year we have had some people leave but by the Grace of God new people have come forth, and for that we are grateful. If any younger adults in the congregation would like to join us you would be most welcome as a few of us are becoming a bit crumbly. Speaking for myself of course! It's only once every six weeks and generally takes no longer than an hour or hour and a half.

Jenny Kelly

Contemplation Group

The Contemplation group continues to meet once a fortnight on a Friday evening and lasts for half an hour. It is time spent in a 20 minute silence with a short reading and finishing with prayer.

It is a time to let go of all that is hanging heavy in our lives and to be with God. Members of the group have come through rain, wind and snow and if you would like to come one evening to see if it is for you, you would be very welcome. There is a chance that a daytime group will start sometime after Lent.

Jenny Kelly

Deanery Synod Report

Over the last year, there have been four meetings of the Hampton Deanery Synod. Three of these were ordinary meetings, while one was an extraordinary meeting on the Consecration of Women to the Episcopate.

The Extraordinary meeting on the Consecration of Women to the Episcopate took place at St Mary's Hampton on 29 March 2011. The Rev. Derek Winterburn opened and chaired the meeting. The meeting was to vote on the legislation providing for Women

Bishops in the Church of England. The main speaker was Mary Johnston, an elected lay member of the General Synod from the Kensington Area. She gave a history of the issue and explained the current proposal, in particular Clause 1, which would remove the legal obstacles, and Clause 7, which covers exemption from equality laws. The other clauses were concerned with provision for those who cannot accept women bishops. The motion for the vote was: ‘That this Synod approve the proposals embodied in the draft Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure and in draft Amending Canon No. 30.’ Members of the Deanery Synod asked questions and spoke for and against the motion. By secret ballot, members voted in favour of the motion by the following margins:

House of Clergy: Yes 8, No 1

House of Laity: Yes 32, No 3, Abstentions 2

This concluded the meeting.

The first ordinary meeting took place at St Mary the Virgin, Twickenham on 28 June 2011. The Rev. Jeff Hopkin Williams opened the meeting and gave a talk on the history of St Mary’s and its work with Spear, outreach and local schools. The Rev. Derek Winterburn chaired the meeting. Derek Winterburn gave notice of the appointment of Father David Cloake at Ss Philip and James, Whitton with effect from 14 September 2011, and of a vacancy at All Saints, Twickenham. The main item was discussion on “Restored – How the church can help to end violence against women.” Peter Grant, Co-Director of Restored spoke on this subject, explaining its origins as an international Christian alliance to combat violence against women and urging churches to become involved in its work. He also spoke of Restored’s new campaign for men, entitled “First Man Standing”, which was launched on 25 June 2011. Finally, Anthea Bryan was elected as a Deanery Governor for St Mary’s and St Peter’s Teddington CE School, and Christine Gutteridge was elected as Treasurer of Deanery Synod.

The second ordinary meeting took place at All Saints, Hampton on 10 October 2011. The Rev. Dr. Julie Gittoes opened the meeting and gave a talk about the work of All Saints, Hampton around the principles of Faith, Diversity and Community. The Rev. Derek Winterburn chaired the meeting. Deanery Synod heard how 11 out of 25 deaneries in the Diocese of London had already voted in favour of women’s consecration to the episcopate. Other diocesan news included the announcement of a vacancy for Bishop of Fulham, a post which will continue to provide oversight for those parishes who do not accept female ordination. Deanery Synod also heard that during 2003-2010 London was the only Diocese that was growing in numbers on parish electoral rolls. Nevertheless, attendance at church is erratic. As attendance grows in the inner city, growth is slower in the suburbs. The Common Fund is also under pressure. It was hoped that contributions to the Common Fund would increase to 5 percent, but they now seem closer to 3 percent, meaning that not all clergy posts could be supported.

The two main items were an introduction to Richmond Welcare and Engaging in Mission during the Olympics. Malika Bouchiba presented the work of Richmond Welcare, a

charity of nineteenth century origin whose founding purpose was to help “fallen women” and their children. Nowadays the charity works with families to help in cases like domestic violence, responding to referrals that arrive from the local authority, other agencies and from self-referral. Welcare is also working with fathers and offering them support. Welcare is an Anglican charity and needs help whether in finance or through the time of volunteers. Next, the Rev. John Hawkins, Chair of the London Olympics Focus Group, presented the item on Mission during the Olympics. The Olympics and Paralympics offer an opportunity for parishes to reach out and share the events. Outreach could involve talking to local sports associations or running a community festival. Hospitality could involve hosting mission teams from around the world or offering accommodation to athletes’ families. Service could involve opening up the Church and its facilities during the Cycle race which passes through Twickenham. Each parish could elect a Gold Champion as a representative to receive emails and keep in touch with the rest of the Deanery during the Olympics.

The third ordinary meeting took place at Ss Philip and James, Whitton, on 6 February 2012. Father David Cloake opened the meeting and gave a talk about his new parish. The Rev. Derek Winterburn chaired the meeting. It was announced that the Rev. Dr. Julie Gittoes will be leaving All Saints, Hampton for the post of Residentiary Canon at Guildford Cathedral. Her last service at Hampton will take place on Easter Sunday. The appointment of Father Alex Lane to All Saints, Twickenham was announced. All are invited to his Collation and Induction at 7pm on 27 April. On 15 March, Bishop Paul was to spend a day in the Deanery ending at St Mary, Teddington for a jazz flavoured service starting at 7.30pm and open to all. Thanks were also conveyed to those who had paid their contributions to the Common Fund on time. In terms of appointments, Anna Buxton was re-appointed as a Foundation Governor at St John the Baptist CE School, Hampton Wick. Meanwhile Julie Gittoes will temporarily remain Chair of Governors at Bishop Wand School until summer 2012. Derek Winterburn also explained the background of a bid for a new CE primary school to open in Hampton in 2013.

The main item of the agenda for discussion was the new Anglican Communion Covenant. This aims to build on the existing instruments of Communion: the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1888 (scripture, creed, sacrament and historic episcopate), the Lambeth Conference, the Primates’ Meeting, and the Anglican Consultative Council. Given the recent divisions in worldwide Anglicanism, the new Covenant would add to these instruments and seek to balance universal approach with sensitivity to other tensions. The Synod of the Diocese of London is due to vote on the Covenant on 29 March.

Giacomo Benedetto

Eco Group

The Eco Group was set up by the PCC two years ago to address ethical and environmental issues – for us as individuals, for those of us responsible for the care of St

stewardship of the world and its finite resources. Having achieved Fair Trade Church status some years ago, we were pleased to participate in the Bishop of London's celebration of London as a Fair Trade Diocese at St Paul's Cathedral in March this year.

In its meetings this year the Eco Group has formulated a Policy for Sustainability and the Environment, approved by the PCC, as a basis for practical actions and longer-term discussion. We have continued to focus on:

- Energy use - monitoring our heating and lighting, and investigating the use of an ethical energy supplier;
- Sourcing fair-trade food and drink for church meetings and events, and at the Summer Fair avoiding plastic plates and cutlery and using an ethical waste disposal contractor;
- Raising awareness of ecological issues during Lent, Fairtrade Fortnight, World Environment Day, Harvest, etc. and publicising our ideas with flyers, posters and the Sunday newssheet;
- Supporting the world's small-scale producers by fair-trade shopping through the monthly Traidcraft Stall.

We are currently discussing how we can help to manage and make creative use of the Oak Lane Cemetery which was in use by St Mary's for about 30 years in the 19th century and is now a haven for wildlife and a wonderful natural area of peace and quiet in the middle of urban Twickenham.

In February a group of members of the Eco Group and the wider congregation enjoyed an evening workshop run by the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, using activities such as surveys and action planning to increase our awareness of the way forward at St Mary's. The Eco Group would like to gather a wide range of views and is happy to attract more members interested in discussing these issues in the context of our Christian stewardship of God's creation.

Diana Wells

Ecumenical Group

The Group met several times during the year and has continued to support good relationships between St. Mary's and other Christian communities, both at home and overseas, as well as continuing to foster positive and reflective relationships with other faith communities, particularly in the local area. The Group has benefited from excellent links with Hounslow Friends of Faith, an interfaith organisation, and has been delighted to publicise its activities and events within the parish.

The Interfaith Knitting Group has become increasingly important and not only helps to provide blankets for charitable causes, but also brings together people of different backgrounds in a convivial and friendly atmosphere where they can come to know one another better.

One of the highlights of the year was a moving and very powerful service to commemorate the tenth anniversary of 9/11. Held in our church and attended by the

Mayor and other local dignitaries, the service featured readings and other contributions from representatives of various faiths, including Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Sikhism, as well as a recitation from the Holy Qur'an by the Imam of Hounslow Mosque. The Group helped to arrange some of these contributions and members were pleased and proud to support the event.

Our Assistant Priest Rosy Barrie took a key role in planning the local observance of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The ecumenical service held at St. Margaret's Roman Catholic Church was attended by members of the congregation of St. Mary's. Later on during the week, the Sunday evening service of Evening Prayer at St. Mary's incorporated a short presentation by a member of the Quaker Meeting in Isleworth.

Charitable initiatives continue to receive substantial practical support from group members, particularly the work of Christian Aid. As in previous years, a coffee and croissant breakfast after the Parish Eucharist during Christian Aid Week raised several hundred pounds and supplemented donations made via the envelope scheme which is also organised by the group.

St Mary's has also been closely linked for many years with Mengo, a Christian hospital in Kampala, Uganda founded in 1897 by Sir Albert Cook. We were delighted, therefore, in February to welcome Emily Cook, great niece of Sir Albert, and Clive Kennett who spoke to the congregation about the life-saving work of the hospital and showed pictures of the newly refurbished operating theatre which St Mary's has helped finance. As well as an annual donation from the PCC budget, the Ecumenical Group raises money for Mengo by a monthly collection organised by its members on the first Sunday of each month. This raised £734 for the hospital last year, £200 of which was raised after Emily's inspiring talk. The staff and patients are extremely appreciative of all the generous support which they have received.

Lesley Prior

Finance Group

The year began with a review of all the basic procedures so that all on the group were clear about their roles. At the second meeting it was clear that we needed a full campaign to increase our giving. The following points were made:

- Income is less than outgoings and reserves are being used up.
- This can continue for no more than two more years.
- After that if more income is not generated the church will be in decline.
- Giving is an essential part of belonging to a church.
- Whilst clubs charge and increase charges each year the church has to rely on donations, and members of the congregation increasing their giving annually.

We moved on to discuss how we could make St Mary's a high priority in people's budgets.

- The existing paperwork sent out each year does not work.

- The service the church supplies has a cost.

- The word “stewardship” should be dropped.
- Some £80000pa more is needed to fulfil our vision.
- The consequence of success is a developing church
- The consequence of failure is a declining church
- The message must be simple and up to date in its presentation.
- Any communication must be on one page.
- We need to use the web site, e-mail, and paper (coloured and high quality).
- Updates on progress should appear each week in the weekly sheet and on the web.
- The amount needed (exact figure to be decided) should be per month.
- The concept of regular giving, preferably by standing order, must feature.
- Legacies ---how to encourage –can we offer the services of a solicitor.
- Charity giving needs more thought.

The finance group then recommended to the PCC that:

- The congregation should be informed fully about this situation
- There should be in future a person responsible for financial planning separate from the treasurer.
- The money given to charity should be reviewed and the review should include seeing the total amount given to charity in relation to our total income.
- A campaign for raising more money should be launched in Spring 2012 and repeated every 5 years.
- Other means of raising money should be considered.

The PCC accepted these ideas and a full giving campaign was launched in the sermon slot on 19th Feb 2012. Simultaneously every person, for whom we had an address, was sent a leaflet and a pledge card and these were also sent via email to those with known emails. The leaflet and pledge card plus instructions were put on the Giving Page on the website.

On 4th March Mary Spredbury (Diocesan Financial Advisor) preached and there was a parish discussion afterwards.

At the time of writing this report, pledges were coming in but it was too early to predict a result.

Tony Dempsey

Flower Group

The Flower group has continued to be active over the past year. We particularly enjoy the Church Festivals of Easter, Harvest and Christmas which give us a chance to work together as a group and to welcome any members of the congregation who care to join us.

The mini Flower Festival linked to the Church Fete and Celebration Sunday has become an annual event with everyone contributing ideas for last years theme, Pentecost, at Joy Lee’s summer tea party (the cakes aren’t bad either).

Over the past year we have worked hard to keep expenditure on flowers to a minimum while maintaining the standard of arrangements. We select flowers with care, use what is available in people's gardens and nurture the flowers so that they last as long as possible. Obviously for weddings we have a larger budget and work to the bride's ideas. We work in pairs with more experienced people supporting and sharing expertise. Often flowers are arranged on a Friday but this is flexible and provided that they are ready for Sunday (or a Wedding) time can be flexible.

Some of our members are not as nimble as they used to be so reaching the Chancel arrangement can be a problem. It would be nice to reduce our average age and have some younger people in our team who could learn a new skill and have a chance to contribute in a pleasant and practical way to the life of our Church. It would also be an advantage to have new eyes and ideas about how we could decorate the Church. Phone Caroline Taylerson 020 8977 3508 for more information.

Caroline Taylerson

Lay Leadership of Mattins and Evening Prayer

Margaret Mence and David Williams have loyally continued their leadership of Mattins on the second and fourth Sundays of each month, with the Eucharist at 11.30 on the third Sunday. The opportunity for a sung Prayer Book non-Eucharistic service is much appreciated by the regular 11.30 congregation.

Evening Prayer has been led faithfully by a committed team of five people, who offer an opportunity for a more reflective form of worship in the quiet of a Sunday evening. This is a short said service usually incorporating a time of stillness for personal reflection. There have been a couple of Choral Evensong services over the year as well as quarterly Taizé style services, singing meditative Taizé chants followed by Compline. These special evening services combine music and stillness.

Charlotte West

Lent Groups

This year's Lent course looked at the theme of grace, how we might understand God's grace and what it means in our lives. Each week the groups considered grace in the context of a different area of our spiritual life, the first letters of which conveniently spell out the word grace: Growth, Relationships, Adventure, Celebration, Expression.

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As always, participants valued the time they spent together, usually over a cup of tea or a glass of wine, to reflect on what their faith means to them, as well as to be challenged by some of the searching questions that the material raised.

Eight groups met in different locations over the central five weeks of Lent, with nearly 85 people in total participating.

Charlotte West

Ladies & Gentlemen who lunch out

This group was started about three years ago by myself and Dorothy Wilkin. At first we went to different restaurants, then it became easier to go each time to the Fountain Staines Road, here we get the essential requirements of plenty of parking, good bus service and reasonably priced food. We meet monthly and alternate between a Wednesday and Thursday. The numbers have grown and we are getting between 10-12 people each month. More recently trips to the theatre also have been enjoyed by the group. Dates for the lunches are advertised in the weekly sheet, all are welcome. Please let me know if you plan to come as I need to know numbers to book a table

Joan Reddrop

Mengo Hospital

St Mary's has been closely linked for many years with Mengo Hospital, a Christian hospital in Kampala, Uganda founded in 1897 by Sir Albert Cook. We were delighted, therefore, in February to welcome Emily Cook, great niece of Sir Albert, and Clive Kennett who spoke to the congregation about the life-saving work of the hospital and showed pictures of the newly refurbished operating theatre which St Mary's has helped finance. As well as a donation from the PCC budget, we raise money for Mengo by a monthly collection organised by the Ecumenical Group on the first Sunday of each month. This raised £734 for the hospital last year, £200 of which was raised after Emily's inspiring talk.

Very many thanks for all your generous support which is so appreciated by the staff and patients.

David Fisher

St. Mary's Branch of the Mothers' Union

The Branch has continued with its usual jobs for the church – coffee and tea duty seven times a year and fortnightly brass cleaning. The members meet monthly to hear interesting speakers whose subjects conform to the aim of the MU, namely to support family life, both in the UK and in developing countries. Hand-made Baptism and Wedding cards are also distributed to mark these special occasions. Members also act as chalice assistants and Sacristans, and several help with Minnows, Little Footsteps and Messy Church on a regular basis.

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Fund-raising events have been held to support MU work overseas and the MU Relief fund – a stall at the H.A.N.D.S. Fair on Twickenham Green and a successful Bridge drive. Coffee and pancakes were sold on Shrove Tuesday in aid of Away From it All holidays for needy families in the U.K. Members attend corporate Communion monthly.

Our vicar, Jeff, gives a devotional talk each Lent and conducts a Rededication Service each September. In addition, Rosy, our Assistant Priest, who is also a member of the branch, conducted a Quiet Day for members at Ham Convent.

Visitors are always very welcome at the meetings which are held on the second Tuesday of each month in the Vestry at 2.30pm.

Pat Ingham (Co-ordinator)

Music at St. Mary's

Parish Choir

The choir continues to take a leading role in the life and worship at St Mary's. It aims to provide music of a high quality, contributing to and enhancing the liturgy by performing anthems during the communion and leading the congregation both hymns and service music – not least the newly introduced setting by Thorne. We are together mainly for the 9.30 service on Sundays, but also for other events such as weddings and Christmas Carol Services. We have sung two prayer-book Choral Evensongs over the year under review and plan to make this a more regular feature of our worshipping life.

Rehearsals are held in the vestry on Sunday mornings, arriving at 8.30 a.m. ready to start singing by 8.45 a.m. I am enormously indebted to those members of the choir who regularly sing on Sundays and rehearse on a weekly basis; and to several guest singers who are able to augment the regular choir for special events. *But we are in urgent need of new singers.* Weekly attendance is not required: you will be welcome even if you can make only occasional services with the rehearsal on Sunday. Please do give this serious thought and help to ensure that the choir can continue to take a leading role on Sundays.

I am especially grateful to Chris Britton who takes rehearsals and conducts the choir on Sundays; and not least to Diana Wells for hosting the annual Choir Summer Party!

Musicians

There are many services at St. Mary's that need music: two or three on Sundays, plus weddings, funerals and other events. We were sorry to say goodbye to Christopher Breeze last September as he went on to become Organ Scholar at Hampton Court Palace and it is hoped that a new appointment will be made later this year. Thanks are recorded to Peter Mence for acting as a regular deputy when work or holiday takes me away from Twickenham on a Sunday.

The third Sunday has recently seen a gathered Music Group led by Liz Benedetto, in particular, leading new Glorias and worship songs during communion. Thank you to Liz and we look forward to this continuing while also expecting an occasional return to spotlighting young performers playing during third Sunday communions on the appointment of a new Organ Scholar.

Concerts

The St Mary's-based Chamber Choir, the Marble Hill Singers conducted by Helen Price gave a concert last summer and the musically highly distinguished Advent Carol Service, now an important fixture at St Mary's, while on Remembrance Sunday, members of the

Twickenham Choral Society gave a performance of Victoria's Requiem. It is always a pleasure regularly to welcome the Richmond Concert Society who fill the church, and many local schools, music groups and soloists who also use the Church for musical events.

Overall, there is much to celebrate musically, and much more music to look forward to this year.

Adrian Mumford
Director of Music

Parochial Church School Charity

The Trust was founded in 1861 to provide school accommodation for the 'labouring and other poorer classes within the parish of Twickenham'. Education was to be in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and the land provided by the then Trustees was the site of the present Infant School in Amyand Park Road. The current Trustees discharge their responsibilities under the Trust by their support of St Mary's School. The Trustees are, ex officio, the Vicar and Churchwardens for the time being, a Treasurer and any other person invited to act as a Trustee. Currently Justin Pickard is the Treasurer and Jean Love and Patrick Ducker are Trustees.

The principal responsibilities of the Trust during the year have been to ensure the provision of suitable premises in co-operation with the Local Authority and the London Diocesan Board for Schools, supporting the provision of an active School Chaplaincy and supporting and assisting the operation of the School by providing budget supplement to the school as requested for such matters as the provision of equipment, additional support staff and contributing to the cost of residential school visits.

Jean Love
Chairman

PCC Report

There have been seven PCC meetings during the year, the meetings now taking place in church during the summer months and in the vestry in winter. As always, we keep our Vision Statement at the forefront of our thinking and to remind us, it is printed on each meeting Agenda. It is:

Our Church is one which seeks to:

Nurture our children and young people with a sense of God

Encourage deeper relationships between each other and with God

Help make God more real for the people of this area

Use our buildings more effectively to promote the life and vision of the Church.

We hope you are all aware that a copy of the Minutes of our meetings is placed on the noticeboard at the back of the church where you can read about what has been discussed, what decided and the thinking behind those decisions. Communication has been much discussed this year and the importance that everyone knows what's going on. A Church

Diary detailing all events has been produced to promote cohesion and co-ordination between the groups and this is available at the back of the church and on the web site. The web site is being improved and updated as it is clear that this is a very important method of communication both for us and in our outreach to the wider community.

Key topics for discussion in 2011/12 have included finance and stewardship which has been given much consideration, highlighting the need for an increase in planned giving in order to maintain the level of activity and services that we currently enjoy into the future. Investing in the vision and the success of the current giving campaign is very important. Charitable giving has also been extensively discussed and will be again this year as we seek to review our policy on charitable giving for the future. Re-ordering is, of course, on-going in our planning and regular reports on progress are given at the PCC meetings. Reports from the vision groups are regularly received by the PCC which help us to focus on things that need to be done, review progress and make decisions. We continue to be grateful to those who serve in the groups and to all who give their expertise, time and energy to the running and maintenance of St. Mary's in so many ways. Do please read about all the activities going on at St. Mary's in the Parish Reports.

Cathy Reynolds, who loyally served as Minute Secretary for nine years has stepped down and we all extend to her our very grateful thanks for her efficient and reliable support. In her place we have been pleased to welcome Rachel Williamson and hope that she will enjoy her time as Minute Secretary.

I give my personal thanks to Cathy and Rachel and also to Lesley and Keith our churchwardens and to Jeff for their ever cheerful and helpful support.

Margaret Mence

Reordering

In accordance with the decision of the PCC, at their meeting on 7th February 2011, the statement of need, with some architect's drawings, was sent to the Diocesan Advisory Committee for consideration at their meeting on Wed 30th March 2011. Their response is summarised as follows.

“In general, the DAC was grateful for the opportunity to consider the proposals at this early stage, and there was agreement that the need for change had been established. The DAC is keen not to stand in the way of the parish's successful growth and development. The Committee considered that the scheme itself would now require pragmatic detailing and adjustment before it could be put in to practice, and made the following specific points to be fed in to this development process.

- 1) A revised Statement of Need should include a comprehensive, detailed audit of secular buildings which are available for public use in Twickenham.
- 2) A business plan detailing the proposed public uses of the reordered church building should be produced

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- 3) The existing pews in the nave and aisles are not of great quality and could reasonably be removed as part of the design, but the choir stalls, are of higher quality and should be retained - possibly in the galleries.

5) It is essential that an archaeological investigation of the ground beneath the pews should be undertaken as soon as possible.

6) The proposed lowering of the chancel step and pew platforms to the level of the nave could be supported as this would enable universal access to the building but a full renewal of the floor, including removal of the existing ledger stones, would be difficult for the DAC to accept, as would any proposal to achieve a level floor by raising the aisle areas to the height of the pew platforms and chancel

7) The proposed re-ordering might cause some liturgical difficulties. In particular, the font and the chancel would be significantly marginalised under the plans. It might be beneficial to give further consideration to the treatment of these two areas

8) The proposed west gallery, although to be welcomed on safety grounds, would need extensive and careful detailing.

9) The exact proposed seating capacity should be specified as it may be that the new movable benches would in fact not be able to hold as many people as the present pews can

10) Careful consideration should be given to the kitchen and WC facilities which would be needed to complement the proposed increased level of usage. The present design does not seem to address this

At the PCC meeting on 20th Sept 2011 the following resolution was agreed:

The Wardens are now to instruct the Architects to proceed with the Faculty application, including ensuring proper and timely consultation with congregation. (Note: a faculty is a diocesan approval to proceed with specified building works)

At the PCC meeting on 6th Feb 2012 it was agreed to allocate a legacy donation of £20000 to the reordering reserve fund to enable specialist architects to address issues, such as acoustics, raised by the parish and to proceed with some of the points in the DAC response.

The next step is a meeting of the congregation with architects on Sat 5th May 2012.

Tony Dempsey

St Mary's Group

We have continued to have a programme of talks during the year. We started with David King telling us about "Old Twickenham" and followed this with a talk by Paul Leonard on "Discovering the River Crane".

December saw the Questors Reminiscence Roadshow with memories by "Yesterdays Children at War". It was a pity that other activities meant that there was only a small audience for what was a very interesting meeting.

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In January we had our annual theatre visit to the OrangeTree and saw the play "The Charity that begins at Home" We then had a talk on the Wetlands by Denzyl Issac which was followed by Rosy's Lent talk.

Our thanks also go to Jean and Paul Leonard for hosting our summer party.

We always welcome new members and are pleased to report that attendance has seen one or two new members

Norman Edwards and Ann Ridge

**The St. Mary's Project
in conjunction with SPEAR**

“And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled”

St. Mary's agreed to fund and practically support a specific project in conjunction with **SPEAR**, the local homeless charity based in Twickenham as a result of in depth research carried out over several months by a small group in the St. Mary's congregation who very much wanted to see if the church could do something for the homeless in the area.

The two year commitment by St. Mary's PCC to fund the St. Mary's Project with SPEAR comes to an end at the end of April. The project was financially in conjunction with Fosters EMA who agreed to match the £10,000 sponsorship by our church over the two years bringing the total sponsorship of the project to £20,000. To fund the project it was agreed that it would be the main charitable beneficiary from our fundraising activities particularly the Summer Fair. A further £7,570 towards the project and for the SPEAR general fund was also raised from various fundraising activities such as the Christmas Bazaar.

The project planned to support low needs homeless by running a property based in Heath Road Twickenham in which five homeless clients identified by a key worker at SPEAR would reside for a period of up to three months. During this time they would be supported in various ways in order to prepare them to return to independent living. SPEAR would help them obtain permanent accommodation within the borough. On a practical level St. Mary's agreed to find within the church willing volunteers to mentor or befriend each client, to help in the search for available accommodation at affordable rents and to help by way of obtaining possessions for each client to take with them once they had moved into permanent accommodation, perhaps share necessary skills, take them shopping, register with doctors, dentists etc.

Over the last two years eight clients have been accommodated through the St. Mary's Project including three successful move ons into independent living. However it is true to say that the initial projection of 20 people per financial year passing through the project was over ambitious due to disappointing external forces. During the first year the

landlord of the property in Heath Road let two of the 5 rooms allocated to SPEAR independently without notice which limited the number of rooms available. The second year saw the promise of another property being leased to SPEAR after substantial improvements come to nothing as all the rooms were finally let commercially. Then the

economic climate and Governmental policy changes from April 2011 resulted in a cap on the local housing allowance payable, making only the bottom third of the rental market affordable to people receiving Housing Benefit. There has also been a lack of suitable properties within the private rental sector, due to high housing prices and landlords feeling insecure about the changes to the local housing allowance.

From the outset it was accepted that the St. Mary's Project was experimental in model and although there have been difficulties along the way there has also been some really positive achievements. SPEAR will reflect on the good and the bad, learn lessons where needed and adjust the model more realistically in the hope that other local churches within the area will be interested in become involved. The clients that came into contact with our volunteers had varied backgrounds and problems and for those who were not successfully housed or were unable to continue on the scheme because of their problems did at least experience some genuine care and friendship from the St. Mary's volunteers who were mentoring them. The opportunity to mentor will still be available to anyone who would be interested as SPEAR would like more people to engage at the hostel on a voluntary basis. Some of our current mentors are considering this option.

As of now the project has underspent by £3,680 – because of fewer clients moving on into permanent accommodation which also meant that the costs of the Tenancy Deposit scheme which offered landlords an insurance policy in place of a deposit were significantly lower. However, it has been agreed with the team at SPEAR that the money should continue to be used in helping homeless people move on into independent living and that one year on from now, if 8-10 more clients have moved through the project it will be considered a success.

Apart from giving financial support I am happy that St. Mary's had the opportunity to engage in working with a local charity at a grass roots level by offering practical help. So many church members came forward with an interest in wanting to help and I would like to thank everyone who involved themselves with such commitment over the two years – the mentors, those who worked with the Tenancy Finders in trying to identify new landlords and properties and helped set up a database to work from, the volunteers who helped prepare Starter packs and of course the fundraisers.

To mark the end of the St. Mary's Project, a Sunday service has been set aside on **24th June** in order for representatives from SPEAR to make a short presentation and officially thank St. Mary's for all the support we have given. It is very much hoped that our relationship with SPEAR will continue in the future and we wish them every success as they continue with the vital work of helping the homeless in these particularly challenging times.

If you require any further information regarding SPEAR and how you can become involved please contact me, Liz Hogg at lizhogg21@hotmail.com.

Liz Hogg

Social Committee



The Social Committee provides opportunities for the congregation and the wider community to develop Christian relationships (*Vision Statement 2010/2011*).

June - "All The Fun Of The Fair" - Summer Fair And Flower Festival



St. Mary's main fundraising event was a particularly vibrant, colourful and active event this year adopting the theme of "All the fun of the Fair". With stilt walkers welcoming visitors at the gate, entertainers and stall holders attired in circus costumes, colourful bunting hanging everywhere and a dry, sunny day, there was no doubt that this year's summer fair couldn't fail to be another huge success. The church interior also was decorated with a wonderfully creative array of intricate floral displays. BBC Breakfast presenter, Charlie Stayt opened the proceedings accompanied by our very own circus ring master Jeff, looking absolutely "marvellous" complete with ringside whip and curly moustache. The fair organisers Jo and Ian Robson are to be highly congratulated on creating such a spectacular, successful and profitable event – it was a huge responsibility and commitment to take on following in the shoes of Gilly Hollis, the previous organiser, who had set the bar high on delivery in previous years. Jo and Ian's imaginative and skillful production involved so many people both in the pre planning and on the day; erecting gazebos; running stalls; manning the gates; providing refreshments or running entertainments – there was a lot to be done!. A huge effort from so many that paid off handsomely. All told a staggering £14,900 was taken, £2000 of which was gate money alone meaning that with concessions, and over 2000 people actually came. After expense outlay the profits were divided between the church funds and SPEAR, the major beneficiary of our charitable giving this year. Grateful thanks go to Jo and Ian and all those who took part in the day and we look forward to 2012's production - the theme being the Diamond Jubilee.



Another sumptuous harvest supper provided by Gill Griffin, a well-stocked bar provided and run by Patrick Ducker and two quiz masters, Liz Hogg and Tim Bowden set the scene once again for the Harvest Supper and Quiz. The event was well attended with 80 tickets sold. From the profit we were able to make a donation of £116 to the Horn of Africa Emergency Appeal. Special thanks to those members of the congregation who had helped with the setup, cooked and supplied the variety of apple pies, helped serve up the meal and tackled the washing up.

October: Parish Tea

This favourite event in the social calendar was once again beautifully organised and hosted by Barbara Williams, Social Committee members and the Parish Visiting team. A record number of approximately fifty people attended and enjoyed a generous tea of sandwiches scones, and cakes provided by members of the congregation. The entertainment was provided by Chris Williams who performed a lively programme of parlour songs which was very much appreciated. It all made for a happy, relaxing afternoon, enjoyed by both guests and helpers.

November: The Christmas Light Up And Bazaar

After some debate it was thought that the Advent Bazaar should focus more on being a vibrant, active and visible part of the Church Street Light Up festivities with the church building being central to our activities. Although a profit has been made over the last few years with the running of commercial stalls alongside the St. Mary's Stall, tea tent and raffle, this particular event was always considered particularly to be one of witness



and outreach for the church as well as a profit making activity. We felt the church could be presented at its best with seasonal activities going on inside and out and would hopefully attract people to wonder in and take a look and get a sense of what our church is. With this in mind, Rosy Barrie and Mandy Hunter planned an appealing programme of events in the church including bell ringing, storytelling for the children and wreath making demonstrations. A substantial selection of colourful Christmas fayre hampers were also on display as the prizes for the raffle – proceeds of which were to go to

A chief highlight and attraction of the evening was the introduction of the traditional figure of St. Nicholas superbly acted by John Barrie dressed in splendid red and gold robes with bishops mitre and long white beard. John gathered a substantial following of children and adults as he dispensed gold chocolate coins (sourced by Fairtrade) up and down Church Street and later on in the church which even led to his picture appearing in the local paper the following week! In the church grounds the St. Mary's stall sold an assortment of mugs, tea towels, Christmas gifts and crafts. An extremely busy and highly profitable tea tent this year, sold deliciously spicy mulled wine (Sandy Dempsey's secret recipe!) and hot drinks to accompany the sumptuous Jolly Hog roast which spread a tantalizing smell up Church Street. A huge thanks must go again this year to Francesca and Simon Grinter whose planning and organisation of this event was perfect and all their hard work really paid off as a profit of just over £2,400 was raised for SPEAR along with a donation of £302 from the Jolly Hog.

Other celebratory highlights:

- This year the Social committee decided to provide the congregation with some sort of social events calendar that could be taken away and put up as a reminder at home. To this end a lovely card calendar was designed by Jo Robson and was distributed back in April.
- In February we said farewell to Lesley Brough the Church administrator. After many years working in the parish office Lesley was moving away from the area with her family. After a lovely farewell service members of the congregation toasted the family's future with a glass of bubbly and a beautiful specially iced cake made by Gilly Hollis.
- Confirmation Celebrations; In September 25 Confirmation candidates celebrated after their Confirmation service in the hall with sparkling wine and a selection of homemade cakes. Liz Noble made a lovely special sponge cake with a themed icing just for the confirmation candidates with the rest of us enjoying the selection of homemade cakes made by members of the congregation. I have never seen so much cake eaten in such a short time!

Sunday Coffee:

The Social Committee brings together various groups and people to serve refreshments after the 9.30 service. A special thanks go to Sandy Dempsey again for arranging the rota and to Audrey Thomas who is now kindly responsible for keeping supplies topped up and indeed helping on many Sundays to set up the urn and the hall. We are always looking for new volunteers to host coffee and if you feel you would like to help please contact Sandy or Audrey.

New Members Please!

The Social Committee is always looking for new members and in particular we are looking for a new chairperson to lead it. If you think you can help please contact Liz Hogg by email. lizhogg21@hotmail.com

With thanks to everyone on the Committee and to those who have helped us throughout the year.

Liz Hogg

The items below give a flavour of the committee's activities.

PCC membership. A list showing details of PCC membership has been compiled and kept up to date. This table will be printed inside the back page of subsequent annual Parish Reports.

Communication. It was agreed that the web-site needs to be kept up to date. Indeed all aspects of church communication need to be co-ordinated. A rolling calendar was started.

Hall. Although the day centre is closed, the council is still honouring their financial agreement with us. This is good news because there is no immediate loss of income. Age UK are, from February 2012, taking over the vacant tenancy.

Lent Courses 2011. The course was, by general feedback, very successful. More than 100 people attended and Jeff thanked all those who led them.

Holy Week and Easter 2011. It was good to have had the Eucharist each day during Holy week. Jeff would like more people to be involved in future years. The Good Friday readings were well received and the readers were a good representation of the congregations. Over 270 people attended the 10.00 am service on Easter Day.

Vision groups. When established, each group should send their Agendas and Minutes to the office and to the wardens who will check if they are operating within their terms of reference. This will also avoid duplication.

Celebration Weekend was a success.

Child Protection. Sophie Fisher was appointed CP officer

Reordering. The Statement of Need was well received and then a Statement of Significance produced. After the DAC visit another communication was received with various issues to be dealt with. This was relayed to the congregation (see also "Reordering Report"). The PCC agreed to proceed with seeking a faculty and to proceed with the architects appointing some specialists. There are ideas for the vestry.

School Governorship. The vacancy was advertised.

PCC agendas were prepared ahead of each meeting.

The role of the committee was reviewed.

Charitable giving was discussed.

Young people were discussed in relation to the impending confirmations.

It was noted that **The Eco Group** will take on Oak Lane cemetery.

From the **Building Group** it was noted that the clock needs a new motor and the trees on the entrance path will be pruned.

In the **office** a new photocopier will go in the small room outside the office.

A review of fees and salaries was carried out.

Olympics. Rosie reported on ideas.

The Christmas services were well attended, especially the crib service.

Finance. The group supported a major campaign.

Outcomes following an afternoon meeting:

- Create a greater overlap of the 0930 services on the 3rd Sunday and other Sundays.
- Develop the website, and improve communication and the welcome pack
- Move forward on re-ordering
- Value silence for adults and children
- Plan ahead financially
- Promote unity, discipleship and mission
- Integrate social and spiritual events
- Develop links with school families

Tony Dempsey

The Traidcraft Stall

The monthly Traidcraft stall has continued to be well supported this year, achieving a turnover of around £2,400, with many new items including the “Real Easter Egg” and “Real Christmas Tree Decorations” which explained the story of Easter and Christmas on the packet for the first time. Other new items are olives, olive oil and couscous from Palestinian farmers and a variety of chutneys and jams from a South African women’s co-operative. Many of the food goods are organic, all are fairly traded and are sourced from small-scale craftworkers and farmers in Africa, Asia and Latin America, paying them a fair price, providing training, and supporting educational and medical facilities for the workers’ communities, with fair loans to help them through difficult times.

Traidcraft’s message “transforming trade, transforming lives” is based on God’s call to stewardship of the world’s resources, trying to achieve a fairer distribution between richer and poorer nations. Farmers, especially in coffee, tea, chocolate, cotton and cereal production, are at the mercy of fluctuating world prices. Today we are more aware of our “shopping power” in a world where our lives are linked by the food on our plates, the wine and juice in our glasses, the clothes we wear, the wood our furniture is made from – relying on materials and workers which are essential to our lives but are all too easy to take for granted.

Many thanks to everyone for your support this year! Catalogues are available for ordering the full range of clothing, textiles, toys, household items, etc. If you would like to join the Traidcraft Stall team (on the second Sunday of the month), please let us know as we always need help setting up, selling and putting away the goods and tables.

Diana Wells, Barbara Williams

Parish Visitors

Our Parish Visitors continue to visit the housebound elderly, the unwell at home or in hospital and those with whom we regularly keep in touch – keeping people unable to get to church in touch with what is going on so that they may continue to feel part of the family of the church. Communion is taken to those who desire it and we are available to visit the bereaved. Parents of children who are to be baptized are visited by a member of our team and newcomers are welcomed on Sunday mornings. We continue to be grateful to the Visitors for their commitment and all that they do for St. Mary's.

If you know of someone who might require the help or company of a Visitor do please let us know. We do our best to be aware of people's needs but cannot always know when help might be required, so we ask the congregation to be aware of those around them in church on a Sunday and let us know if someone is unexpectedly absent for more than two weeks or if they know that someone is unwell so that we can offer them a visit. Anyone who needs a friendly listening ear is most welcome to contact me or the Vicar.

Margaret Mence

The Visit to Walsingham on 18th – 20th November 2011.

Spending a long weekend in a beautiful historic village, in good company and in gloriously sunny autumnal weather, is clearly an attractive prospect. Those of us from St Mary's however who went to Walsingham last year, including some who had never been before, know that our visit meant much more than a long weekend away.

The village of Little Walsingham which is in a dip in the landscape of North Norfolk is where, in the eleventh century, the local lady of the manor saw a vision of St Mary who encouraged her to have a building built in the shape of a small house representing the house where Mary and Joseph and their family lived. A well of water was dug where the vision had appeared and the little house was built.

Since then visitors have found in Walsingham a resting place where the Grace of God feels more readily available and where other people and their circumstances may more easily be upheld before God.

Last November, our group, carefully shepherded by Jeff attended the various aspects of the liturgy which are on offer. These include prayer during the first visit to the little or Holy House, the moving procession round the Stations of the Cross within the beautiful

Shrine Garden and a walk to the Roman Catholic Shrine with its two little Chapels and its modern main Church.

Saturday afternoon was free for exploration. We could visit the medieval Church of St Peter which sits alone in a field above Walsingham, flooded with light and echoing with the feet of thousands down the centuries walking into the ancient carved pews. We could visit the Orthodox Chapel in the old station house where (once you have located the light switch), the figures in glorious Icons look into your heart. We could also visit the bookshop which is full of resources for further study. On the Saturday evening we attended the main Eucharist for all the Parish Groups. After supper there was a Service of Anointing and prayer for the Healing of self or others followed by the availability of Reconciliation (confession and absolution) or a word with a Priest.

On Sunday morning Jeff celebrated a Eucharist for our Parish alone, incorporating all our Intercessions. All of you were prayed for. In the afternoon, all the Parish Groups met for a Service ending with each individual sipping and then being blest with the water from the well and having it poured into our cupped hands overflowing to the ground.

Walsingham is a difficult place to leave. It is a place where each visitor may experience the readily available Grace of God but we may each have only realised the full benefit our visit some time after our return.

Barbara Williams

Welcare In Richmond Children's Centre

Welcare is a Christian Charity which St. Mary's and other local Churches across Richmond Borough support. The friendly and welcoming Centre is one of eight Centres in London and the suburbs and is situated on Twickenham Green. Welcare's Headquarters is in Southwark. It's Mission is to support and strengthen disadvantaged families from whatever background or religion. It has teamed up with many Services in the Community, for example health, housing, schools and voluntary organisations. Welcare in Richmond supports about 250 vulnerable/needy families by providing a variety of Services, Courses and fun activities for children aged 0-5 years. One of the Courses running at the moment is for people who have experienced Domestic Violence and is called 'Road to Recovery' and also there is one called 'Working Progress. Welcare also gives practical help such as helping parent(s) with Grant applications and occasionally provides clothing and food bags for some families. There is a Summer Outing and a Christmas Party held every year. Welcare seeks to provide Services in response to local needs, which encourage self-help and build communities.

In April 2010, Welcare was commissioned by Richmond Borough to run a Children's Centre for local families with children aged 0 - 5 years to 'run alongside ' Welcare. There is now a Programme with a rolling Timetable of an even wider range of fun activities - for example 'Stay and Play' sessions, 'Singing Hands', 'Little Talkers' and 'Bollywood Dance'. The Courses include 'Paediatric First Aid and Child Safety', and 'Kids Cooking' - learning about the benefits of healthy eating, for parent(s) and children. There

is Fathers Group - 'Dad's Unlimited', with their children, held on a Saturday morning. Also there is a Grandparents Drop-in. with their grandchildren, held once a week. There are also other services and activities at other locations in the area. As Welcare has teamed up with Richmond Council it is able to offer all the Services, Courses and Activities for free.

Welcare receives a small Grant from the Diocese of Southwark. Also a few Local Authorities and Trusts gives some money, but cuts have reduced funding at the same time as the workload has increased. Welcare would welcome any people willing to help or volunteer at the Centre. The Staff are very grateful to St.Mary's for the support it gives.

For more information or if you are interested in volunteering at the Centre please contact
Malika Boushiba - Manager or
Jill Clifford - Administrator

Tel No 8893 9123 Email - admin@richmond-welcare.org.uk

Jane Waterston
Parish Representative