



All Saints Kingston upon Thames  
Annual Report  
Jenny Bridges PA to the Rector

2022-2023

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## **Team Rector's Report - Joe Moffatt**

It has been a great joy to take up the role of Team Rector for the Kingston Team Ministry since September last year. I've been largely based at All Saints where I've been appreciating the centrality of its location, the strength of its musical tradition, the long pedigree of its history and the friendliness of its café. But I've also enjoyed getting to know the parishes of St John the Evangelist in Spring Grove and St John the Baptist in Kingston Vale, both of which have distinctive and valuable ministries within their local neighbourhoods. And I've been meeting inspiring people left, right and centre from all the various organisations and community groups in Kingston. I can honestly say, there has yet to be a dull day. Indeed, the Queen died on my first day in the job, and it's been something of a whirlwind ever since. But I'm slowly finding my feet and starting to feel very much at home.

This is mainly due to the wonderful welcome that I've been given. Thank you for the warmth and friendliness that my family and I have received from so many people. It's been greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank my colleagues who have been a great support since I started and who also did a sterling job in carrying the benefice through the interregnum. In particular, I'd like to thank William Allberry, who did a pretty much full-time interim-vicar job at All Saints, and the two churchwardens, John Dewhurst and Roshan Jathanna, who shouldered a huge amount of work and responsibility. I'm very aware that all three churches depend heavily on small teams of highly dedicated staff and volunteers and I'm hugely grateful for their commitment and talent.

Highlights of my time so far include the big services at All Saints, such as the Thanksgiving for the Queen and the Advent/Christmas/Epiphany Carol Services; the Licensing Service for Lindiwe Maseko as Team Vicar at St John the Evangelist; and the worship at St John the Baptist led by the new Korean families. I also really enjoyed leading confirmation courses, in partnership with Lesley Charlton, my URC colleague, and seeing both young people and adults grow in their faith, their confidence and their sense of belonging.

I've found that keeping our arrangements between the three churches loose and flexible works well as we respond to different contexts, opportunities and challenges. I sense that each church is going through a transition period and needing time and space to work out their own vision and strategy for mission. But as these emerge, I look forward to identifying common themes and opportunities for closer collaboration. So, when the time is right, we'll reintroduce our Team Ministry conference, bringing together our three PCC's, to consider an overall Kingston Team Vision. I hope that, in taking our time, we ensure that this is a 'bottom-up' process, rather than 'top-down'.

That is not to say that we shouldn't do as much as possible together in the meantime. I've hugely valued the weekly meetings that I have with my Team Vicar colleagues, Mandy Beck and Lindiwe Maseko, along with Andrea Campanale, our local Lay Pioneer and leader of Sacred Space Kingston. This ensures that we are regularly praying together, keeping up-to-date with news and remaining alive to new opportunities for collaboration and mission. I'm delighted that all three churches have big plans for the Coronation weekend, involving some exciting community events and celebrations. We have also booked a Kingston Team Outing to Salisbury Cathedral on Saturday October 28<sup>th</sup>. Look out for details of how to sign-up. And in the pipeline is a monthly Kingston Team Ministry e-bulletin which will help us to share news, stories, and reflections between our three churches.

So, I'm full of hope for the future. It feels like an exciting journey that has only just begun. Let us pray for one another, that God may guide us on that journey and deepen our faith and friendship along the way.

## **Churchwardens' Annual Report 2022-2023 John and Roshan - Churchwardens**

Last year's Churchwardens' Report ended on an absolute cliff-hanger. We were still in the Vacancy which had begun in October 2021, but by the time of the Annual Meeting the post of Vicar of All Saints and Team Rector of the Kingston Team Ministry had been advertised, a shortlist of three candidates drawn up and interviews were pending. So, we were waiting!

The interviews duly took place on 11<sup>th</sup> May, and Revd Joe Moffatt emerged as the unanimous preference of the appointment panel. Following an extensive refurbishment of the Vicarage, largely at the expense of the Diocese, Joe and his family moved from over the river into their new home, and his Institution service, conducted by the Bishop of Kingston, took place on the evening Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September. It was in every respect an absolutely magnificent service which, along with many members of the All Saints congregation and Civic representative, was attended by Joe's own invited guests (including his parents and other members of his family) along with clergy from the Kingston and Hampton Deaneries and a large contingent from Joe's former parish of St Mary's with St Alban's in Teddington. The absolutely joyful service was followed by a reception in the East End, laid on by Sarah and her brilliant team, and which demonstrated to everyone present (as if there was ever any doubt) that All Saints *really* knows how to throw a great party!

On the Sunday evening before Joe's Institution Service, we held a special Choral Evensong (and, of course, a subsequent party on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September to thank William (and Joan too) for his absolutely invaluable work in supporting our day-to-day worship during the Vacancy. His meticulously planned service rotas saw no fewer than fourteen clergy from beyond our own team either leading our services or preaching at them. Our worship was so much the richer for William's immense contribution.

There was, though, an entirely unexpected and deeply saddening sequel awaiting us immediately following the glorious climax to the long months of the Vacancy. During the late afternoon of the following day, Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> September, the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was announced to a stunned nation. Our long-established 'Royal Death' protocol swung into immediate action, initially with the Tower Captain and a Churchwarden climbing the Tower early in the evening to lower the church flag to half-mast, in the teeth of an extremely strong wind. Candles were lit on the Altar and a Book of Remembrance was opened on the recently-installed Welcome Desk. People came to the church in very large numbers to pay their respects, to pray and to light candles. Special prayers were said at 12.00 noon every day for the next week. A Civic Service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving for the Life of Her Majesty, conducted by the Bishop of Kingston, took place in a completely packed church on the evening of Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> September.

Following this deeply sad interlude, life at All Saints settled down to something approaching normality, although with a noticeable fresh injection of energy as Joe's new ministry gathered momentum. A special service to mark the retirement of Bishop Richard took place on the evening of Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October, and was particularly notable for the presence of the distinguished preacher, Cleophas, Bishop of Matabeleland, a close friend of Bishop Richard. There are not many services recorded in our Register of Services that have been signed by *two* bishops. And, it goes almost without saying, it was the cue for another excellent All Saints party!

A well-attended All Souls Requiem Eucharist took place on the evening of Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> October, with the annual Civic Remembrance Service following on the morning of Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November. The sequence of Christmas services, from Advent through Christmas to Epiphany, went very well. The congregations at each of the services were noticeably larger than the previous year, as lingering anxieties about the Covid-19 situation had substantially reduced, and as before they were watched by considerable numbers of people via our

YouTube livestream. We are immensely grateful to our excellent musicians: the organists, the choir and the bellringers, for everything they did to make these special services, and also our routine weekly services, so successful. The regular Choral Evensong on Wednesday afternoons at 5.30pm has become a well-established, and increasingly well-attended, component of our weekly round of services. Three funeral services have taken place at All Saints during the last year, along with a wedding and seven Baptisms. A Confirmation Service at the United Reformed Church on the afternoon of Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> March, conducted by Assistant Bishop Rob Gillon, saw seven members of our congregation confirmed, including three members of the choir. We also hosted the Kingston Episcopal Area Ordination Service, conducted by the Lord Bishop of Southwark, on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July, and the annual Mayoral Service took place on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June.

The day-to-day work of All Saints, which was very well maintained during the potentially challenging months of the Vacancy, has continued to be supported since September by the sterling efforts of a huge number of people, both our immensely hardworking staff (Jenny, Pippa and Richard), and our many volunteers and especially those who coordinate their activities from behind the scenes. Special mention must once again be made of the invaluable contributions of Isabel Isaacson, PCC Secretary and Alastair Deller, Honorary Treasurer. Paul Thompson, deputy churchwarden with delegated responsibility for premises and insurance, continued to work extremely hard to tackle a number of complex insurance-related issues during the last few months and somehow managing to bring them all to more or less satisfactory resolutions. The separate reports of the many and varied group activities that take place week by week (below) are an eloquent testimony to the continuing rich tapestry of life at All Saints.

The church has continued to be open to visitors throughout the week from 10.00am until 4.00pm, and the Café, managed by Sarah and her team, continues to attract a loyal and steady following of both regular customers and occasional visitors. The Vergers and the Listeners combine to ensure that there is a warm welcome for visitors, whatever their reason for coming into the church. On Saturday mornings, members of the Gardening Group often pause to talk with passers-by as they work in the churchyards, providing another form of mission outreach activity to the local community.

Entirely exceptionally, there were two days during the year on which the church was closed. The first, on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July, was necessitated by an extreme weather (heat) warning issued by the Government. The second, following an overnight incident in the churchyard, was due to the Metropolitan Police preventing any access to the churchyard or to the church itself on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July until the late afternoon, after which it was possible for Choral Evensong to take place. This latter closure was subsequently the subject of formal representations by the Archdeacon of Wandsworth to the Borough Police Commander, who we understand undertook to prevent such complete closures in future if they could possibly be avoided.

The building has continued to work very hard for its living, being regularly hired for weekly rehearsals, frequent concerts both at lunchtimes and in the evening, meetings and receptions of various kinds, and the highly popular (with a younger demographic) 'Pop-Up Shop', held normally on the last Saturday of each month, selling 'vintage pre-loved fashion clothing'.

The Churchwardens would once again like to extend their heartfelt thanks to the Clergy, the Assistant and Deputy Wardens, the PCC and the whole congregation for their support over the last year. It has been a source of great strength to us and has been enormously appreciated.

### **All Saints Parochial Church Council – Isabel Isaacson**

The All Saints Parochial Church Council met six times during the year following the 2022 APCM (June 2022-April 2023) and there were also 3 meetings of the PCC Standing Committee during this period. There are **12** elected and co-opted members and **9** ex officio members including the clergy, wardens and Deanery Synod representatives. The average attendance at meetings was **13**. The PCC's regular business includes the monitoring of the Church's finances, reviewing Church life and events, health and safety issues, including safeguarding, and preparing for forthcoming services and other events. The work of the PCC is greatly assisted by the appointment of sub-committees to look in detail at particular issues. In 2021 a sub-committee was appointed to review the Church's giving to good causes and more recently, a team has undertaken to examine our on-line presence to identify areas for change or development. A Standing Committee has been formed from members of the PCC and is constituted as follows: the Vicar, the Churchwardens, the Honorary Treasurer, the Deputy Churchwardens and the PCC Secretary. Its first meeting took place in October 2022; meetings will subsequently take place every two months, alternating with PCC meetings.

### **Music Department – David Condry**

The past year has been highly successful in terms of standards and recruitment, and we have been increasingly busy. In addition to our usual weekly work of three fully choral services, the choir has been fully involved in the celebrations of the late Queen's jubilee, her memorial service, the farewell service for the former Bishop of Kingston and the welcome and installation of our new Vicar, not to mention the ordination service, many extra Christmas services, increasing numbers of weddings and, sadly, several funerals.

We have welcomed four new probationers and sworn in three new choristers, all of whom have proved to be extremely committed and talented musicians. Our line-up of choral scholars has remained stable and two of our current scholars have won choral scholarships to Oxford, to be taken up in October. Alan Erdelyi has remained as our organ scholar. We should be very proud of our choral and organ scholarship programmes and how effective these positions are for providing a rich environment for these talented young musicians to flourish.

In December we once again took part in the joint Christmas concert with Thames Youth Orchestra. This was again, a great success, both musically and commercially and has provided us with some very welcome income to begin funding our new choir robes. This is now an annual fixture, and diaries have already been marked for the next few years.

As I mentioned last year, it has become apparent that our choir robes are many years past their best, and most are in an appalling state, with seams coming apart, material ripped and disintegrating, and polycotton surplices which are badly and irretrievably discoloured. These very old robes do not reflect the professional musical standards of the choir and they must be replaced with something well-made which will last for decades to come. We have already raised some money towards this, and we now have a firm plan to move forwards with this project.

Unfortunately, the organ has developed a serious fault with the "capture system" – the highly complex system of computerised electronics. Without getting too technical, high atmospheric temperatures during summer are consistently causing the whole system to shut down, making the organ unplayable. There are several other associated problems – not the least of which is that the system memory is failing and losing settings. We have consulted the diocesan organ advisors who agree that the system should be replaced at the earliest opportunity. There is a faculty application in progress and sources of funding and grants are being sought.

The music library has continued to expand. We have acquired many new anthems, canticles, and mass settings as well as four new settings of the preces and responses.

As part of the overall strategy for the expansion and growth of the music department, we are in the early stages of exploring the possibilities of a musical outreach programme. This would begin on a small scale involving one or two schools and hopefully would expand to include more schools in the local area. In addition, we hope to launch a junior choir for young people who love music and singing but who are not yet old enough for the church choir. It is hoped that both of these linked projects could launch by the start of the 2023-24 academic year.

I would like to thank each and every member of the music department for their professionalism, dedication and loyalty. In particular, I would like to thank Matthew O'Malley – Organist, Alan Erdelyi – Organ scholar, Eleanor Howard-Williams – Choir matron and Nigel Duffin – choir librarian, for their unwavering hard work in helping to run our music department and without whom the running of the department would be impossible. In addition, I would like to thank our Vicar for his help and support and for the choir association committee, without whose help and hard work, we would not be able to run our extra-liturgical endeavours like our come-and-sing days.

### **Safeguarding – Alexandra Crook (Parish Safeguarding Officer)**

As Parish Safeguarding Officer (“PSO”), I work with the PCC to implement the policy and procedures found in the House of Bishop’s Promoting a Safer Church safeguarding policy statement, the House of Bishop’s safeguarding Policies and Practice Guidance while being responsive to local parish requirements.

The PCC must promote a safer church for all in the church community and ensure there is a plan in place to raise awareness of safeguarding matters, promote training and ensure that safeguarding is taken seriously by all those in the church community.

Our parish continues to promote Safe Recruiting for volunteers in accordance with the procedures set out in A Safe Church. The safeguarding policy and procedures and names and contact details of the PSO are also advertised on the church premises and in the Volunteer handbook. The PSO is the main DBS administrator but in recent months, we have received permission for Pippa Joiner (our Heritage Officer) to help with identification checks. DBS checks are now renewed every 3 years.

Since the arrival of our new Rector, Joe Moffatt, we have started to use a shared secure online safeguarding account which is only accessible to a restricted number of people who need access to it. This secure safeguarding account contains electronic files relating to safeguarding, including a document recording DBS checks. Volunteers are aware of and work to the House of Bishop’s safeguarding guidance and we keep a register of training to ensure all volunteers get safeguarding training every 3 years.

Over the coming year the PSO will:

- Continue to respond to any safeguarding concerns as they arise
- Keep safeguarding prominent at PCC meetings
- Liaise with the churchwardens when annual health and safety and fire inspections of the premises occur
- Review risk assessments for all new and existing parish activities where children and adults who may be vulnerable may be included
- Adhere to the Code of Safer Working Practice (Appendix 19)
- Ensure we observe the correct ratios for adult/children in each group

- Continue to update safeguarding policies (these will go past the PCC, and then onto the church website and Volunteer Handbook for all to view)
- Advertise the parish Safeguarding Policy and Procedures in summary on the church premises and publicise the name and contact details of the PSO
- Ensure full recruitment procedures are followed for all staff and voluntary workers
- Chase up any outstanding training certificates and DBS checks; and
- Continue good record retention and security

I wish to thank John Dewhurst, Roshan Jathanna, William Allberry, Sandy Cragg and Rachel Davies for their support this year. I am also grateful for the guidance and support received from the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

**Annual Fabric Inspection: Summary report - John Dewhurst and Roshan Jathanna (Churchwardens); Paul Thompson (Deputy Churchwarden)**

The Churchwardens are required to inspect the church building and the churchyard at least once each year, or to arrange for this to be done on their behalf (*The Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure, 1991*). The Churchwardens are required to present an annual report on the condition of the building to the Church Council. The report is then presented to the Annual Parishioners' Meeting, with any amendments required by the Church Council (*A Handbook for Churchwardens and PCCs, 1997*).

The Churchwardens are pleased to be able to report, on the basis of the annual Fabric Inspection that was carried out along with a Risk Assessment on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023, that the church building is structurally sound, watertight, secure, safe, in generally good decorative order, clean and tidy, well-lit and heated, and is accessible by wheelchair. The external condition of the building is no worse than may be expected for a building of its age. The Quinquennial Inspection of the church building and its environs will be carried out by Ptolemy Dean Associates, our designated Church Architect, in June of this year. It is intended, subject to the award of a Faculty by the Diocese, that the interior lights will be converted to LED in the course of the next few months.

The churchyard is judged to be safe and is clean and tidy (thanks in no small part to the continuing work of the Gardening Group) and does not pose any threat to neighbouring buildings.

AS in 2022, the inspection noted some weathering and aging issues on the external of the building, which includes some maintenance work that can be carried out in the coming months.

Pigeons continue to be unwelcome visitors and roost all over the exterior of the building. As reported in 2022, the broken pigeon deterrent wires along the top of the South Nave wall are in need of replacement. Quotations for this work are now being sought from specialist contractors.

In the Tower, the 100-year-old carillon, which played hymn tunes on the bells four times each day until it became unserviceable some years ago, has now been replaced with a modern electronic system. The new chiming system played its first hymn tune across the town centre on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March, to the especial delight of the Market Traders. The cost of this work has been met by a generous anonymous donation. During these works, Nicholson's Bell Engineers attended to some minor maintenance issues which had been identified in the previous year. This additional work was funded by the Ringers.

Gas, electricity, and lightning conductor safety certificates are all up to date, as is the church's Public Liability Insurance.

**A detailed annual fabric inspection report is available on request.**



## **Heritage and Learning Activities – Pippa Heasman**

Throughout the year, we have been actively engaging with the community and over 1,500 people have taken part in a range of exciting workshops and events.

Our schools' workshops have been seen 420 pupils taking part in hands-on experiences that explore the Anglo-Saxon history of the local area. These workshops have been well-received, with 100% of participants rating them as "excellent", "very good" or "good". We have also resumed our Joint workshops with Kingston Museum, with 60 pupils attending so far and plans for future collaborative sessions and have begun marketing special sessions for the coronation of King Charles III.

We have developed and delivered new therapeutic workshops for adults, working with Kingston Carer's Network (KCN) and NHS retirement group. These workshops have engaged 58 adults over 5 sessions and have been on a range of topics including Stained Glass, Medieval Tiles, Anglo-Saxon history and The Christmas Story. These have created a supportive and inspiring environment which allow participants to connect with each other, learn about history and explore their creativity.

Our Thumbs Up It's Thursday craft days have been a great success with over 1,000 people attending these family-friendly event days during school holidays. This has engaged new families, as well as attracted regular attendees and helped to create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere at All Saints.

Our Learning and Engagement Officer has also supported the supported the *Seven Saxon Kings* Embroidery project, worked with Liz Deller to provide a small shop offer, supported Little Saints (which recommenced in January 2023) and supported volunteer activity- helping the Parish Safeguarding Officers undertake DBS checks, log of safeguarding training and have risk assessments for each area of volunteer activity.

The coming year (2023-2024) will be an exciting year, especially with the coronation of King Charles III, and we look forward to continuing to provide meaningful and engaging learning experiences.

## **Little Saints – Pippa Heasman**

Little Saints, our informal drop-in session for toddlers and their carers, restarted in January 2023 after being paused due to the pandemic. Little Saints has been a longstanding and much-loved feature of All Saints that provides a valuable opportunity for young ones to play and for their carers to meet others in the community.

Whilst Little Saints has just restarted, we are seeing sessions becoming increasingly popular and since January 2023 have had c. 50 attendances from children at the sessions. Our dedicated team of volunteers, Chris, Sian, Ann and Pam play a key role in welcoming and engaging with parents and carers and make them feel supported.

Little Saints includes 45 minutes of free play, followed by 15 minutes of worship with interactive stories and songs led by our Vicar Joe. This provides a fun and engaging way for young children to learn about faith.

We would like to extend our thanks to all the volunteers who have made Little Saints possible. We are grateful to Ian Nevill for undertaking substantial work on the toy boxes, to Ann Cornick for sourcing wonderful age-appropriate toys and to Brian Cornick for repairing many of the toys and replacing batteries. We would also like to thank Richard, our Caretaker, for keeping the area clean and Sarah and the café team for all their continued support.

### **Vergers - Yvonne (Vonnie) FitzPatrick**

Firstly my welcome to our new Reverend Joe at All Saints. As I have been unwell I have been unable to be as fully involved as I would have liked to be, particularly in person.

Again, I cannot thank enough the Volunteer Vergers for their support at All Saints. Our donated desk for Vergers is fantastic.

I am extremely pleased that Vergers are happy to accept money for sales items in the Church shop. This has most definitely helped to take pressure off the Café to take payments themselves, particularly during Recitals and lunchtime periods when the Café can be quite busy.

We have been lucky enough to recruit five new Vergers recently. Many Vergers have regular slots while others prefer to be on a “copy in” situation, meaning that they do not take a regular slot(s) but rather “fill in” when the Rota, or more importantly in my view, the weekly reminder goes out, which works very well.

Unfortunately, this has been a difficult year for me due to ill health. Many people have been so supportive, including many parishioners and visitors to the Café. In particular, I would like to thank, Pippa, Jenny and Isabel, and of course Sarah who has been very understanding during this time for me.

Most importantly I would like to thank my partner David Maclean as without him I am not sure I could have coped to carry on with the Vergers Rota.

I am now hopefully on the road to recovery, after nearly six months of struggling with ill health.

I am very much looking forward to meeting new Vergers that I have been unable to meet properly in person and again I thank Pippa, Peter Watson and Nigel Duffin for helping me during this period.

### **English Conversation – William Allberry**

We continue to offer this very informal session for anyone who wishes to improve their spoken English through conversation. We meet monthly, on the last Friday of each month between 12 and 2pm. We have a good number of ‘teachers’ ready to help, but usually only have 4 or 5 ‘students’. We are doing what we can to get the word round through refugee organisations and the College. Please encourage anyone who might benefit to come along and join us!

### **Christian Aid – Isabel Isaacson**

All Saints Church has continued to support Christian Aid and to join with Kingston Churches to fundraise through 2022. The theme for Christian Aid Week, 15-21 May, was ‘Turning hunger into hope’. The collection took place as usual and this year we were able to resume house-to-house collections. However, more practical and popular options were the delivery of envelopes to roads where a ‘safe house’ was nominated for the return of envelopes;

donations via a QR code on the Christian Aid leaflet and donations via a 'Just Giving' page. The collection raised £8,288 in cash and over £15,000 through Just Giving.

One of the highlights of Christian Aid, 2022, was Saturday 21st May when Kingston clergy and members of the congregations of All Saints, St John the Evangelist, St John the Baptist, St Matthew, St Mark, the Methodists and the United Reformed Church and friends all got together to dance the Jerusalem in Clarence Street (this is still available to view on <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/kingston-churches>)

On 24th September there was a sponsored Riverside Walk and on 14th December Carol Singing in Clarence Street raised £233.22 (which was more than in 2018 (£205) and 2019 (£177)).

We are, as always, very grateful to our volunteers for their time and effort in organising and carrying out the collecting and to all the Kingston residents and their friends who, by their generosity, help each year to make this a success.

### **Kingston upon Thames Bell Ringers - Paul Flavell, Tower Captain**

I'm very pleased to say that we are enjoying good attendances on Sundays and Wednesdays when we can usually ring 10-12 bells. Attendance at some practice nights has been astonishing – 24 at one practice!

Wednesday practices are run by different people to give them the opportunity to manage a practice and to do different things to keep everybody interested.

We are delighted to welcome Jacob Blackwell and we're very pleased that David and Judith have returned to ringing. They are also holding handbell sessions which is greatly enjoyed and helping the ringers understand plain hunting for example. On the other side we were very sorry to say goodbye to Graeme and Heather.

So-Shan, Gavin and Colin are making good progress and we are currently teaching some new learners who are also doing well, including Chris, Roshan, Junnan, Hongli, Katie and Joey.

We have had regular visitors to the tower including Jackie and her learners from Richmond and Thomas from Twickenham. Other ringing visitors were from Newcastle, Nottingham, Leighton Buzzard and Wellington New Zealand!

We make our visitors very welcome and try and include ringing for everybody to have made progress and that they will want to come again.

Key ringing events in 2022 were of course ringing for the platinum jubilee in June and we rang half-muffled for the death of the Queen in September.

At the time of writing the carillon is being replaced with a modern electronic version. The mechanism from the old carillon is being retained in case there is the finance and will power to restore it in the future. The new carillon will play the same tunes, strike the hour, and have a minute bell facility.

Finally, we were delighted to organise the segment on the Alan Titchmarsh "Love your Weekend" programme on ITV in February, with Joe & Pippa helping with historical and social details and good interviews and film of the ringers getting ready to "Ring for the King" for the coronation in May.

## **Knit for the Needy - Catherine Fennemore**

Once again we are pleased to report that the Knitting Circle continues to flourish and we have welcomed many new members during the year. The Circle meets on Tuesday between 10.00 am and 11.45 am approximately.

This last year we have sent to MALAWI: 42 large & 52 medium & lap blankets in a variety of colours and patterns and 38 cot blankets. We continue to provide simple T-shirts - 60 large, medium & small and 55 hats to suit both girls and boys in different sizes, 33 adult hats and 13 scarves. We have also sent 65 "fish & chip" sets for the new born and very small babies. These babies are called "fish & chip" babies *because their mothers are so poor that they have to wrap the babies up in newspaper when they take them home from the hospital.* To the afore-mentioned we can add: 3 jackets, 2 small cardigans, 2 small dresses and 1 quilt. We continue to receive a substantial number of beautifully made teddies, rabbits, a rhino and a cat - 43 in total - (children need cuddly toys) and a tractor. These blankets and garments provide much needed warmth and comfort particularly during cold nights and winters.

The centre to train ladies as dressmakers continues to flourish. This skill enables them to earn an income and assist with providing for their families. Any and all haberdashery items - scissors, needles, reels of cotton, ribbons, thimbles, pins, tape and bias binding and so forth are always needed. Manual sewing machines are always welcome and go out in the next available container. When the ladies leave the centre they are provided with a sewing machine so they can immediately begin to work independently. It is very much a case of "A hand up not a hand out".

When you are carrying out a spring clean, please remember that suitcases which are used to carry items out to Malawi are then given to the students for their possessions when they go away to school or higher education. There is also a need for sanitary ware for girls and ladies and our members have generously provided large quantities of underwear and the materials needed for making the sanitary products. *Note: the women and girls make these re-useable items themselves.* Bed linen, coloured or patterned, is suitable. There are difficulties for some women and girls at present in our country but it is worth remembering that this is a problem of long-standing for many in other countries. Toiletries and medical items are always useful.

As you will appreciate the costs of shipment are very high and any assistance in this matter is much appreciated by the organisers. More information about the organisation can be found here: [www.africanvision.org.uk](http://www.africanvision.org.uk).

The poppies knitted by members to commemorate those lost on active service in war were again displayed in November. We also knitted flowers for the Easter decorations.

All donations of wool are gratefully received and we acknowledge with gratitude the very generous support we have enjoyed this year. We have some very creative and skilled ladies in our group who can turn the most unlikely materials into beautiful items. As you will see all donations will be used to alleviate the difficulties and suffering of very needy people.

## **The 'Sunshine' Coffee Group - Carys Griffiths**

The Thursday 'Sunshine' Coffee Group is going from strength to strength following a slow start after the pandemic. We now have several more people who have join us either on a weekly basis or occasionally. The make-up of the group is also changing with more church members joining. It's a relaxed and happy gathering with lots of laughter. This year we were pleased to welcome a Nepalese lady and another from the Ukraine which led to some

stimulating conversations. As well as lively conversations, we participate in several types of quizzes and games. Before Christmas we had an outing to The Squires Garden Centre, in Teddington where we savoured a tasty Brunch before browsing around the Christmas shop. I'd like to thank Beryl Walker & Janet Neville my co-hosts who are an invaluable help to the group's success. We now look forward to a summer full of interesting things to do and new people to meet.

### **The Gardening Team - Carys Griffiths**

Our current dedicated Gardening Team consists of – Chris Ault, Jon Taylor, Sheila Bryant, Heather Esswood, Bette Tomlinson, and me. Although Jean Cope is no longer able to participate in the actual gardening after her fall, she is very much valued as an adviser as she has considerable gardening experience and knowledge of plants.

Since it was such a dry summer it was quite a challenge to keep the garden flourishing as it needed a great deal of watering. It also meant that the trees shed their leaves earlier than normal and continuously. In a way this helped us, as we could clear the leaves every week and did not need to have the usual extra autumn help, we normally depend on. However, earlier in the year 'Good-Gym' a Kingston Community Volunteer group came to assist us with some very much needed weeding. The group tries to volunteer for at least 100 good deeds a year helping clean up the environment in the local community. Their help was very much appreciated.

Adverts on the church website for gardening volunteers brought several enquiries, but unfortunately no follow up except by one person, Susumu Jacquier-Yamada who appears to fit in well with the team and is quite industrious. We hope he will stay as having three men on the team is very helpful.

We have been unfortunate this spring in having a number of plants removed by persons unknown. However, a couple of the gardeners brought different types of plants for other parts of the garden which in time will spread and fill gaps. The squirrels and pigeons have, as usual, been having a field-day with our plants. This is mainly due to the public feeding them but hopefully this is going to be less of a problem before too long as new plans are afoot to deter these birds and vermin.

One of the benches which used to be situated on the south path of the church is in an extremely dangerous condition and is a health and safety issue. A decision has been made to dispose of it as it has already been repaired several times.

As is their custom Mary & Geoff Warman have taken care of the hedges whilst Caroline and John Ayles have dealt with suckers at the bottom of trees. I am very grateful to them all for their input.

The gardens are there for everyone to enjoy either to just sit and contemplate in a peaceful setting or as they walk through.

### **Listening Service – Sandy Cragg**

Our listeners continue to provide a welcoming, caring and supportive presence in the Church six mornings a week, as well as the occasional lunch hour. The service is hugely appreciated by the many lonely people who are grateful for someone who will just be there and listen and we are very grateful to all those who loyally give their time. This year approximately 700 people have used the Service.

2023 marks 20 years since the inception of the service and we are pleased to continue to welcome new recruits. There will be a training course in May on Saturdays and possibly a further one in the summer on weekdays if there are enough takers.

If you or someone you know might like to volunteer to be part of this, please contact the office or [sandycragg26@gmail.com](mailto:sandycragg26@gmail.com) to find out more. Please note references are required.

### **Seven Saxon Kings Panels – Sandy Cragg**

We have very exciting news – King Athelstan will not be alone on the East End wall for much longer! The next three Kings in the series – Edmund, Eadred and Edwy, are in production. Thanks to the generosity of two anonymous donors, both Edmund and Edwy are now embroidered and beaded and Eadred is currently being worked. The panels will then all be framed at the same time, to be installed in the early autumn - date to be confirmed soon. Then we start serious fundraising for the remaining three, which we plan to have ready for the Athelstan's 1,100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025.

Would you like to help us bring this stunning project to fruition? We plan a book of embroidered names, to be displayed near the panels to help us with this. The name can be yours, or that of a loved one, or your company – see the leaflets on display in the East End - £100, or more if you wish, per name. Look out for the presentation during the Coronation Weekend or for more information, or to discuss how you could help, speak to one of the working groups – Joe; David Robinson; Leo Duff; Pippa Heasman; Sandy Cragg.

### **Flower Team – Faith MacDonald**

Things are slowly returning to 'normal' in respect of the life of the Church although there have been fewer occasions when large floral arrangements have been required. It was so nice to be able to spend time and imagination creating an arrangement around the font for Remembrance Sunday last year. We received many compliments from the public which were much appreciated by the Team. Reverend Joe has requested a similar arrangement for the coronation of King Charles in May.

We have two weddings on the horizon. Weddings, of course, do provide a small amount for the Church coffers because the additional 'uplift', which we charge for the procurement and actual arrangement of the flowers, is given to the church.

A few people have expressed an interest in learning flower arranging so we hope the flower arranging 'team' will slowly increase. This said, it is also the case that, unfortunately, the cost of flowers has increased substantially since 'lockdown' and several of our more reliable suppliers have gone out of business. We now have established a very good relationship with 'Zoe's Flowers' in the Market place and this has enabled us to have a more reliable and convenient supplier.

Nevertheless, flowers now cost considerably more than before 'Lockdown'. Joe is aware of this and, I believe, is sympathetic to asking for a small contribution from the Congregation. A good way to do this would be to resume the "First Sunday in the month" collection of £1 although, obviously, more than this would be much appreciated. Indeed, if we could collect more then we could consider having a small pedestal arrangement permanently in the side Chapel to lift the spirits of those people seeking comfort in the Chapel. Just a thought!

### **Christmas Tree Festival - Liz Deller**

We had a successful Christmas Tree Festival, with 22 decorated trees. We received 4 sponsors, including Saxon Kings Estate Agents, an appropriately named business to be involved in the church fundraising. They have also kindly contributed to the Saxon Kings embroideries. We raised just over £1000, distributed between 9 charities.

We will be re-thinking our fundraising in 2023 but hope to continue with this event.

### **All Saints Book Club – Anne Nicholson**

The Book Club has continued to meet on the fourth Sunday of each month.

We still read the Church Times monthly choice which includes an article about the book and a list of questions to focus our discussions. The choice of books is very varied, and we have interesting and lively discussions.

We have recently recruited three new members and would welcome anyone else interested in joining us.

**The financial accounts report is separate to this report.**