

# **The Parish Church of St John-at-Hampstead**

## **Review of The Year's Activities 2017**

## Foreword from the Vicar

There is an enormous amount to engage the reader in this annual review, and there is much to encourage us. I began my time as Vicar on March 16 2017. Part of me thinks it was only yesterday, and part of me thinks it was ages ago. So much has happened, and there is so much yet to discover. The first thing to say, from Julia and me, is a huge thank you to everyone who has made us so welcome. The Vicarage is a superb place to live and to offer hospitality. Hampstead Parish Church is a wonderful place to be a minister of the Gospel.

Thank you especially to Jon Siddall and Angela Gardner, your Parish Representatives and Churchwardens through the process of my appointment. Their work went way beyond the call. Jenny Lupa took over from Angela at the 2017 Annual Meeting: we are blessed in the dedication, effort and skill of our Churchwardens. We are similarly blessed in Inigo Woolf, our Treasurer, Nick Walser our PCC Secretary, the members of the Standing Committee, Deborah Zandstra, our Safeguarding Officer, and everyone else who has played a formal role in the life of the PCC.

Not least I am grateful for the work of Rebecca Keane, our administrator. I simply could not believe that Rebecca had been here only six months or so longer than me, so encyclopaedic is her knowledge of HPC. Particular thanks to Diana Finning and Gill Perrin, who, while continuing to offer all sorts of gifts and service to HPC, are each retiring from the PCC after too many years to contemplate.

The received wisdom is that you 'watch and wait' in your first year. No chance of that here. James Sherlock's moving to Helsinki meant a busy process leading to the appointment of Peter Foggitt as Director of Music, with the chance to look again at our aspirations for music and worship. The opportunity to host the C4WS Cold Weather Shelter was too good to miss, and proved to be a profound example of community and service. The proposal that we sponsor a refugee family under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme also came at an opportune time, and in both of these cases we have worked in partnership with those from other organisations and in the community.

There is much else on our plate. We are at the end of a five year Mission Action Plan, and need to refresh and re-establish our vision, to guide us through the next few years. Our work with children and young people is active, but stretched, and there remains a vacant role for a paid worker in that area. Our social action and pastoral care are ready to be reshaped. Significant legacy income means that we can look carefully at projects to develop our facilities further. Our 'general' giving is reducing, because congregation numbers have fallen during this decade. Our 'mission' situation is constantly changing, because the world is transforming around us.

I am encouraged, and looking forward to the next few years. In June we will be joined by Ayla Lepine, our new curate. It will be good to have another colleague in the team. I have really valued the work of Jan Rushton, Handley Stevens and Andrew Penny in leading and preaching in worship, along with everyone who contributes Sunday by Sunday. And I remain both impressed and encouraged by the dedication of the great number of volunteers who ensure that our services take place, our children are cared for, our people are visited, our church is cleaned, our churchyards are tended, our visitors are welcomed, and so much more. This is a great place to be. Thank you again.

*Jeremy Fletcher*

## Churchwardens Report

In March, we welcomed Jeremy Fletcher as Vicar following his Institution and Induction by the Bishop of Edmonton and the Archdeacon of Hampstead, bringing the ten month interregnum to a satisfactory close. We would like to express our sincere thanks to all those within the HPC community whose unwavering support and encouragement made the challenge of the interregnum a shared one. The experience of the months since under Jeremy's inspired lead, ably supported by Julia, already gives strong grounds for optimism about the future of our church.

### Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church

It is the responsibility of the churchwardens to inspect and report to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on the fabric, fixtures, fittings and furniture of the church.

We duly completed the annual check of the inventory at the end of the year and are pleased to report that this did not reveal any items of value to be missing or damaged. The inventory records are held securely in hard copy form; a project to complement this by creating an electronic record is planned.

The silver gilt Steeple Cup (dated 1629-30 and donated to the Church in 1747 by Susanna Weedon) remains on loan to the V&A Museum. The item can be viewed in the Silver Galleries – do take a look if you are ever visiting the V & A.

During the course of the year, the opportunity was taken to improve the washing and hot water facilities in the Parish Rooms in readiness for the hosting of the C4WS night shelter. Remedial work was also carried out to address the incidence of damp in the Thorns Room. In addition, the church contributed to the major refurbishment and redecoration of the Vicarage. Further improvements to the buildings are planned following the Quinquennial Inspection Report in late 2017 and in support of the new Mission Action Plan once agreed.

We add our thanks to those expressed elsewhere in this review to all who give generously of their time to help maintain and keep tidy our church buildings and grounds for the use and enjoyment of both members and visitors.

### Statistics of Mission

#### *Electoral Roll*

There were 358 names on the Electoral Roll at 1 January 2017. In the course of the calendar year 9 names were added and 22 removed either through death or relocation away from the parish. The net result was an Electoral Roll of 345 at 31 December 2017.

#### *Attendance, Baptisms, Marriages & Funerals*

The average attendance at worship on the Sundays in October (the period designated by the diocese for gathering such statistical information) was 176 (193) for all services; 145 (160) adults and 31 (33) children with an average of 96 (98) communicants.

For weekday services, there was a weekly average of 5 (5) communicants and 7 adults and 8 children at Holy Hamsters (8 adults and 10 children). There were 12 (18) baptisms, 12 candidates for confirmation (9) and 11 (0) first communions (0). There were 2 (5) weddings and 1 (1) marriage blessings, and 8 (9) funerals. (Figures in brackets are for the previous year).

*Jenny Lupa & Jon Siddall*

## **Reports on Church Activities**

### **Children and Young People**

Our dedicated team of Crèche and Junior Church volunteers continued to support the children's groups in the absence of a Youth/Children's worker. Our numbers remain good with fifty-seven children registered and attendance at Holy Hamsters on a Thursday continues to grow.

We are grateful to Naomi Davey, who coordinated the crèche until December 2017 and we welcome Rebecca Dodson who has taken over from her. Naomi has kindly agreed to continue to produce the very successful Junior Newsletter.

All the Junior Church groups were involved in various charity fund-raising projects this year. The Harvest Festival project 'Send a Cow' raised £895 to equip families in Africa with the seeds, tools and training they need to produce their own harvests and lift themselves out of poverty. The Lent project of 'Toilet Twinning' raised £700 towards funding the building of toilets in South Sudan. A cake sale held on Homeless Sunday in aid of C4WS raised £190.

Seven young adults were confirmed and eleven of our children were admitted to communion in March and April.

In October the Friends of the Music and the Cavatina Chamber Music Trust sponsored a Classical Concert for Children by the Magnard Ensemble at Hampstead Parish Church.

The Monday group started in April 2017 and runs during term time from 9.30am – 11am for children under five. It is run by volunteers who are responsible for setup, activities, buying food and materials.

*Chris Money*

### **Pastoral Care**

The Pastoral Care working party has continued to work towards fulfilling the aims of the Mission Action Plan, which in broad terms involves building an inclusive and caring community, attentive to the needs of all its members, and working towards involving as many members of the congregation as possible.

To begin at the beginning, welcoming new members starts with welcome parties and we have experimented by holding parties at different times and dates of the week. This programme has been limited during the interregnum but useful introductions have been made despite this. There are, of course, many other ways to meet members of the congregation and the Living Book Club, organised and run by Sheena Ginnings, has run since 2014 and given us all an opportunity to hear from a variety of fascinating people. (Sheena has now resigned as organiser as she has taken on other responsibilities and we are hoping that someone new may want to take on running this lively monthly meeting.) The monthly Tea Service, also launched in 2014, has attracted a small congregation from the church and local community who value a short informal service and time for tea and a chat. Following discussions with the organisers at Henderson Court, our local Age UK centre, it will be moving there in 2018 for a trial period. It will be easier for the residents living in sheltered housing if we meet there. In order to help us all to relate to those with dementia in an appropriate way, three Dementia Friends events have been organised, two in 2014 and one in 2017. At the end of the year we joined the Camden Dementia Action Alliance as this will be

a good forum for learning from other community organisations working in Camden and for publicising what we are doing at HPC to support those with dementia and their carers.

Going on outings together is another way to get to know each other and the second Parish Pilgrimage to Westminster in 2017 was successfully accomplished without losing anybody on the way. A small group also had a special visit to the Tower of London where the chaplain, Canon Roger Hall, gave a fascinating visit behind the scenes. Realising that August can be a quiet time for many retired people who stay in London, a week of activities was organised under the title "Holiday in Hampstead". Combining talks, activities, entertainment and delicious lunches it now seems to have a very successful life of its own and ran for the third year in 2017.

In order to improve access to pastoral support and address issues of member isolation a "Friend at Church" visiting scheme has developed so that it is easier to remain aware of the varying needs of the whole congregation. A small team of lay visitors has also been set up and appropriate training has been given. Finally, close links with the Social Action working party have enabled both working parties to respond to a variety of needs in the local community including supporting the work of the Contact Club and Age UK Camden.

Grateful thanks are due to all those who have helped to set up and run these various activities either through their membership of this working party or to those who have willingly joined them. In the words of the Mission Action plan, they have all helped to "demonstrate God's love as a force for good in our community and in the world."

*Diana Finning*

## **Social Action**

2017 was an exciting year for Social Action ventures in which projects started in recent years have now become 'established practice'. These activities include:

- support for Camden and Haringey food banks, and for the Baptist Church Contact Club, where two parishioners are helpers
- the August Holiday-in-Hampstead week of events, which was very well received and drew new people to our church
- the Christmas Hamper Appeal, which provided 40 baskets for elderly neighbours in need.

Through these ventures St. John's has developed friendships with charities we support and with other people in the community who help with the work.

Elsewhere, John Willmer and John Barker have been very active with other parish charities in their work with *Freedom from Torture* and *London Churches Refugee Fund* (JW) and with *Citizens UK* and their Living Wage campaign.(JB), regularly reporting back to HPC.

The PCC's decision, therefore, to open up the church to the Winter Night Shelter in December was warmly welcomed by the Social Action team, who had been hoping to be part of a project which gave opportunities for our church and our school to work together. In the event, Rebecca Dodson, in her role of Meals Co-ordinator for the Shelter, enlisted several HPS families to cook for the guests, along with Liz Cross.

Special thanks are due too to Diana Finning, Sheena Ginnings and Sue Kwok for collaboration this year.

*Rosemary Loyd*

## **C4WS Shelter**

As a trustee of CARIS Camden, when I heard that Holy Trinity, Finchley Rd said it would not be able to host the C4WS shelter on Saturday night, because of their building work, I was quick to propose that Hampstead Parish Church should take it on. The immediate response was positive; Jeremy, then our very new Vicar was enthusiastic and the PCC unanimously positive. Initial calls for volunteers were encouraging. There were some concerns, centring mainly around the provision of a shower (which would indeed be desirable, but its absence was not a major disadvantage) and storage where again the arrangements were not ideal but we survived without major inconvenience.

It was quickly clear that there was great desire to help coming from many different quarters of the congregation and wider parish; residents of Church Row and around volunteered and the catering was almost entirely supplied by teams of parents from HPS. Not all wanted to, or could, be directly involved with welcoming and serving the guests but the families (including some very small stuffers of pillow cases) who made the beds on Saturday afternoon, were as vital to the operation as the ladies who took that bedding away and laundered it each week. There were opportunities for Marthas doing the washing up, and Maries talking to the guests. The idea of the shelter is not to benefit the church, which hosts it, but there was an undeniably widespread feeling of involvement and focus similar in a way to the Spring Fair but longer lasting. Both incur hard work and both are rewarding; the Shelter was not (often, anyway) as much fun as the Fair but several people have mentioned to me a feeling of spiritual enhancement and there was, I believe, a widespread feeling of satisfaction, that in however small a way good work was being done. There were also quite a few laughs; not all the guests could put their problems aside for an evening, but some could with hilarity.

A number of guests have told me unprompted (and second hand reports confirm) that we were considered one of the best shelters for warmth of welcome and for the amazing dinner. As a trustee of CARIS, that made me very proud, and grateful to all who contributed in so many different ways to that success.

We were not, however perfect; the sleeping accommodation was cramped when the shelter had the full complement of 16 guests (which was rare) and the dining room might be most kindly described as cosy. There is nothing effective we can do about this. We could and should, however, improve the washing facilities even if we do not install a shower. And we need to iron out some hiccoughs over the rotas.

As I have said it was primarily a communal effort; but it wouldn't have happened without Jeremy's enthusiasm and Rebecca's support, and my sanity was secured by the knowledge that I had Christine Risebero as lieutenant. I am grateful to them, and many others.

*Andrew Penny*

## **Community Sponsorship Group – Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme**

At its meeting on 17 July 2017 the PCC responded to the global refugee crisis and agreed that the church would apply to become a Community Sponsor for a refugee family under the UK government's 'Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme'.

By its name Community Sponsorship implies the involvement both of our church community and the wider community.

A core group was set up to start working on the long application process. The Vicar is the chairman of the group that includes people from Hampstead Parish Church, Citizens UK (of which the church is a member) and other churches in Hampstead.

We held a successful launch event for the project in the church on 13 October that was attended by approximately 150 people, including our MP Tulip Siddiq and Neil Jamieson CEO of Citizens UK, both of whom spoke at the event. A letter of support from the Archbishop of Canterbury was also received and read out.

We have received several generous donations from members of the congregation that enabled us to fulfil the government's financial criteria and two members of the public generously offered us a flat in Central London for two years for the family at Housing Benefit rates.

At the end of January 2018 we submitted our application and resettlement plan to Camden Council for their approval. This is required before we can submit our application to the Home Office for their approval.

As part of the planned support for our family we have recruited and trained a group of supporters, from both the congregation and wider public who will be involved in helping the family to settle in England, learn English and build new lives.

The Community Sponsorship Group is very grateful to Hampstead Parish Church and its congregation for all their support in so many ways. The church has allowed us to use the church and meeting rooms at no cost; and members of the congregation have given their time, creative talents, skills, professional expertise and financial support to this project.

We hope to welcome our family in the summer and we will be keeping the congregation posted on our progress in the parish magazine.

*Sheena Ginnings*

## **Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Adults at Risk**

The PCC has adopted the Diocese of London's recommended policy statement on the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk, which is renewed annually. By this statement we are reminded that we have a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm. The implementation of the policy is overseen by the Children and Young People's Working Party and by the Church Safeguarding Officer. A copy of the Safeguarding Policy is displayed at the back of the church, as are the names and contact details of the Safeguarding Officer (Deborah Zandstra), and Children's Champion (Vanessa Fitzpatrick) and contact numbers of Childline and Parentline.

We follow the guidelines published by the Diocese of London in all activities involving children, such as the Junior Church, Crèche, Junior Choir and Holy Hamsters. These include aiming to ensure that all leaders and, to the extent possible, regular helpers have up to date DBS checks and that all groups (with the exception of St John's Junior Church group) are supervised by at least two adults, and carrying out regular risk assessments. The carrying out of DBS checks is an ongoing process as checks have to be refreshed periodically and new volunteers offer to help with children's activities. No safeguarding concerns were raised with the safeguarding officer in the year 2017.

*Deborah Zandstra*

## **The Churchyard and Additional Burial Ground**

### **Do you love looking at old churchyards?**

Of course our churchyard goes back much further than can be seen on the surface. The monks of Westminster buried their dead here from 986 onwards. The previous buildings had their, somewhat smaller than now, burial ground too - one which had to be extended in 1760 when the new church attracted a larger congregation from the new Hampstead. We have famous people, we have wild flowers, we have some magnificent trees - and we have weeds! Not everyone appreciates the "rustic charm" thinking it betokens neglect but that couldn't be further from the truth. Come on the first Saturday of the month and you'll find a team of people beavering away at weeds and undergrowth, at flowerbeds and paths, maintaining the natural look but also opening up the history. Some of them even sneak back in at other times too! We're indebted to Camden Council for some recent safety work - they regularly inspect the tombs for signs of decay, as they do the trees too. The Columbarium has been cleaned up and the Memorial Garden boasts a new bench; work is in hand to restore John Constable's tomb.

The graveyards - the area around the church I think of as the churchyard and the one over the road is officially known as the Additional Burial Ground (if you've ever wondered what people are referring to when they say ABG now you know!) but to most visitors it's just "the graveyard" - attract even more visitors than the church, possibly because more famous people are buried outside than in. And once a year we take part in the *Open Garden Squares Weekend* - 9th June this year - when people who've never heard of Hampstead Parish Church or its graveyard visit us. If you've never strolled round and enjoyed the history, the flora and fauna, the roses, the blackberries, why not make this the year you rectify that?

*Judy East*

### **The Cleaning Team**

The cleaning team volunteers – men and women – ensure that the church is kept bright, shiny and as free as possible from dust, litter and spiders' webs. The main bulk of the cleaning is achieved on specific Saturday mornings which provides an opportunity for the team not only to co-ordinate their labours but also to socialise over hot drinks and cake. In the calendar year 2017 the team met for six cleaning mornings:

*Saturday 18 February* Clean the galleries

*Saturday 11 March* Clean the body of the church ahead of the induction on 16 March

*Saturday 10 June* Summer clean of the body of the church

*Saturday 16 September* autumn clean of the body of the church

*Saturday 28 October* Gallery clean

*Saturday 16 December* Christmas clean of the body of the church.

Last year I reported that the team had reached crisis point in terms of the numbers of volunteers willing to undertake cleaning. This remains the case, and we have not always been able to do as complete a job as would be desirable. I am very grateful to those volunteers who do considerably more than their allotted stint, but would like to have sufficient to ensure that everyone has an appropriate task and none need spend more than an hour or two at it.

Many visitors who come to the church comment on how well cared for it seems. This is only possible because of hard work by the cleaning team, but it seems to me this is an outward

and visible sign of Hampstead Parish Church being a caring community. That is an important message. I should like to express my thanks to the team for their very thorough and faithful efforts.

*Anne Stevens*

## **Fairtrade at Hampstead Parish Church**

In 2017 Traidcraft focused on the needs of farming families whose livelihoods have been devastated by climate change. The money raised has helped families to gain the skills they need to grow more and earn more, allowing them to access healthcare, send their children to school, build a functional home and simply have enough to feed their families. Traidcraft is helping to break down the barriers that keep hard working people living in poverty and we, at Hampstead Parish Church, are doing what we can to help, and we are grateful to the congregation for their continued support.

I am very grateful too, to our core group of helpers who assist with setting out the stall and selling the goods on the first Sunday of every month but we would very much welcome a few additional volunteers who we could call on occasionally, when one of our regular helpers is away.

Some highlights over the last year:

- Supplying coffee, tea and biscuits after the morning service, and for other events such as the Open Garden Weekend.
- Providing household items such as handwash and toilet rolls for use at church.
- Holding a successful stall at the Christmas Market, selling Christmas cards, wrapping paper and Advent calendars as well as Palestinian dates and olive oil, Christmas biscuits and chocolates, and much more.
- Supplying chocolates for the Contact Club's Christmas dinner.
- Holding a successful Big Brew event which raised £450; it was attended by our local M.P. Tulip Siddiq, as Traidcraft Exchange is campaigning for a Brexit that remembers farmers and workers in the poorest countries.
- Providing some of the contents of the Christmas hampers which are distributed to members of the local community through Age UK.
- Supplying the Food Bank with food and other essential household items

Every penny that is spent at the Traidcraft stall goes towards helping people in some of the world's poorest regions to build businesses and create a better future for their families and communities. Thank you all very much.

*Sue Kwok*

## **The Flower Team**

The talented Flower Team do flowers in the Church throughout the year (except Advent and Lent) and the team is always happy to welcome new members. The only requisite is to enjoy working with flowers in what is a very beautiful and special building.

At Easter, Harvest and Christmas we share the decorating responsibilities with the children's groups and other members of the congregation who come along to help.

I would like to thank the congregation for their appreciative comments and their financial support of the flowers in the church throughout the year.

I took over the Flower Team at Christmas 2003 from the indomitable Joan Barton who whenever I suggested doing things differently would say “when you are in charge you can do it your way”.

I retired from the role of Flower Team coordinator at Christmas 2017. (It isn't quite 15 years because Judy East took charge of the team for several years.) I am so very pleased that it is now in the hands of the very creative, capable and enthusiastic team led by Esther Fitzgerald and supported by Marilyn Brooks and Barbara Alden. I am looking forward to being part of the flower team as they do things differently.

My very grateful thanks to the whole flower team for their enthusiasm, commitment and creativity while I was the Flower Team Coordinator; and also to Rebecca Keane for all her practical help.

*Sheena Ginnings*

## **The Junior Choir**

The Junior Choir continues its regular schedule of Thursday 5.30-7.00, Friday 4.45-5.45 and Sunday from 9.00. Since October 2017 the choristers sing Choral Evensong weekly on Thursday (a big step up but all going well!) as well as continuing to be part of the Parish Eucharist on most Sunday mornings.

I currently have 18 choristers ranging from age 7-17. They are all Barney Rodgers Scholars meaning that they receive subsidised one to one singing tuition from either myself or our singing tutors, some of whom are members of the adult choir. Choristers are entered for ABRSM and RSCM examinations as and when and it's pleasing to see the choristers do really well in their exams!

Since writing last year we have held a fun fundraising quiz night, enjoyed outings to Salisbury and Ely Cathedrals, given thanks for the Barney Rodgers Memorial Fund at a special Evensong in October 2017, sung in St Paul's Cathedral as part of the RSCM award holders presentation and sung the Eucharist at the Old Royal Naval College Chapel, Greenwich. It's also been wonderful to welcome two Organ Scholars and provide them with opportunities for playing and conducting at Junior Choir services.

*David Moore*  
*Junior Choir Director*

## **Church Stewards**

In the very cold weather Rebecca and Jeremy generously provided hot drinks for all comers. A very kind gesture that highlights one important aspect of an open church - shelter. In bad weather all sorts of people take shelter in the church - mothers with their babies, grandparents with that toddler who has to be taken out somewhere whatever the weather (and we have a range of reading material to while away the time till it stops raining), tourists, casual drop-ins, some of them surprised at the sight that opens up before them. We're so used to the church it's stopped surprising us but to a newcomer the inside is so unlike the outside they regularly register astonishment! There are people on more serious missions

too - many come in to pray and to light a candle, to sit quietly in a pew and drink in the peace. One of the skills of a steward is to gauge who wants to talk and who wants to be left alone - we've all visited churches where visitors are pounced on and treated to the whole spiel whether we wanted it or not, and then the visitor becomes the 'carer' humouring the needs of the steward!

But I talk as if we had a whole rota of stewards providing cover day in day out and that's not at all the reality.

What we have are a few dedicated individuals (very few) filling a few slots in the week. And I struggle to understand why or target likely new volunteers. Although it can, admittedly, sometimes be a bit cold, on the whole an hour or two in a quiet church with book or knitting is actually rather relaxing. Or bring a friend for a quiet chat. Rebecca's usually in the office so you can make yourself a cuppa (but resist the temptation to talk to her while she's trying to work!) and you know that there is someone else in the building.

### **So I'm asking two things**

- 1        Could you be a volunteer?
- 2        If not, why not?

Seriously, I'd be glad to know what's so off-putting about stewarding and maybe we can make some changes ([judy.east@hampsteadparishchurch.org.uk](mailto:judy.east@hampsteadparishchurch.org.uk)).

*Judy East*

### **Servers**

Over the last two decades my reports have looked at the year in question with Holy Week still fresh in one's memory. This year's was colder than usual but each of the services was unique and moving and Easter Day's Eucharist service with Baptism was warm and thrilling. As servers, we are honoured to play our part in these services.

Early in 2017 our beautiful church was the setting for a wonderful funeral to Doris Asher. Remembered and loved for much, I particularly remembered and was grateful for her long-time stalwart serving.

We have an excellent team of servers, diverse and representative of our wonderful church (with 10 adults and six young people), and I thank them all, and also Judy East and Rebecca Keane, working behind the scenes in the Parish Office. However, we urgently need more volunteers to join our team.

The role of a server is to assist the clergy before, during and after a Parish Eucharist service. It is a privilege for us to support Jeremy and Jan in this way and play an active part in our worship - with the added bonus of being close to our excellent professional and junior choirs in the chancel.

We operate a rota system, and servers select the services they wish to volunteer for. We recognise the importance of attending services as a member of the congregation and we accommodate our members who contribute in other capacities (such as sidesperson, Junior Church leader, intercessor, member of the coffee team, etc.).

If you would like to find out more about becoming a Server, please contact me. We can have a chat about what's involved and about your availability. All servers receive instruction and support.

And there's our annual Mulled Wine and Mince Pie party to look forward to as well!

*David Gardner*

## **Sidesmen and Welcomers**

The Sidesmen and Welcomers team has continued to play an important part in ensuring a positive initial contact for visitors to services in the church. Around 40 people help out regularly at either the 8.00am, 10.30am, or Evensong services and a number of others volunteer occasionally, for example at the Christmas services.

Our main task is to extend a warm welcome to all those who attend services, whether they are regular members of the congregation, newcomers or visitors, as well as to be on hand to provide assistance and information when required. The Sidesmen and Welcomers help prepare for services, hand out hymn books and pew sheets, ensure that everything runs smoothly 'behind the scenes' and tidy the church afterwards.

Those on duty also fulfil a further important responsibility in protecting the health and safety of the congregation should an emergency arise, including the evacuation of the church. Meetings between the Head Sidesman and the Churchwardens / Duty Wardens, and among the Sidesmen and Welcomers, are held from time to time to discuss the role of the group and possible ways of improving our efforts. A 'Welcoming Safely' workshop was held in January when Linda Ridgers-Waite, Chair of Stewards at Southwark Cathedral, shared her experiences with the assembled group of Sidesmen, Welcomers and Church Stewards.

Grateful thanks as always go to all members of the team for their valued support. We would benefit from additional volunteers at the moment and are especially keen that all groups and ages are adequately represented. Please let me know if you who would like to be involved or if you are aware of anyone who would like to be.

*Richard Blakesley*

## **Reports on Activities of Associated Charities and Organisations**

### **Hampstead Community Choir**

The choir had a very successful second full year. Under the directorship of David Moore our repertoire, and confidence, have increased. New members have joined throughout the year and we currently have 25 regular singers.

We are very grateful for the continued support of the Friends of the Music. Financially we are indebted to the Hampstead Church Music Trust for their grant and although we have a good income from our subscriptions we are not yet able to fully pay our way. We received half of the proceeds of the Quiz Night held in June but we are aware that funding from that source should not be relied upon.

We organised two major community concerts involving the Hampstead Players and the Junior Choir. Summer Nights in June raised £310 for Parish Charities and Christmas Lights in December raised £638 for C4WS Homeless Project. Both events were great fun and much appreciated by both the audience and the participants.

We sang an anthem at three services while the regular choir was on holiday as well as singing on two special occasions after the morning service at HPC. We performed at Henderson Court as part of Holiday in Hampstead 'Tea at the Ritz' afternoon and again to sing carols just before Christmas. We sang Christmas carols at Swiss Cottage tube station in aid of Christian Aid and were invited to sing at an event for Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe in Belsize Park.

The Community Choir continues to provide a creative outlet for members of the congregation and wider community who love to sing. It is open to people of all levels of musical ability and members do not need to audition or be able to read music.

*Chris Money*

### **The Friends of the Drama**

The Friends of the Drama experienced another successful year with the summer and autumn productions once again at the heart of our activities.

Our summer production was George Bernard Shaw's classic, Pygmalion. Hoda Ali directed a talented cast in a clear and compelling portrayal of this modern fable, to a highly appreciative audience. In the autumn we were treated to Jane Austen's Persuasion, skilfully adapted by Jane Mayfield and Shereen Abdallah, and directed by Shereen, supported by Jane's experienced hand as associate director. The audiences were charmed by this retelling of a much loved novel. The fact that both these successful productions were directorial debuts is a very positive sign of the Society's continuing strength.

The year's productions raised a combined surplus of more than £3,000 which has meant that during 2017 the Friends of the Drama were able, together with the surplus from the previous year, to commit a further significant charitable donation of £6,500 to Hampstead Parish Church.

The popular Literary Hours on the third Wednesday of each month reinforced the Friends of the Drama's commitment to encouraging church-based literary activities and raised over £950 for the HPC Fabric Fund. We also held two well-attended evening events: a reading of

a fascinating new play, Rembrandt and Spinoza, and a showcase evening of scenes directed by members. We have also been very pleased to be involved in the inaugural Summer Nights, and continue our involvement in the Christmas Lights concerts.

In 2017 we welcomed our new vicar Jeremy Fletcher and we would like to extend our thanks to him for his interest and support. Our grateful thanks also go to all those who continue to support the group, both on and off stage, and enable us to reach out into the local community through our literary and dramatic activities. We remain indebted to Hampstead Parish Church for the ongoing use of its facilities.

*Matthew Williams, Chairman*

## **The Friends of the Music**

We remember with gratitude our former President, Lady Jane Garland, who passed away in the spring of 2017. Jane was a loyal supporter of the music at the Parish Church, and it was only fitting that we sang the beautiful Mozart Requiem in her memory in November. Jenny Macdonald-Hay graciously accepted to become our new President. Jenny has a great depth of musical experience as a concert violinist, and has for many years been a mainstay of the musical life of our parish.

Passion week was marked by a superb and inspiring performance of the St Matthew Passion, accompanied by Ensemble Passio and conducted by James Sherlock, with the Junior Choir as *ripieno* in Part I. Christine Buras gave a lovely Sidwell Memorial Recital with a very interesting programme of songs by Clara and Robert Schumann, Johannes Brahms, Edvard Grieg, and Jean Sibelius. The Magnard Ensemble gave a new special concert for children age 4 – 11, making music fun for them, and playing a range of musical instruments including a hosepipe. This brilliant and well-attended event was co-ordinated by Helen Evans with financial support from the Cavatina Trust. At our Desert Island Discs evening, we heard the musical selection of castaway Lord Mance who chose a wide range of music, from Mozart to Wagner and Scottish Ballads, while providing fascinating accounts of his experience on the Supreme Court. Harking back to an old tradition of home recitals, Kathy Nicholson devised a lovely and lively *Georgian Christmas*, together with Aidan Coburn and Martin Oxenham, with Nick Fletcher (our vicar's son) on the keyboard.

Our monthly lunchtime Recital series in the Parish Church have continued. For example, the phenomenal French pianist Patrick Hemmerlé played Chopin's 27 etudes in May to great acclaim. We remain extremely appreciative to David Moore for organising these concerts.

September saw the departure of James Sherlock, who conducted our church choir for five years. He returned in November to conduct not only the Come & Sing Mozart's Requiem, and to perform a sparkling Mozart piano concerto (K488), but also a superbly conducted Bach Mass in B Minor for the Hampstead Arts Festival. His tenure, coinciding with the Charmian England bequest, has raised the standard of the adult choir to a new level. Although we will miss James, we immensely appreciate his successor Peter Foggitt. Peter has a wide musical range as pianist, organist, conductor and composer, and has already shown himself to be a wonderful Director of Music.

The Junior Choir is going from strength to strength under the inspiring leadership of David Moore. The choristers sang a full Choral Evensong twice a month on Thursday, with adult support, and a shortened version of Choral Evening Prayer on the other Thursdays. David

also leads the Community Choir, which gave some lovely performances, including the Summer Nights concert in June and the Christmas Lights concert in December.

Gill Perrin resigned as Chair of the Committee late 2017. We are very grateful for Gill's excellent and manifold contributions over the years. We shall miss her effective leadership, her deep musical knowledge, and her warmth. We are grateful to the Trustees of the Hampstead Church Music Trust for the financial support that allowed us to enjoy such beautiful music last year!

*Maurits Dolmans, Chairman*

## **Hampstead Christian Study Centre**

The Study Centre has continued its meetings as a theological reading group in the Crypt Room on Wednesdays from 8 – 9.30, but sometimes we have got ourselves into a lively discussion which has gone on till almost 10pm.

The book we read in the Spring Term was just such a book, giving rise to much debate. It was a book we all enjoyed and from which we learnt a great deal – Marcus Borg and Dominic Crossan jointly debating “The First Paul”. In this we looked at modern scholarship which has established which of his Epistles were written by Paul and which probably were not. It was pleasing to many of us to find that the views ascribed to St Paul, such as his statements against women, which have prejudiced many against him, are all to be found in the Epistles of dubious authorship.

In the autumn we played our modest part in remembering the Reformation by looking at “All Things Made New” by Diarmaid MacCulloch, a collection of his essays and reviews from various sources. They were arranged in chronological order and dealt with Reformations across Europe, the English Reformation and a final section looking back at the effects of it. We were not able to cover every chapter but were led in our thinking by various people including the Revd Jeremy Fletcher who with great erudition helped us to see Cranmer in perspective.

In the spring we turned to an older book, “on Being Liked” by James Alison which elucidated the various theories of the atonement. I think it is fair to say that most of us found this book difficult and were critical of his style though not of his general ideas. We plan to read two books this coming term, both not obviously theological, Claire Tomalin's autobiography and a novel by Salley Vickers, “The Cleaner of Chartres”.

We had an interesting Saturday lecture on Milton by the Revd Jon Dean which took place at St Andrews and we are grateful for their hospitality. We were again able to host the Annual Donald Barnes Memorial Lecture which this year was given by Canon Mark Oakley from St Paul's. As was expected from the author of an inspiring book on poetry, “The Splash of Words”, this was a witty and wide-ranging talk pleading for richer liturgical language which would open our hearts and minds rather than closing them.

The 21 Club continues to discuss subjects of topical interest and anyone wanting to attend the monthly Monday talk should contact the Revd Jan Rushton. Meanwhile the Study Centre is happy to have as many voices as possible joining in the debates on books which make us think more clearly about our faith.

*Mary Shakeshaft*

## Reports from Synod

### Report on the London Diocesan Synod

The Synod met three times in 2017.

The finances of the London Diocesan Fund remain in good shape with income from parishes rising between 2 and 3%. It is likely Parishes will be required to contribute 2 or 3% more each year for the three years to 2020.

In July, the Bishop of Lebombo, our ALMA partner in Southern Mozambique led our worship and this seems to be developing into a trend as the Bishop of Angola led our worship in July 2016.

The Diocese promoted a resolution on reducing the maximum bets on fixed odds betting terminals and this was supported by General Synod in Summer 2017. Parliament is looking at reducing the limit from £100 but probably nowhere near the £2 the Synod would like to see.

With Bishop Richard leaving at the beginning of 2017 and Bishop Sarah's appointment not being announced until the end of the year, few initiatives have been started in 2017.

The information disseminated to us which stuck most in my mind are the mission statistics. Church attendance is broadly static in the Diocese with a fall in outer London balanced by growth in Inner London where there have been a growing number of Church Plants.

Nationally between 2010 and 2015 there was a 4% decline in usual Sunday attendance. Churches in the Edmonton Area had a fall of 2.9% in attendance whereas the London Diocese saw a 3.8% increase over this period led by 9% growth in Inner London.

*Inigo Woolf*

### Report on the North Camden Deanery Synod

Synod met four times in the year – holding regular meetings in February and June, a garden party in July, and a joint meeting with South Camden deanery synod in October.

The February meeting was at St Saviour's church. Synod reviewed some of the activities at member churches that responded to the exercise led by +Ric in October 2016 on how the church in North Camden might grow. The Revd Jonathan Kester, Area Dean, recognised the high levels of energy involved in parish outreach, and asked for support for those projects that had been identified at deanery level. A good question was to ask "this is something we are excited about, but how can we take it forward?" He welcomed ideas on how to support both the existing and new projects.

In the business session, the Deanery Annual Report and Accounts were approved. Synod thanked Charles Aylwin for his preparation of the Financial Statements. A grant to C4WS of £900 was approved; school grants were agreed for projects at Emmanuel, St Luke's and St Paul's; and contribution levels were set for the Schools Maintenance Fund (to be renamed the Schools Development Fund in line with its objects) at £100 per parish and for the General Fund at £15.

In response to a request from the Vacancy in See Committee, Synod discussed its views on

the needs of the diocese and the qualities needed in the next Bishop of London. Work in small groups was shared in a plenary session, and the notes from this were consolidated by the Lay Chair and reviewed by the Area Dean before being submitted.

The June meeting was at Holy Trinity Swiss Cottage, and took place during the Area Dean's sabbatical. The Lay Chair welcomed seven new members, before +Rob chaired the election of Synod officers for the new triennium. Peter Ginnings and Nancy Jirira were elected unanimously as Lay Chair and Synod Secretary respectively. There were no nominations for Treasurer and, for the time being, Standing Committee has asked Charles Aylwin to continue.

+Rob conducted a brief service to commission the new Synod. He spoke of the key role of synods in the church's leadership and in encouraging mission and mutual support. He asked Synod members to renew their commitment to serving God and the people within the deanery and across London.

There was a presentation by +Rob and Anne Casson (Lay Chair, West Haringey) about the Ambassadors training programme. This encourages lay people to be positive about sharing their faith in their ordinary lives, and ensures they are equipped with the right language and resources to be able to do so. We each face a "front line" – at work, at the school gate, at the bus stop – where we have the opportunity for conversation or for unexpected acts of kindness that may make a difference to those we meet.

The Revd Kristin Breuss, HTSC, and the Revd Tim Keightley, project manager, described Holy Trinity's plans for creating a new, more flexible centre on the present site that would enable an expansion of the range of the church's activities, especially amongst vulnerable young people. Synod watched a video about the project, and had an opportunity to see the plans and discuss them with the team. The project has an estimated project cost of £11m, of which the first £3m had already been pledged.

St Mary Kilburn and St James West Hampstead proposed a motion for debate at Synod:

"That this Synod requests the House of Bishops to commend under Canon B4 an Order of Prayer and Dedication after Civil Partnership or Same-Sex marriage, indicative of no departure from the doctrine of the Church of England on any essential matter, and furnished with ample safeguards that no parish should be obliged to host, nor minister to conduct, such a service."

The Revd Andrew Foreshow-Cain spoke to it, emphasising that the motion did not seek to change the church's teaching and understanding of marriage, but rather to recognise the complex array of relationships that exist today and to allow those churches that so wish to recognise and celebrate committed relationships that are currently unrecognised.

In discussion he confirmed that this was simply an enabling measure and not mandatory. There was one speaker in favour and one against. The motion was passed – with the majority in favour, 1 against and 4 abstentions. The Lay Chair communicated the result to the Diocese's Synodical Secretary to be considered by the Diocesan Bishop's Council.

In the Business section, it was reported that:

- i) since the last meeting the Revd Jeremy Fletcher had been inducted to St John at Hampstead, the Revd Marjorie Brown had been made a Prebendary of St Paul's, and a lay member, Chinweoke Onurah-Ajike, had died suddenly

- ii) this was the last meeting for the Revd Diana Young, who was moving to St Alban's diocese, and for the Revd Andrew Foreshew-Cain, who is retiring and moving to Manchester
- iii) Churches Together in Hampstead and Hampstead Parish Church are hoping to sponsor two Syrian families under a government approved scheme
- iv) Deanery school governors were elected/re-elected at – Anne Diack, Hampstead Parochial; Flick Rea, Emmanuel; Jessica Scudder, St Mary's.

Synod was asked to keep all these people and situations in their prayers.

In July the garden party at St Cuthbert's was relatively poorly attended, but those who were there had a good time despite the inclement weather. It was also a good opportunity for those who did not know this church – tucked away in the corner of the deanery – to have a good look around and appreciate how a modern worship space can work. Our thanks to those who did the catering.

The joint deanery meeting in October was held at Hampstead Parish Church, since this seemed to be the most convenient venue for members from both Synods. The Area Dean for North Camden introduced the new vicar of Hampstead, the Revd Jeremy Fletcher, who spoke briefly about his background before moving to London.

The Lay Chair then introduced the Revd Dr Steve Griffiths, the Edmonton Area advocate for youth ministry, who spoke about the diocese's strategy for working with young people (11 to 18 years old). The intention is to engage every parish in youth ministry in some way by 2025. There were several strands to his work:

- developing leaders and changing church culture to engage with youth more
- investing in youth projects and apprentices
- developing strong links between churches and secondary schools
- establishing 6 youth minsters to act as resource centres for youth ministry
- running youth missions with other youth organisations

Training in youth ministry has already started; and six "minster churches" have been identified as resource centres to support parish work, across the range of traditions and types of need.

In the Business section, the Lay Chair called for volunteers to sit on Camden's Standing Advisor Committee on Religious Education (SACRE), and Synod unanimously approved the election of Adrian Barratt as its LDBS director in succession to the Revd Andrew Foreshew-Cain.

*Peter Ginnings*  
*Lay Chair*

## **APPENDIX A – Membership of the PCC and Working Parties**

(As at 31 December 2017)

### **Trustees under an Act of Parliament of 1827**

#### Ex Officio

Revd Jeremy Fletcher	Vicar (from 16 March 2017)
Angela Gardner	Churchwarden (until 24 April 2017)
Jenny Lupa	Churchwarden (from 24 April 2017)
Jon Siddall	Churchwarden
Revd Diana Young	Curate (until 25 June 2017)

#### Elected

Gaynor Basseby-Fish  
Angela Gardner  
Gillian Perrin  
John Willmer  
Margaret Willmer

### **Membership of the PCC**

#### Ex Officio

Revd Jeremy Fletcher *	Vicar and PCC Chairman (from 16 March 2017)
Angela Gardner *	Churchwarden and PCC Vice Chairman (until 24 April 2017)
Jenny Lupa *	Churchwarden (from 24 April 2017 and an elected member)
Jon Siddall *	Churchwarden and (from 24 April 2017) PCC Vice Chairman
Revd Diana Young	Curate (until 25 June 2017)

#### *As a lay member of the London Diocesan Synod*

Inigo Woolf *	Treasurer (also an ex officio member of the Deanery Synod and an elected member)
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#### *As lay members of the North Camden Deanery Synod*

John Barker	(from 1 June 2017)
Annie Duarte	(until 31 May 2017)
Diana Finning *	(until 31 May 2017, an elected member and, until 24 April 2017, Deputy Churchwarden)
Vanessa Fitzpatrick	(also an elected member)
Angela Gardner	(from 1 June 2017, Deputy Churchwarden from 24 April 2017)
Peter Ginnings	(also an elected member)
Rosemary Loyd	

#### Elected Members

Gaynor Basseby-Fish	Electoral Roll Officer
Elizabeth Beesley	
Natasha Blumenthal	(until 24 April 2017)
Jonathan Davey	
Helen Evans	
Seka Graovac	
Benjamin Harrison	(from 24 April 2017 until 9 October 2017)
Christine Money	
Andrew Penny *	Deputy Churchwarden
Handley Stevens	
Nicholas Walser *	PCC Secretary

#### Co-opted Member

Revd Jan Rushton	Associate Priest
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(Those marked with an asterisk \* served as members of the Standing Committee for all or part of the year)

## **Working Parties of the PCC**

The Working Parties support and carry out the plans and programme of activities approved by the PCC.

The Working Parties consist of members of the PCC and other members of the church with relevant skills or experience. The intention is that each should include a mixture of established members (to provide continuity over what we do well) and newer members (to encourage new thinking about changing needs). The membership of the Working Parties is stated as at 31 December 2017. The Vicar, Churchwardens and PCC Secretary may attend meetings of any Working Party of which they are not already a member.

The **Buildings and Fabric Working Party** sustains and develops our physical heritage. Its role is to ensure the good repair, safety and functioning of the church building (including heating and lighting); to anticipate and recommend improvements to meet the changing needs of the congregation; to commission and manage related projects (in association with our professional advisers); to monitor the use and condition of the Parish Rooms and the needs of outside users; and to monitor the work of the cleaning team and contractor.

Members: Inigo Woolf (Chair), Elizabeth Beesley, Mark Nevard, Mervyn Warren, Margaret Willmer. The position of Secretary is currently vacant.

The **Children and Young People's Working Party** continues to support and encourage the work of all our children's organisations and events, oversees parish policy on child protection and seeks to find ways in which the church can reach out and further its work with children and families.

Members: Marilyn Brooks (Joint Chair), Christine Money (Joint Chair and Secretary), Naomi Davey, Vanessa Fitzpatrick (Children's Champion), David Moore, Andrew Penny, Deborah Zandstra (Safeguarding Officer).

The **Communications Working Party** helps to build community through informing members and "seekers" of church activities. Its role is to develop a single communications strategy and plans that span several media (website, magazine, emails, pew sheets, notice boards); to oversee the commissioning of materials, design, production and maintenance of these media to meet the information needs of users; to support staff and members engaged in communications activities; and periodically to review user satisfaction with church communications.

Members: Jon Siddall (Interim Chair), Graham Lee, Margaret Willmer. The position of Secretary is currently vacant.

The **Finance and Fundraising Working Party** exists:

- to promote the link between faith and financial responsibility;
- to encourage a culture of giving by members on a regular basis;
- to review in detail budgets, results, and financial reports and to debate and propose solutions to financial issues;

*(the Working Party does this in recognition of its role in advising the Standing Committee which may not have the time or expertise to do this work. The role of the Standing Committee is to assess the financial working party's recommendations in the light of reports from other working parties and make recommendations to the PCC, which retains the legal responsibility for all financial matters. To avoid duplication of effort the*

*financial working party will meet the week before the Standing Committee, and on other occasions as necessary.)*

- to devise fund raising campaigns in the context of the above, to support the priorities in the Mission Action Plan;
- to support and monitor the effectiveness of fund-raising activities.

Members: Charles Perrin (Chair), Angela Gardner (Secretary), Peter Ginnings, Bryan Sanderson, Jon Siddall, Inigo Woolf (Treasurer), the Vicar.

The **Pastoral Care Working Party** helps build an inclusive and caring community attentive to the needs of all its members. It reviews and develops the pastoral care of the congregation, including those who are housebound, isolated or in hospital. It supports the work of the sidesmen, welcomers and those responsible for hospitality after worship, arranges for newcomers to be properly welcomed and involved, and encourages / initiates the development of support networks and group structures to involve as many members of the congregation as possible.

Members: Diana Finning (Chair), Handley Stevens (Secretary), Stephen Clarke, Sheena Ginnings, Jean Harrison, Nicki Siddall, Nicholas White, and (representing the Social Action Working Party) Rosemary Loyd.

The **Social Action Working Party** focuses our engagement with the world around us. It proposes the list of charities to be supported by the church<sup>1</sup>; provides information about and personal contact with these charities; plans a programme for increasing congregational involvement in this part of our mission; and focuses our response to issues of social justice and social need in the local area.

<sup>1</sup> This sum, amounting to 10% of our parochial income, comes mainly from collections at Easter, Whitsun and Christmas, and from the proceeds of the Spring Fair.

Members: Rosemary Loyd (Chair), Liz Cross (Secretary), John Barker, Natasha Blumenthal, Rebecca Dodson, Seka Graovac, Ted Pleasance, Revd Jan Rushton, John Willmer, and (representing the Pastoral Care Working Party) Diana Finning.

The **Volunteering and Events Working Party** exists to increase member participation in running church spiritual, pastoral and social activities, and to oversee the church's events. Its role is to support other working parties in need of finding volunteers; to devise a programme of social activities that engages the whole congregation; to encourage and recruit volunteers with the appropriate time and skills to assist with the variety of activities; and to provide support to the individuals and groups responsible for organising/putting on individual events (as needed).

Members: Andrew Penny (Chair), Elizabeth Beesley, Jenny Lupa, Jon Siddall.

The **Worship, Education and Spirituality Advisory Group** helps equip the congregation to be "the church in the world". It exists to advise the Vicar on the presentation of the liturgy; to explore possible developments in the liturgy, pattern or style of services; to review needs and opportunities to improve the Christian education of the congregation; to review, develop or commission retreats, quiet days, study groups and courses; and to monitor the work of the choir and serving team.

Members: The Vicar (Chair), Richard Blakesley, Judy East, Vanessa Fitzpatrick, Peter Foggitt, David Gardner, Jenny Lupa, David Moore, Andrew Penny, Revd Jan Rushton, Jon Siddall, Handley Stevens, Nicholas White..