

APCM REPORTS 2021-22



'Faith, Hope and Love in the heart of Streatham'

RECTORS REPORT

'Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all the darkness' Desmond Tutu

These words have never been truer in my lifetime. We are living through some extraordinary days and there is no shortage of darkness around. Russia's invasion of the Ukraine has shocked us all and this, happening so soon after 2 years of a global pandemic, is leading many into fearful, anxious, and dark places. As followers of Christ, we are called to be curators of hope who, as Desmond Tutu both described and embodied in his lifetime, can see that there is always light to be found.

I hope that as you read these reports you will be encouraged by the light that shines out of every page. It is the light that shines from a community of people pulling in the same direction, building one another up and serving their community in acts of loving service. My heartfelt thanks go to every person who has contributed to our life together this year; you are curators of hope!

I would like to especially thank the clergy team who have enabled us to enjoy a varied style of worship and preaching this year and are a huge personal support to me. I would also like to make special mention of our musicians, who under the Director of Music's leadership, have consistently enriched our worship with their enormous talent and commitment. I want to pay tribute to Moyra and Sue, our fabulous Church Wardens and Sien Yin Cheng our outstanding Treasurer. Together they make serving as your Rector a joy.

Finally, I would like to thank Barbara Booth who stepped in as our volunteer Parish Administrator for 10 months of this year while Eileen McLoughlin was on maternity leave. Barbara gave generously of her time and considerable talent, ensuring that Sunday by Sunday we had our worship and notices sheets. She has kindly agreed to continue with us our office volunteer about which we are all delighted!

There is no need for me to add to what is written in these reports, but I would like to draw your attention to the **Appendix** at the back of the booklet. It contains a **Mission Action Plan update**, highlighting the progress we have made this year regarding our four main priorities:

- **Worship.**
- **Future Generations.**
- **The Especially Vulnerable.**
- **Care of Creation.**

Once again, the progress has been remarkable and there is so much to give thanks to God for.

There are two specific challenges facing us this coming year which I would like to draw your attention to.

1. **Finance** – during 2021 our income from individual standing order donations has fallen considerably. Generous givers have sadly died, moved away, or experienced a change in circumstances and as a result have stopped (or reduced) their standing order to St Leonard's. The combined total amounts to approximately 10K. This presents us with a huge challenge, especially as we set a budget for 2023.

What can we do?

- The good news is that we have increased in number and so I would ask our newcomers to consider setting up a monthly standing order to support the work of St Leonard's. A regular monthly gift makes a huge difference, no matter how small, because it enables us to budget, and we receive your gift even if you haven't been able to get to church! We can also claim gift aid on your donation if you are a UK taxpayer.
- We shall also be returning to taking up a cash collection at services. Covid19 restrictions meant we had to stop this, but we plan to restart it from Easter Sunday onwards. If you are unable to set up a standing order, please remember to bring your cash donation to church and if you are a UK Tax payer please make use of the yellow envelopes available.
- If you are an existing giver, and haven't reviewed your gift for a few years, it would be wonderful if you would consider a small increase in your donation.

2. **The Church Hall** – The Spires Charity currently occupy our Church Hall on Tooting Bec Gardens, but the lease runs out in September 2023. Although this is 18 months away, there is much to think about as we plan for the future use of the hall and not least the enormous amount of work that will be required to repair and refurbish it. Despite being a Charity supporting a most worthy cause, The Spires have sadly not fulfilled their maintenance and repair obligations and as a result we will need to invest heavily if we are to bring it up to a standard worthy of use. We believe we can achieve this through the likely sale of our property on Aldrington Road. The PCC and a small sub committee are exploring our options as I write, and despite the challenges we are hopeful that the Church Hall will become the most remarkable asset to us in the long term.

Thank you for being a part of St Leonard's,
it continues to be a great privilege and joy to serve as your Rector.
With my love and prayers,



*What we celebrate, O God, in the life of this church is yours, not ours.
Yours its strength and hope, yours its faith and high endeavour.
All is yours and you are all in all.
Take the strength and weakness of this church,
And let both speak of your glory.
Take the hopes and the fears of this church,
and let both bring its people nearer to you.
Take the excitement and the routine of this church,
And let both be means by which your work is done.
Amen.*

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

After a fond farewell to Ann Morisy, we delightedly welcomed Sue Kearton as our new churchwarden. It has been a busy year, despite the covid restrictions that persisted. The sidesperson teams have been excellent, doling out hand sanitiser, masks, welcomes and latterly service sheets once we no longer needed to put them on the chairs. It is wonderful to have some of our younger members of the congregation join us in this role. They were particularly valued when we doubled up on services at Christmas to ensure we maintained suitable social distancing – it meant a lot more work for everyone but gave those wishing to attend the opportunity to do so as safely as possible.

John Brown and his band of friends keep the churchyard spic and span and often put the world to rights on a Monday while the church is open for private prayer or Mindful Movement. Ian Pratt and Andrew Johnson are church watchers on a Wednesday after the midday eucharist.

As most of you will know, the churchwardens have a major responsibility for the church buildings and churchyard. During the year the work on the roof continued with the Chancel/East End roof and some of the stonework being renewed; one soon discovers the complexity of church buildings and the value of our architect, Roderick Maclennan. The windows have had all their polycarbonate removed, repairs undertaken, and new metal grills installed providing better light penetration. Following the interior redecoration and high window cleaning, the stained glass is wonderful, even our black Madonna had a dust down! The work has been funded by various charities ably approached by Caroline Leaveaux who is also the mistress of faculties. Speaking of which at long last we have fixed the defibrillator to the wall in the narthex and have permission to replace the doors from the narthex into the main church – tenders are being sought and to install a new handrail for the steps at the side of the chancel.

A break in resulted in the need to repair one of the plain windows above the ramp. We think the intruder saw the camera on the gallery (used for live streaming) and thought it was part of

the security system so exited swiftly – one positive from the covid pandemic! As is the ability to continue to live stream (thank you Nick and team) for those still anxious about meeting in busy places or living too far away to come to the church each Sunday. The CCTV system has been accessed by the police to assist their enquiries as it can show some activity outside the churchyard, and it gave a lovely view of our intruder before he redirected the camera when breaking in!

The tablets are still being used by some friends and the links between the socially vulnerable or isolated and younger members of the congregation continue with some permanent friendships being forged from such a difficult time in 2020.

Lambeth Landscapes led by Ruth Davies, continue to be highly valued and have contributed to Eco church activities. We hope they will soon start on tomb and monument renovations. The beauty of our churchyard has increased with all the work by Ali and her colleagues from Eco Church and God's Green Acre group. It gives such pleasure to us all and to the public who use the churchyard as a shortcut as well as accruing awards – well done Ali and team!

The Church Hall continues to be leased by Spires under the new arrangement while they are looking for new premises. In the meantime, we are having to undertake various remedial works to ensure the building is maintained until we can undertake the extensive refurbishment it requires for future use. We are actively looking at options for starting developments and renovations.

The organ is getting regular tuning/voicing and was carefully wrapped for the duration of the decorating. It seems it takes a tuner a long time to really get to know the instrument and each time he visits, Sam from Harrison and Harrison, gets to know her foibles a bit better.

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Sue and Phil Heeley, assistant churchwardens, who manage the not insignificant task of arranging for all the visits by various personnel to ensure our public building conforms to Health and Safety and other regulations required, as well as ensuring the man from Beaver keeps any unwanted little visitors away. Examples include the spire, the boilers, the piano, the heating engineer, lighting checks, the lightning conductor checks, fire extinguishers PAT tests and so on – thank you so much Sue and Phil. Another thank you to Phil for helping keep the churchyard neat and tidy after the Monday crew have done the honours.

The Tellers are organised by Ian Pratt and count the offerings every two weeks or so rather than weekly, as this income stream is reduced, possibly because the plate has not been passed, but also a number of people prefer to use the contactless machine

Also owned by us is the 'Curate's House' in Aldrington Road which has been let to a delightful family and is managed by a local lettings agent. It will require some work in the near future. The service sheets that miraculously appear each week have recently been produced by the wonderful Barbara Booth who has stood in for Eileen who has been on maternity leave, enjoying life with her third daughter Dottie – who loves a cuddle but couldn't get many from most of us until recently due to 'you know what'. At least once we returned to our normal pattern of Sunday worship the load was reduced.

2021 was a year for our Quinquennial inspection – the 5 yearly architect report that lets us know what we need to do urgently, or consider doing in the longer term. Roderick MacLennan has been present at church a lot in recent times overseeing the roof repairs and the north porch work so is very familiar with our building. So, there were no nasty surprises from his inspection on 15th December and some of the recommendations have already been actioned such as clearing the gutters, completing the works on the east end roof, the damaged window and redecoration. Two minor leaks need investigation and we need to monitor the graves stones and trees in conjunction with Lambeth Landscapes.

There are other people, too numerous to mention, who help our church run so smoothly and without whom we would not be able to provide all the services and activities there are – thank you all so much. As ever it is a joy to work with Rev'd Canon Anna Norman-Walker who continues to amaze with her capacity for hard work and good ideas, all done with such humour and thoughtfulness – we are indeed most fortunate to have her as rector to lead our amazing clergy team.

*Moyra Heggie and Sue Kearton
Churchwardens*

The following reports will appear in alphabetic order.

ADULT LEARNING REPORT

After the success of Zoom in Lockdowns we have continued to meet this way for discussion during the last year. In November/December 2021 we followed a four-week Advent Course based around the 'Christmas readings' from the gospels, with a recurring theme of Travel. Currently a similar group is meeting during Lent to explore a Pilgrim Course on The Lord's Prayer.

Parallel to this, a new group emerged. The Wednesday Lunch Club, led by Reader, Marion Gray, meets in church most Wednesdays after the lunchtime eucharist (following a short break for a drink and packed lunch). So far Marion has led Bible Study/Discussions on John's Gospel and Old Testament themes of Sabbath, Justice and Shalom. The group is currently

studying the same material as the Zoom Group and, after Easter, this will be followed by a series on the Holy Spirit.

Maybe this 'mixed economy' will become a permanent fixture? Both groups have quite a number of 'regulars' but some people pop in and out for unavoidable reasons and you are always welcome. If you have any suggestions for the future, please let us know.

Rev Eileen Turner

BROWNIES REPORT

It is with sadness that I report this year that after around 10 years since we restarted 6th Streatham brownies, it has closed again. I was unable to offer the required time and other volunteers could not be found despite trying for at least six months. The unit had naturally run down during the last two years, we had continued to meet on Zoom and back in person once we were permitted but had not taken in many new girls on Zoom and only a few once we resumed in person. The girls have all been 'reoused' in other local units or have moved up to Guides.

Angie Leach (Brown Owl)

CHILDREN'S CHURCH REPORT

After the long absence caused by the pandemic, we finally welcomed back our Children's Church groups in September. We run two groups which are divided according to age: Reception to Year 3 go to the Chapel of Unity at the back of the church whilst Years 4 to 6 go upstairs to the Clergy Vestry. Leaders of both groups use Roots learning and worship resources which are based on the weekly gospel used in the main service. We currently have 27 children on our registers, and we are averaging an attendance of 8 children per week. Whilst these numbers are down after such a long absence, we anticipate our figures will grow as we continue to come out of the pandemic.

We would like to thank our brilliant team including Ali, Claire, Sue, Beauty, Bethia, Temi, Rachel, Liz and Pat as well as our young volunteer, Ciara, who will be helping with the younger group until the end of the summer term as part of her Duke of Edinburgh award. We're also hugely thankful that Bethia is currently training to become one of our leaders.

It has been wonderful to finally have our children's groups back and we look forward to continuing our work with the children of St Leonard's during the coming year.

Julia Dare and Rachel Turner

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

This year Poppy Giles has taken over as our Children's Society Representative. Our thanks go to Sue Heeley for faithfully serving in the role for many years and to Kate Heeley for counting the mountains of coins that appear every year in our boxes. Lots of new donors signed up for a box this year and so we look forward to seeing what the pennies have amounted to this time next year! In 2020 we raised £678

CHRISTIAN AID REPORT

As with last year, due to the Pandemic, we were unable to have fundraising events this year for Christian Aid week in May. However, we shifted our focus to October and used Harvest Festival as an opportunity to think about the work of Christian Aid and to raise funds to support its valuable work. Brian Martin from Christian Aid was our guest speaker at our All-Age Harvest festival service and we raised over £1,000 in donations, with further donations made online as well! This was a fantastic achievement and over double what we had raised the year before.

We anticipate that this year, all being well, we will organise fundraising events linked to Christian Aid week itself.

Liz Stephenson

COFFEE TEAM

The new coffee rota was at last in place again by the Autumn after a long break and is now firmly up and running. Thank you to everyone on the rota who keep it going so smoothly every Sunday. I know you are much appreciated by the congregation.

However, we would be very grateful for more volunteers to be on the reserve list to cover occasional 5th Sundays or absences. So, anyone interested please get in touch with me.

Susan Gibson

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

It has been a bumpy year for Deanery Synod meetings with cancellations due to Covid. However, there has been an engaging programme around this. Being a member of Lambeth South Deanery Synod is interesting and worthwhile, if you are considering it.

On 13th May 2021, St Leonard's hosted the **Ascension Day service**, with Revd Stephen Hance, who is a member of our clergy team as well as the national team, providing a sermon on 'Come Holy Spirit'. Although we still had Covid restrictions, the choir was able to offer a socially distanced accompaniment to the service, and this was well received.

On 26th May, we discussed **bereavement** and the role of churches as the first port of call for many people after a death of someone close. There is a wider movement of Bereavement Friendly Churches which aim to support us with how to respond when someone is bereaved – often very hard as we don't know what to say. This may tempt us into trite expressions such as 'they are with God now' which is no comfort to someone not of our faith – but who still wants the comfort of coming to church and just being accepted at a hard time. More can be found on the Loss and Hope website (lossandhope.org)

On 8th July, we discussed the **Environment** – with a panel of speakers, including this time Ali Angus who spoke about our Eco Church and its work as a fresh expression of Christianity, providing a new way into faith. People who have never been into our church yard have come by, chatted and met us, and some have joined us and become part of our church family. Ali was flanked by Brother Hugh from the A Rocha Eco Church network, and by Ian Christie who is senior lecturer at the University of Surrey, and Diocesan advisor for Kingston.

The autumn was taken up with **elections**, in which we were all invited to take part. Our winter Synod was to be a social gathering, our first chance to meet in person, but a rise in Covid meant that this had to be cancelled.

Caroline Leveaux

DEEPDENE HOME REPORT

Deepdene Home is a mental healthcare provider offering care to people with severe and enduring mental health needs, and in Streatham, they provide a residential home for twenty people with specialised nursing and long-term needs.

Since the easing of lockdown, Marion Gray and I walk the short distance to Stanhope Road once a month and meet the wonderful people who live in a shared community and the staff who support them. At our monthly service we regularly have attendance of between ten and fifteen people. It is clear they enjoy our visits and make us feel very welcome.

This Christmas, with some members of the choir we shared in a carol service, sang some of their favourite Christmas carols and joined in tea. It was evident that everyone really appreciated the time we took to be with them and to share in the joy of Christmas.

We will be back to see them this Easter, to share in the love and compassion of God, share a cup of tea and maybe a hot cross bun too.

It is a joy to be with them each month and I look forward, with Marion (and David who has recently joined us), to being able to strengthen our ties with them further over the upcoming months.

Rev Hayley Argles-Grant

ECO CHURCH REPORT

do justly, love mercy and walk humbly

Since the last report, it has been great to have restarted our in-person, Eco Church monthly Gatherings, using space inside as well as continuing to work in our church garden. In 2021 we held:

- A documentary film showing
- Soul Space, with Rev Dave
- A pilgrimage to Southwark Cathedral

This is the final year of the funded part of Eco Church at St Leonard's, and this year we are trialing many different types of activities which include:

- Swap Shop, eco-sharing our excess
- Building bird boxes from kits made of scrap wood
- a book reading, talk and discussion about recycling and climate change.

And to come...

- Earth Day Green Fair with a Swap Shop and plant sale,
- a making workshop a
- A day trip to A' Rocha UK's Wolf Fields site in West London.

All these activities are ways to explore how we can minimise our human footprint and the contribution our adjust our current way of living to be kinder, more sustainable and to discover ways of living in balance in the world.

In God's Green Acre, in May and June, inspired by the Psalm23 Bible Society Project, we will be creating some space near the oak tree, for quiet reflection and pause to remember our loved ones interned there.

We are proud to have been awarded a rare, Silver Eco Church Award. Well done to all on this collective achievement. We were also awarded a London in Bloom Silver Gilt award for Church Yards, two years running and with one mark away from the top prize last year, this summer, we are going for Gold.

So, it is with huge gratitude that I thank everyone for their prayers and support, for donations to swap and of plants, pots, seeds, tools, time, skill, and good humour. With special thanks to: Anita, Charlie, Dennis, Duncan, Hazel, Kate, Katie, Leonie, Mary, Nicky, Pat and Tim.

Any questions or comments, please get in touch. If you feel that you might be called to help move Eco Church forward in the next phase of its development, we would love to hear from you.

Ecochurchsw16@gmail.com text or call me on-07791 121 274 or speak to Canon Anna.

Ali Angus

ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

24 names have been added to the Electoral Roll in the past year (and none removed) bringing the total to 235.

Tony Nunn

FINANCE REPORT

Another year has passed by very quickly and we have survived it in spite of the many challenges facing us.

When we set the budget for the year 2021 in November 2020, it was prepared with a lot of uncertainties ahead of us. But I am pleased to report that we ended the year with a smaller deficit than budgeted. And we have succeeded in carrying out repairs to our East End roof, the stained glass and redecorated the church. Although we received grants from Viridor Entrust, Garfield Weston Foundation and Heritage England, to name a few, I must thank our congregation for their generosity and support, without which we would not have been able to achieve these projects.

We have seen a shift from loose money collection and envelope giving to online giving either via the Total Giving website or our card reader situated in the Narthex and we are thankful for the foresight of our dear rector for this.

During the year, we also received two further grants - one to support Interfaith Activities and the other to assist in the Covid-19 recovery. As expected, both grants are being used to fulfil their intended purposes.

We continue to support our children's choir and choral scholars and hope to be able to do so in the future.

And now onwards and upwards for 2022!

Sien Yin Cheng, Treasurer

FLOWER ARRANGING REPORT

Flowers enhance the beauty of our Church. They contribute to the wellbeing of the congregation and improve the atmosphere within the Church. As well as those who attend Church I hope they were also of joy to those joining us online.

I would like to thank people who generously donated money for flowers and the people who supply foliage through the year. I would also like to thank our lovely team who dedicate their Saturday mornings each week to decorate our church and keep it looking beautiful.

Mary Treacy

FREEDOM CLUB AND STREATHAM SENIORS REPORT

We have yet to do our post covid big party, but as we write activities are starting to get back to normal.

Our first meeting was on 17th September where just over 20 of us met for our eucharist and then ate our own sandwiches (bring and share lunches have not yet been resumed) but we did provide cake and hot drinks. Ali in her role as Covid Pastor facilitated a good session for us to talk to each other and reflect on the past 18 months.

A small group went to Wimbledon to see our own Robert Owen and friends in Jolly Good Company a musical hall type entertainment with fish supper included, we were ferried there and back by an alternative to Greyhound cars – John Gillette (Office Eileen’s dad) and his black cab.

Our final activity for 2021 was a Christmas café concerto on 7th December, whilst maintaining social distancing we served drinks and titbits to the participants who were entertained by two of our choral scholars and the chamber choir of Streatham and Clapham High.

The Freedom Club also works closely with Streatham Senior Connections. Streatham Senior Connections involved churches in Streatham working together on behalf of older people. Under this umbrella we donated throws and funds for hot water bottles to the Foodbank this year; John Brown did two sessions on local history, one at the Vale, a new retirement complex in Knollys Road, and one at St Peter’s Church and 30 of us had a trip to Capel for a pub lunch. This was such a success we returned with Freedom Club members in October.

Mindful Movement hosted by Oona and Diana goes from strength to strength even on zoom, but it is a joy to be back in the church.

So, we have come back with a bit of a bang and hope to continue in 2022 with lots of good events. We would really love a few more of our congregation who may be eligible by age to come a join us in our activities.

Moyra Heggie

MUSIC REPORT

It has been another eventful and successful musical year at St Leonard's, and I am delighted that we are now able to have the full choir singing for services in a non-socially distanced manner.

Numbers in the adult choir have once again increased, this year from 18 to 21. I believe that this has helped to improve the sound of the choir, though I am still keen to increase numbers over the coming years. We appointed our first three choral scholars last year, and I am delighted that all these three have remained with us this year. They have also been joined by Andrea Manuel and André Soares since September. Andrea and André are both studying at The Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and they have each contributed greatly to the choir over the last six months.

We have recently applied to The Ouseley Church Music Trust for a grant to continue our choral scholarship programme, and we are hugely grateful to those members of the St Leonard's congregation who have already given to this worthy cause. We very much hope to continue the programme in its current form, as our five scholars have contributed so much to musical life at St Leonard's over the last year.

The numbers in our chorister section have remained consistent, and I am pleased that we welcomed three new choristers in Year 3 into our choir at the beginning of the academic year. Over the course of the year, 14 choristers were awarded their surplices, as they had sufficiently progressed through the RSCM 'Voice for Life' programme. All our choristers are progressing both vocally and musically and continue to work hard on Thursday evenings in term-time. A personal highlight was the singing of our choristers at the two Christmas Carol Services. We are now actively recruiting new choristers in school years 3 and 4, so if you have a child at that age who is a keen singer, please do get in touch.

In September, we introduced a 'Changing Voices' section for our choristers, which is ably led by our senior choral scholar, Mark. There are currently two boys being supported in singing through the voice change, and I am sure they will be in the vanguard of male chorister vocal development at St Leonard's over the coming years.

Choral Evensong resumed at the end of July, and we have been singing this service weekly since the beginning of September. It has been great to return to the regular pattern of worship through music, and I am pleased to see that the size of the congregation for Evensong seems to be slowly building. This is an enjoyable, relaxing service where music is to the forefront, so please do come and join us on a Sunday at 4.30pm.

As always, my thanks go to Travis for his playing and to Mary for her assistance with our choristers. Thank you also to Anna and the team for constantly believing in the importance of making high-quality music in our church, and for all their efforts in facilitating it.

Calum Fraser, Director of Music

OPEN THE BOOK REPORT

With the pandemic receding and an increasing wish by the nation to return to some normality as soon as possible, we resumed our stories at the school.

Working in the New Testament, we lowered the sick man through the roof, with a gasp from our audience as he nearly slid off the stretcher, but Jesus was at hand to steady things. The Centurion marched his miniature army across the stage with their new helmets gleaming, wearing the chainmail knitted by church members. The storm on the lake all but blew us over by Mr Jackson's audio intervention - the technology in this school is second to none. Needless to say, the fish flowed effortlessly into our nets when the time was right. Our story this week is of the "Loaves and the fishes" and the crowd on the shore listening to Jesus is the entire school, having been primed to "pretend eat" and enjoy, which they will do with gusto as they love to participate.

New members continue to join our little group, and we are really grateful for this as inevitably some of us cannot be present at all times, due to a variety of reasons. We are a core group of about 10 at the moment but always ready to welcome anyone willing to give us a try. It is a very worthwhile and enjoyable project and we think and hope that we make a difference to our small children, some of whom may be hearing and taking an interest in these stories for the first time.

Pat Aggarwal

PRAYER REQUEST REPORT

Your prayers a source of comfort and strength for those who have asked for them.

We pray and keep praying because God wants us to and because God wants to be in a loving relationship with us. At different times in our lives we can suffer in mind, body or spirit and we reach out to our worshipping community for their prayerful support. Suffering is hard, painful and challenging. We pray that God may use this time to bring about something good. This may be healing, acceptance and a strengthening of our relationship with God.

With Anna's support we stay in contact with those who have asked us to pray for them, to say we continue to pray for their healing and enquire about their journey towards healing or death.

Loving God comfort and sustain all who suffer. Give us the reassurance of your presence and enduring peace. Amen.

Oona Emerson

PULSE (YOUTH CLUB) REPORT

It has been wonderful to get back to meeting in person this past year, and we continue to meet weekly during term time. We have 21 young people on our books, and usually have pretty much a full house each week. They are aged between 10 and 16.

We managed to go on our planned weekend trip to Hoppers in Kent last July and had a wonderful time away together. We took 18 young people and 9 adults. We plan to return to Hoppers this July which we are very much looking forward to.

Conscious of our expanding age range, we now sometimes split into age groups for our short talk (or 'God Slot' as we call it), so that we can keep things relevant to all our young people, whatever their stage.

Pulse continues to make links with the wider church community. We have Pulse members helping on Sundays with children's church, sides duty, serving and the live stream. A number of our Pulse members also joined the Eco Church pilgrimage to Southwark Cathedral. We are working together with Freedom Club to arrange an evening in the summer when Pulse and Freedom club can join together, possibly for a Beetle Drive! We are having a visit from Julie who runs the monthly Taizé services. This aims to give the young people a taster of Taizé and possibly get them involved in one of the upcoming services.

We have 2 young people currently volunteering at Pulse as part of their Duke of Edinburgh award.

We would like to thank the wonderful team who make Pulse work each week. Creating games, giving talks, organising crafts, cooking wonderful food, and just being there and getting to know our young people.

Nick & Rachel Turner

RINGERS' REPORT

The past two years have been strange and frustrating times for bell ringers – no ringing at all during the first lockdown, then “socially-distanced” ringing (involving strange combinations of bells), incumbents insisting on lateral flow tests etc. Things are more or less back to normal now, but many towers have seen their band diminished as ringers failed to return, either for health reasons or because they found other things to do with their time, and St. Leonard's is no exception.

We are particularly sad that Wilf Grove is no longer able to ring, having suffered a heart attack in addition to worsening Parkinson's disease. Wilf learnt to ring at Immanuel church, where his father was the verger, in 1962 and transferred to St Leonard's when ringing ceased at Immanuel in the late 60s (the bells were removed in 1976).

We were also shocked when John Loughery sustained horrific injuries to his right hand in an accident last October. However, he is undergoing physiotherapy and hoping to be back on the end of a rope as soon as his hand has regained sufficient strength and mobility.

On a more positive note, we are pleased to welcome Hannah who joined the band in January, having done a little ringing at university a few years ago, and is now making great progress. We are also grateful for Emily, who was married in St Leonard's in October and rings with us most Sunday mornings.

Whilst we currently ring four, five or six of our eight bells on Sunday, the smaller bells don't get heard very often, which is a shame. Bell ringing is a very sociable activity and one which unusually combines physical and mental exercise. So, if you feel any inclination to have a go, do come along any Tuesday evening (7.30 – 9.00); we'd be delighted to "show you the ropes".

In particular, I'm looking for someone fit and mechanically minded who might be interested in taking on the role of Steeple Keeper (that is the person mainly responsible for routine maintenance of the bells).

Tony Nunn, Tower Captain

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

The work of St Leonard's safeguarding officers, Sue Heeley and Ken Gordon, quietly continues through the year of the Parish. Appointed by the PCC and working closely with the Rector we try to ensure the safety of all, whatever their age or vulnerability, who access our church and participate in the many activities throughout the year.

Each Diocese of the C of E has been independently audited in respect of safeguarding and, indeed, at parish levels we have been required to conduct our own self-audits and anticipate this to continue. There are also various committees constantly updating safeguarding policies and guidelines which will continue long into the future so it is a constantly changing picture.

The Diocesan Policies are to be found in the various Church of England documents and in particular '**A Safe Church**' which encompasses the same and has been adopted by the PCC. This sets out in detail the policies to ensure the safety of all and during the past couple of

years has and continues to be updated. To assist Bishop Christopher, the Diocese has a small but very effective Safeguarding Advisory Team.

During the past year, numbers of young people actively involved in the life of our church has continued to grow, through their contributions to toddler church, crèche, children's church, youth group, junior choir, as servers, Taizé Service and much more. Their safety is of the highest priority and all adults responsible for leading or supervising are recruited following our safeguarding policy and procedures.

Having covered young people, many others involved in the life of our church are vulnerable. It is important we are aware of these adults and afford to them the same protection we give to our younger members. Those visiting the housebound or involved in the leadership of groups and events for older people are subject to safeguarding procedures and guidelines as contained in the Diocesan policies.

In order to maintain and enhance our safeguarding procedure we are continuing to develop our database (similar to the single central register in schools), which has allowed to establish a rolling programme of regular DBS checks for all members of the church family who undertake specific roles with regard to young people or vulnerable adults. This means that several established groups have been rechecked and we are grateful to St. Leonard's School for supporting this process for our Open The Book team.

We feel sure St. Leonard's is a safe church and that it will continue to remain so but, that can only be achieved with the assistance of **all members of the church family** being actively aware of safeguarding and if concerns arise, speaking with Anna, Sue or Ken.

Lastly, we would like to remind everyone that all safeguarding policies can be easily accessed through the church website together with contact details for Ken, Sue and the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers. We end by expressing grateful thanks for the help given by many to each of us throughout the past year.

Ken Gordon/Sue Heeley

SERVERS REPORT

My thanks again to all the team for their commitment throughout the last year. Following (at last) a full return to our duties, it has indeed been a pleasure to resume our contribution to St. Leonard's services. The long break necessitated certain changes to the team, and I am pleased to welcome (throughout the course of the past year) the addition of Precious, Eden, Eloise, Esmond and Paige.

My thanks also to those who work so assiduously behind the scenes of St. Leonard's chancel in upholding its grandeur: to Monica who launders the Altar linen, Patricia who polishes the brass, and Sue and Mary, those skillful needlewomen who maintain the Altar frontals and keep our robes in good order.

Gill Tomlinson

SPACE TO BE

Space to Be aims to be a place where you can find a bit of peace in a frantic world, and come into the Presence of the Spirit with a quieter mind.

I now offer two sessions a month during the school term. The first Wednesday offers an online place (using the zoom platform) where participants can meditate together for about 20 minutes. On the second Wednesday of the month, we meet at St. Leonard's from 7.30pm for an hour.

I have tried to make the St. Leonard's sessions more accessible for people who are not used to being with silence. Although each session is slightly different, a general outline would be:

- Welcome, introductions and opening prayer
- Entering into companionable silence
- A settling practice such as a body and breath mindfulness practice
- A poem or reading
- Music chosen to help the mind and body relax and calm
- A period of deliberate surrender to God. At this point participants are invited to use their own practice whether that's Centering prayer, Christian meditation, mindfulness etc. I generally suggest the practice of Christian Meditation as a quick way into holding the silence if people are new to this.
- Either a contemplative activity to follow if people wish to engage, or participants can continue to meditate.
- Music to soothe
- Final prayer and or reading.

In the future I plan to introduce a labyrinth style contemplation, making use of the existing church layout.

Numbers joining with me vary from two to seven. I have about twenty on my email list.

A big thank you to the St. Leonard's for allowing me to host these sessions!

Peter Johnson

ST. LEONARD'S CHURCH ARCHIVIST REPORT

I continue to receive numerous enquiries concerning the history of St. Leonard's church and the parish of Streatham and during the past year information and assistance has been provided to:

- Leigh Chard in connection with his relatives, Arthur & Harriet Mitchell, who lived in Balham in the parish of Streatham in the 1830s and 40s and who were buried in our graveyard in 1851 and 1849.
- The residents of 30 Tooting Bec Gardens on the history of their house which was built on the site of Wood Lodge, a large mansion that stood in extensive grounds next to Streatham Rectory and Tithe Barn.
- Michael Davies of Oxford in connection with the marriage of his foster parents, Muriel Grimshaw of 179 Wellfield Road and John Davies of Tooting in 1950.
- Peter Sparkes, concerning his distant relative, Elizabeth Howland (nee Child), who was buried at St. Leonard's and was married to John Howland, Lord of the Manor of Streatham and Tooting Bec, whose handsome monument is in the tower of the church.
- Tony Plowright concerning the possible burial of his grandmother, Mrs. Billett, in our churchyard.
- Further assistance and information was supplied to Ms. Diane Conrad-Daubrah of Switzerland concerning the Revd. Stenton Eardley of Immanuel Church, Streatham Common, in connection with the prominent role he played in the Church of England Temperance Movement and his local activities in that cause.
- Assistance was provided to Michael Danley of the Church of the English Martyrs concerning architectural plans and drawings of the church.
- On behalf of the Streatham Society, a tour of the church, crypt and bell tower was undertaken as part of the Lambeth Heritage Festival held in September 2021.
- A meeting was held at St. Leonard's with Professor Dr. Cassie Ulph of Manchester University concerning her "History Without Houses" project she hopes to launch later this year featuring Streatham Park and the Thrale family. I undertook a tour of the church, including the Thrale vault in the crypt, and, together with members of the Streatham Society and others, visited the site of Streatham Park house with the professor and discussed with her possible local locations which could be used for her project.

- Information and assistance was supplied to David Crisp of Lewin Road concerning the Lewin family, members of which are buried in our churchyard and lived in Streatham in the 17th and 18th centuries. David was researching the family in connection with the 150th anniversary of the building of Lewin Road.
- I assisted Tony Nunn in providing information and illustrations of St. Leonard's Church War Memorial and other memorials that commemorated those killed in wars which were once in the church, together with various other war memorials in Streatham, to Alan Littell of the War Memorials Trust for inclusion on the War Memorials Online website.

Sadly I have to report severe damage caused to the magnificent tomb (No 210 on our graveyard plan) situated in the north western part of the churchyard. The tomb has been damaged beyond repair and is a tragic loss to the heritage of our ancient graveyard and would appear to have been a mysterious and pointless act of vandalism.

We thank Victor McGill for his litter picking duties each Monday and for all he does to help keep the churchyard tidy and free from litter. I am also grateful to the many others who have toiled in the churchyard together with members of the Eco church group who have made such a magnificent contribution in enhancing the graveyard with plantings and nature friendly developments. The churchyard is one of Streatham's ancient historic sites and as a result of these labours it is enjoyed by thousands of people who walk through it each year and find it such a pleasant place to visit.

John W Brown, Church Archivist

ST. LEONARD'S SCHOOL GOVERNORS

Continuing their service as representatives nominated by the PCC into 2022 on the governing body are Julia Dare, Eileen McLoughlin, Denise Hamilton and Anna Jones. I would like to welcome Susie Stubbs who has recently joined as the latest PCC nominated governor.

As we emerge from the pandemic, like society the school continues to return to normal, as activities are being held in person. But the school continues to adopt technology where possible to enhance learning. Likewise, the governing body has taken a blended approach utilising technology to enhance governance and also embracing the opportunity to work together in person.

As always, on behalf of the governing body I would like to thank Simon Jackson, Laura Akhtar and Natasha Gavin and all of the staff at the school for their continued resilience and hard work at St Leonard's.

Jason Aspell (Chair of Governors)

ST. LEONARD'S SCHOOL HEADTEACHER REPORT

What is embedded?

Church representation remains at the heart of the school's Local Governing Board (LGB) and therefore the strategic leadership of the school. The church continues to support some of the school's most vulnerable families by providing financial support to assist with shopping for food and household items. The church also provides vouchers for children in need of new school footwear and has established a partnership with *Shoe Zone* on Streatham High Road.

Canon Anna has visited school to lead worship fortnightly and has visited for other purposes also, including advising on curriculum content for RE, providing pastoral support and sessions for pupils. Children from the school continue to have the opportunity to audition for the church choir and to be mentored through an accredited scheme in choral singing.

We are looking forward to returning to our end of term services in church and will have an Easter service in April.

The *Open the Book* team regularly visit, bringing the Bible stories to life for our infant children. The work, dedication and performances involved are greatly appreciated by the children and adults within the school's community.

Parent donations (following our Christmas performances) were collected for our chosen charities: *The Nehemiah Project* and *The Carmen Suite* at St George's Hospital. We do wish to make these partnerships much stronger as time progresses.

What is new?

Recently, governors have been able to return to making school visits, focusing their attention on understanding the school's curriculum, how we identify and provide for children with additional needs and how we identify, manage and help children and families where there are safeguarding concerns.

The school aligning itself with the parish church and has agreed to raise funds for the *British Red Cross* in response to the humanitarian situation arising in Ukraine. We will be holding an event before the end of this term.

What is to come?

Disadvantaged children in receipt of pupil premium funding will be able to begin working with the church's eco team in our school garden after Easter. This project has been difficult to get off the ground due to the damage that abandonment had caused in our vegetable garden.

Towards the end of the summer term, the school will be introducing the Church of England's adapted *Ten Ten* resources to lead worship in our infant and junior phased assemblies. Canon Anna will be supporting the training of staff who will be leading these acts.

Simon Jackson

TAIZE REPORT

The monthly Taizé services have continued over the last year, initially online via Zoom and then returning to the church from September. The services on the second Sunday of each month at 6.30pm are quiet and contemplative, following the format of chants and silence from the Taizé community in France. The planning group continues to meet regularly and to set up and clear the space on the service evenings. This year we have relied on the large bank of services that we have created over the last nine years, always using the readings of the day as the central inspiration for the liturgy.

Our Taizé congregation continues to include people from around the UK via the live stream who find this style of prayer and singing to be helpful in their spiritual life and we have received many encouraging messages over the year to encourage us to keep the live stream going.

The service continues to be advertised through the 'Taizé In London' and 'St Leonard's Church' Facebook pages. Returning to the church has been a welcome re-gathering of our familiar Taizé congregation and we are also delighted to see new faces every month, many who have found out about the service through friends and social media contacts. St Leonard's youth group, 'Pulse', are now familiar with this style of meditative prayer and are involved in the planning for this year's Stations of the Cross Taizé service on Palm Sunday.

Julie McCann and the Taizé Team

TODDLER CHURCH REPORT

After much longer on Zoom than we anticipated, toddler church has been noisily and enthusiastically back in church for a year or so now. St Leonard's echoes to the sounds of around 30 (plus) enthusiastic toddlers every term-time Monday from 10.30 to about 11.45; with at least one carer each – mums, dads, grandparents, childminders, aunts, neighbours; a rather large group and getting larger and noisier by the week. The children rush into the building and are mostly wildly enthusiastic participants in the fast-moving pattern of the hour. The older ones have learned the songs and the actions and can anticipate what is coming next, diving in the instrument box for the loudest drums, sitting nicely for the story, making helpful prayer suggestions, and knowing when it is time to rush down the aisle for squash and a biscuit.

There have also been some recent innovations: the wonky cardboard box theatre used for telling stories has been transformed into a wooden theatre (although the cardboard figures and backdrops are the same, and with the same propensity to fall over), the diocese has given a grant for the theatre and for more mats to accommodate our constantly growing number of children.

We have been joined by Temi, who is proving a great help with the IT side of things, Rachel makes coffee and cares for us all, Barbara welcomes everyone at the door, coordinates the buggy park (it requires a lot of coordination) and ensures that the registration is complete and everyone helps with the not inconsiderable tidying up. It is all turning into quite the organisation, led by Anna and Hayley, both of whose enthusiasm and positivity remains undimmed.

Elizabeth Ridout.

Mission Action Plan St Leonard's Church Streatham



'Faith, Hope and Love in the heart of Streatham'



Our four priorities are:

I. Our Worship.

We want to express our gratitude to God by offering the best of who we are and the gifts we have in our worship

We want our worship to be accessible, welcoming, and inclusive of all.

We want to hear what God is saying to us and be open and responsive.

In 2021 we have:

- Maintained online worship throughout.
- Offered continuous ministry during lockdowns on Zoom.
- Adapted to social distancing – Choristers split groups / main services at x2 times.
- Built back attendance post Covid lockdowns.

- Installed new 'Stations of the Cross'.
- Hosted a deanery ascension service.
- Choral Scholars X 2 / New Choir members / Choristers strengthening.
- Commissioned a new Altar Fall.
- New Servers.
- New Bell ringers.
- Expanded the reading and intercessor rota.
- Lockdown weddings.
- Advent & Lent courses via Zoom
- The 'Start' Course – Adults and YP together.
- Wednesday Lunch club – Bible study Group.
- Amazing Christmas services – Lighting extravaganza!

2. Those who are especially vulnerable.

We want the vulnerable in our community to experience God's love through us.

We want to ensure that those who are vulnerable among us, both close at hand and in the wider world, are noticed and supported.

In 2021 we have:

- Online Mindful movement.
- Food bank referrals
- 60-minute sing - Zoom
- Christmas vouchers / school shoes.
- Christmas gifts Spires / food bank
- Christian Aid service and funds
- Children Society boxes rebooted.
- Freedom Club & SSC returned and rebuilding.
- Deepdene House – team growing.

3. Future generations.

We want to ensure that local children and young people receive from us the nurture and care they need to grow in faith, hope and love.

We want to share the story of God's love with the children in our community and beyond.

We want to strengthen our relationship with our church school and other schools in our neighbourhood

In 2021 we have:

- Pulse – Zoom and in person. Numbers up and growing. Weekend away.
- Toddler Church – zooming and booming. 32 Families. Team grown.
- Confirmations – 10 Youngsters (Start course)
- Baptisms +++++
- Schools work – Open the book.
- Assemblies – online and in person.

4. Care of Creation

We want to be active in responding to the cause's effects of Climate change.

We want to become better stewards of God's creation.

In 2021 we have:

- Kept going!
- Silver Eco Church Award.
- Silver – Lambeth in Bloom.

Other achievements include:

- East End Roof & Internal decorations.
- Pines and Needles (income generating)
- Hosted Streatham Arts Festival exhibition.
- Streatham Choral are back, plus concerts.

