Celebrating ‘the light of Christ’ at Pentecost

On Sunday 20 May people from across the Diocese gathered at Southwark Cathedral, bringing banners and waving streamers, to join together and celebrate Pentecost.

The service also marked the end of Thy Kingdom Come, the global wave of prayer started by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, which invited Christians around the world to pray between Ascension and Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus Christ.

After an introduction by the Bishop of Southwark and testimony from the Bishop of Woolwich, the Rev’d Canon Jay Colwell (right), Canon Missioner and Director of Mission and Evangelism, preached about the presence of God at Pentecost, saying: “Pentecost is all about the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is all about the presence of God”.

Members of the congregation were then invited to receive anointing for the renewal of faith and witness before writing their prayers on paper ‘flames’, which were collected together to make up larger flames.

The service culminated in the lighting of sparklers in the grounds of the cathedral, reflecting the Bishop of Southwark’s charge to “carry the light of Christ into the world’s dark places”.

Barbara Lane and Jill Sandham receive Lancelot Andrewes medal

On Friday 25 April Bishop Christopher presented the Lancelot Andrewes medal to Lay Canons Barbara Lane and Jill Sandham for ‘Godly service and zeal for the Gospel’.

Barbara (left) was Diocesan Director of Education from 2004 to 2013. Jill (right) retired in 2013 from her role as Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser after more than 20 years working for the Diocese.

Barbara chairs Cathedral Enterprises (the ‘trading arm’ of the Cathedral Chapter) and Jill is in her second term as one of the College of Canons representatives on the Cathedral Council.


Barbara Lane
Barbara Lane

and Jill Sandham
and Jill Sandham
receive Lancelot
receive Lancelot
Andrewes medal
Andrewes medal
The Very Revd David Edwards

Bishop David Atkinson writes:

David Edwards was a gracious man. A very fine scholar, yes, and a dedicated and prayerful priest, but I think of him mostly as a very generous, caring and gracious human being.

I only knew him during my time at Southwark Cathedral between 1993 and his retirement to Winchester in 1995, though I had earlier read some of his writings – most notably his masterly Religion and Change (1969). David’s hospitable mind enabled him to write on the Honest to God debate, many volumes of church history, a study of the new Roman Catholic Catechesis and biographical work on people as varied as the philosopher Bishop Ian Ramsey and the poet John Donne. In 1989 he wrote ‘Evangelical Essentials – a liberal-evangelical’ dialogue with John Stott.

My first personal encounter with David was when I came for an interview for the post of Canon Missioner.

The farewell lunch for Bishop Peter Selby was still in full swing, so Bishop Roy sent David out to study his look to look after me. His polite shyness and my pre-interview nervousness made for a rather halting - though thoroughly friendly - half hour.

On our first morning in Southwark, he took me and Sue (my wife) to see Hays Galleria, and had to rush back having forgotten he was taking midday prayers. We prayed in St Andrew’s Chapel which David had set aside as a place of prayer for people suffering from HIV and AIDS.

He was responsible for the memorial plaque honouring the victims of the Marchionness, which sank in the Thames in 1989. And he directed the first stage of the fine new buildings on the Cathedral’s north side.

When I think of David now, I often recall him leading intercessions, and his passionate prayers ‘for Bosnia’ (in 1994/5). It was from him I learned freshly to pray ‘Your kingdom come…on earth as it is in heaven’. There was one memorable moment when the Chapter were lining up before the Sunday Eucharist, and David quietly asked: who is preaching this morning? We all turned to him and said: ‘You are.’ And he did, and delivered, unscripted, one of the finest sermons I have heard from the Cathedral pulpit.

David asked Roy White and me to accompany him when, to his surprise, he was honoured with the Freedom of the Borough of Southwark.

David cared for his colleagues and staff. On one occasion he took us all in a minibus to Bruges for a very fine lunch, and then back again. I was never quite sure why Bruges was such a popular vision of Swinging London and the psychedelic 60s.

People don’t choose to be refugees!

Refugees are people who have been forced to leave their country in order to see what is on the other side, to escape war, unrest, persecution (be it race, colour or creed) or natural disaster.

My personal experience of the movement from home to another country was the outbreak of war and unrest in my country and an exodus of old, mature people (by creed) or natural disaster.

Of us to live and, as they say, do our own thing. But as one nation standing up against the other.

Dissent among countries, - wars and rumours of war, the more educated and people don’t choose to be refugees!

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People don’t choose to be refugees!
Bishop Christopher condemns the violence in Gaza

Bishop Christopher has joined with Bishop Declan Lang, Chair of the Holy Land Coordination, in condemning Israeli violence in Gaza.

They said: “The terrible loss of life in Gaza caused by the Israeli army’s use of live fire against civilians is to be condemned unequivocally. These protests take place against the drastically deteriorating humanitarian situation which leaves little hope and continues to undermine a peaceful resolution. Hundreds of families across Gaza are now mourning their loved ones, dead and wounded. Israel has a right to defend itself but also has the moral and legal responsibility not to use disproportionate force and not to prevent the injured from receiving medical treatment. All violence is destructive to peace efforts and our cry is for a peaceful two-state solution with Jerusalem as the shared capital. We pray for all those who suffer from this conflict and for the peace of Jerusalem.”

The level of humanitarian suffering is emphasised by the appeal from the Al Alh Arab Hospital in Gaza saying that ‘the situation at the hospital is critical’. The Director of Al Alh implemented an emergency response to receive trauma cases including setting up an emergency wing with staff doing extended shifts to treat the injured and wounded.

This hospital is supported by the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East and will receive support through the Bishop of Southwark’s Lent Call Fund 2018. It is regarded as a centre of excellence in healthcare in the Gaza strip.

Café Concert for Christian Aid

In April Christ Church Purley hosted an evening of fun, food and music to raise funds for Christian Aid’s ‘Stronger than the Storms’ appeal.

The band song! headlined the evening, telling the Gospel story through beautiful moving songs, many of which were the ones they had composed.

The evening, compered by Andy Leigh OBE, also featured music from Rock Choir, and from Christ Church members Sue Keeler and Tom Griffiths. After a ploughman’s supper, Peggy Ameako, Christian Aid’s London Church Co-ordinator, shared something of the vision for Christian Aid Week 2018.

Sun shines on St George in Southwark

The sun shone for the highlight of the St George in Southwark Festival in April when a 12 ft dragon (created and carried by members of The Dragon Café), the Mayor of Southwark, and St George led the parade from St George’s Cathedral to the Church of St George the Martyr in the Borough.

The square outside St George’s Church became an open-air theatre for community singing and a performance of Sarah Harding’s moving play about the martyrdom of St George. It featured St George the Martyr children’s choir and children’s drama group alongside professional actors. To finish the day, a community tea was enjoyed by performers and guests alike courtesy of the Mothers’ Union!

The Festival programme included a children’s craft event, a poetry workshop and performances of The Ballad of St George and the Dragon. Visiting choirs and the Putney and Wandsworth Brass Band enriched the Festival Eucharist and Choral Evensong on 22 April. The Festival ended on 24 April with an interactive concert for local children.

The Priest in Charge, the Revd Jonathan Sedgwick said ‘By telling and re-telling our stories, drawing on our creativity, and involving people from all ages and backgrounds we can celebrate St George and our diverse heritages as the same time as encouraging one another to overcome the dragons we face in our own day.

‘If anyone has ideas for next year or would like to be involved then please contact us.’

Want to learn how to be a pastor? Go on a prayer walk with your Bishop!

That’s what three curates (Sarah Simpson, Stefan Matthews & Daphne Clifton, pictured left to right) in East Lewisham Deanery did when Bishop Karowei visited recently.

At the beginning of a packed week of visits to all the churches in the Deanery, the prayer walk started at All Saints’ C of E school and finished at the Good Hope Café in Hither Green, which is run by the Jimmy Mizen Foundation.

Even though he has the longest legs, and arms tailor-made for selfies (!), the Bishop taught the curates how to walk slowly and pastorally using what he calls his ‘policeman’s walk’. Stopping along the way for conversations and to pray for the local businesses, schools, colleges and community, Bishop Karowei allowed plenty of time to reflect on the past, present and future ministry in this Deanery as the curates prepare for their ordination as priests on 7 July.

Bishop Karowei went on to meet school groups, parent and toddler groups and Scouts and, at the end of a very busy week, had enough energy to encourage the clergy at a Chapter lunch.

‘In Mary Sumner’s footsteps’

St John, Coulsdon Mothers’ Union branch celebrated their 70th birthday with ‘The Big Party’ on Saturday 28 April.

Nicy Roberts, Branch Leader, writes:

The inspiration was the MU theme ‘In Mary Sumner’s footsteps’. As she started by inviting women in her parish into her home, so we issued an invitation to our community to an All-Age Family celebration in our home, the church.

We welcomed 110 adults of all ages and 63 children for an afternoon of traditional gadget-free fun, a sumptuous tea, a touch of magic, and an MU focus, not forgetting cake and balloons and party bags containing prayer cards and mini Bible story books.

Cynthia Smith, our MU Diocesan President, presented long service certificates for 25 years, 50 and 65 years.

The overwhelming response was ‘more events like this, please’! In turn we are now asking ‘what more can we do to offer Christian care for families?’.
‘Appeal for the Peal’

The bells of Croydon Minster have been pealing out across the town since December 1936. Now they are in need of major refurbishment and an ‘Appeal for the Peal’ will be launched at the Minster’s Patronal Festival on June 23/24, to raise the £26,000 required.

Shirley McGill, Tower Captain, writes:

The bells were cast by Gillett and Johnston, Croydon’s local bell-foundry. They are much praised throughout the bell-foundry. They are much

The bells were cast by Gillett and Johnston, Croydon’s local bell-foundry. They are much praised throughout the bell-foundry. They are much

Southwark Cathedral will mark the first anniversary of the attack on London Bridge and the Borough Market throughout the day on Sunday 3 June.

The principal event will be a Service of Commemoration at 3pm - an invitation to the families and friends of those who died, survivors and the first responders to come together and to remember.

During the service four new corbels will be blessed, one of which depicts PC Wayne Marques, one of the first responders who was injured in the attack.

At the end of the service Bishop Christopher will bless an olive tree, ‘The Tree of Healing’, as a permanent memorial to those who died. This will be planted using compost made from flowers left on London Bridge after the attack.

Later in the day Southwark Cathedral will host its second Grand Iftar which, this year, will also mark the anniversary of the London Bridge attacks and will bring all communities together to celebrate Ramadan, to promote resilience and to share the common values of Hope, Peace and Unity and celebrate the diversity of those who live and work in the Bankside area.

There is also an exhibition of three pieces of work by Alison Clark, Artist in Residence, at the Cathedral. On display until 14 June and entitled Broken Beauty, they have been especially commissioned to mark the anniversary.

Remembering the London Bridge Attack

Embracing Diversity

The Diocese of Southwark Diocese of Southwark’s Children and Young People’s Mission and Ministry Department joined with Greenwich Parent Voice in a project to engage and support families with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) particularly across Greenwich Borough. The Embracing Diversity Celebration took place on Saturday 12 May at Woolwich Polytechnic School.

The idea for a special church service, especially for families of children with SEND was suggested by a parent as a way of countering negative perceptions of disability in some Black and Minority Ethnic communities in Greenwich.

These might be where disabled children are seen as a source of shame or where having a disabled child for some signifies insufficient faith. Disabled children are not always welcome at church services and some parents are fearful of taking their children to church if the child presents challenging behaviour, is noisy or just appears to be different.

After 14 months of careful planning and spreading the word, the event was a festival of colour, music and Caribbean food. The hall was filled with music, large banners and artwork made by local schools and community groups on the theme of All God’s People, equality and justice.

Attended by more than 170 people, including Theresa Pearce MP and senior community leaders, the service was led by the Revd Herbert Aparanga, Vicar of All Saints, Plumstead. It included Taizé worship, gospel music and multi sensory prayers. There was Makaton signing and a visual timetable to support the needs of those present.

Javan Coker, a student at Charlton Park Academy, sang in the band and performed one of the songs from his album Shout Jesus. Peter Lincoln James and Aike Kennett-Brown presented a three-part drama on the Parable of the Good Samaritan. Prayers and readings were led by young people on the autistic spectrum.

In two short films commissioned for the event parents of children with autism talked about their experiences of the love and support they receive from their churches. There was also challenge for churches to do more to reach out. Capt. Nicholas Lebey CA, Thamesmead Team Ministry, gave a powerful and moving address, reflecting on the fact that ‘all of us are created in God’s image, we are all God’s children and we all have abilities’. He also apologised for the Church not always being as welcoming as it should have been. After the service there was lunch and the opportunity to look at stalls offering relevant services and support.

Greenwich Parent Voice is an independent group representing parents of children with a child with special educational needs and/or disability. The group is committed to giving a voice to all parents. GPV publishes information, holds free events and provides the means for parents of children with SEND can connect with and support each other. It is funded by the Department for Education and supported and monitored by the charity Contact-A-Family.

Hugh Ridsdill-Smith, the Youth and Children’s Work Consultant can be contacted at hugh.ridsdill-smith@southwark.anglican.org

Do you know a family or an individual who needs a holiday?

Southwark Mothers’ Union ‘Away From It All’ (AFIA) is a holiday scheme funded by members and other donations to help people who wouldn’t otherwise be able to have a holiday.

The scheme is open to anyone who is experiencing stress in their family life. Holidays are normally booked at a holiday camp for families but can also be at a small guest house for individuals depending on their needs.

Individuals can also apply for themselves or for their family but applications will need to be supported by someone in church ministry, a health professional, social worker, head teacher or similar. For an application form, contact Pat Fisher at fisherpk@live.co.uk or telephone 020 8289 8348.
‘Messy Readers’ renew commitment

The three Area Annual Meetings of Readers took place mid-April, with Joanna Cox of SAGE as principal speaker at all three meetings, talking about ‘Encouraging Spirituality in Later Life’.

Ray Wheeler,
Croydon Area Warden of Readers, reports:

The Croydon Area meeting took place at St Matthew, Redhill on Saturday 14 April. During the business session, Lindsay Ould (Addington, St Mary) was elected to fill the vacancy of a Croydon Area Representative on the Readers’ Board.

The worship at St Matthew’s took the form of Messy Church planned by Anne Currie (Reader at St Matthew’s) with the theme ‘Faith as small as a mustard seed’. Readers were invited to participate in three activities:

1. Cleaning pennies - what dulls your sparkle? what refreshes you?
2. Creating a tree from hand prints (representing leaves of the mustard tree) - a big tree where all our prayers come to rest.
3. Constructing a 3D cross - stretching your brain, and considering the gift of patience.

In her introduction, Anne highlighted that just as God plants his seed of love, God also plants vocation in our souls that need nurturing and feeding - firstly to bring it to maturity and then to keep it strong and healthy.

“As Readers we have come together like the birds of the air... all different, all with our hopes and dreams for our ministries...but as one body, the body of Christ.”

Bishop Jonathan then encouraged us to stand around him for the Act of Rededication.

In conclusion he highlighted the plight of the ‘children of the Windrush’ and encouraged us all to sign the online petition calling on the Government to resolve the issue.

The Kingston Area Readers met at St Mark, Wimbledon, while the venue for the Woolwich Readers was St James, Bermondsey.

College of Canons meet

Southwark Cathedral’s College of Canons met on 25 April to hear about the work of the Cathedral from the Dean and to offer thoughts and advice where appropriate. They also elected Lay Canon Jill Sandham to serve a second term as one of their representatives on the Cathedral Council along with the Revd Canon Kim Hitch.

The Home of Devenish

Weymouth Dorset

There are 23 Bungalows and 2 flats available to widows of clergymen of the Church of England or widows of officers of the armed services (excluding Territorial Army and Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve) providing they are members of the Church of England.

Each property has 2 bedrooms, is unfurnished, occupied rent free and is centrally heated, decorated and maintained free of charge. Council tax is also paid by the Charity. They are not warden controlled.

For further information or an application form please contact:

Mrs J Kemnis-Betty, The Home of Devenish, Manor Coach House, Stottinway Street, Weymouth, Dorset DT3 5QA

Telephone: 01305 813895

www.homeofdevenish.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 202400

On 19 May St James Merton Novena Group welcomed ‘Harry and Megan’ (centre) to their ninth day of Thy Kingdom Come prayers in the Vicarage Garden- followed by a toast to the Royal couple.
In this particular week, the contribution of refugees to the UK is celebrated to encourage a better understanding between communities and to highlight some of the issues affecting the estimated 65.6 million forcibly displaced people in the world - of which 22.5 million are now considered to be refugees.

Since joining the Diocese in 2014, I have been the Refugee Response Coordinator working within the Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation Department. I’ve had the pleasure of visiting many parishes, and meeting many individuals and voluntary organisations who have been working hard on the ground or who are keen to support and help refugees and asylum seekers.

Alongside the good work undertaken by our parishes there are also a number of well-established projects and charities who have strong links with us. These include the South London Day Centre for Asylum Seekers (SDCA), LEWCAS (Lewisham Churches For Asylum Seekers) and the London Churches Refugee Network (LCRN).

As a Diocese, we have been committed at all levels to supporting and helping refugees and asylum seekers for many years. A number of properties owned and maintained by the Diocese have been allocated to provide housing for asylum seekers and refugees. These include a property which housed women and children in the care of the Sisters of the Church, a religious community within the Anglican Communion and an otherwise unoccupied vicarage in which a refugee family is living.

We may now be responding to the needs of refugees from different parts of the world but the challenges, the hopes and dreams of those who seek sanctuary are nevertheless the same – to rebuild their lives, to feel safe, to work, to make friends and give something back.

I hope that this article will give you a taste of some of the good work that is being undertaken within our Diocese and encourage you especially in this June in Refugee Week and on World Refugee Day to get involved in supporting, helping and praying for the refugees and asylum seekers in your community.

Joanne McCrone – Refugee Response Coordinator
Email: joanne.mccrone@southwark.anglican.org

Seeking sanctuary, new hope

Refugee Week is a nationwide programme of arts, cultural and educational events taking place in the week around World Refugee Day on 20 June.

I have recently been reading *Fortress Britain?* – a series of essays on how we approach immigration after Brexit.

As I did so, I was struck once again by the gulf between how people in Britain see ourselves, and the experience of those who come here looking for asylum.

One of the essays gives voice to those who are not only asylum seekers, but the asylum seekers themselves, and enables them to share what it is like to be distrusted, not to know when or for how long you might be taken into custody, with the fear of returning to a country of origin where you are not safe. It is an experience which robs people of their dignity and their humanity.

Christian faith demands of us that we see everyone as a child of God. Noone is ‘illegal’ in themselves; all people should be able to retain that sense of their own worth as a human being. That is the calling of the churches in serving those who come seeking refuge here.

Some will come through schemes which at least give them acceptance by the institutions of

Bishop Jonathan reflects:

A number of church members are also involved in helping to run Croydon Community Against Trafficking (CCAT), a charity set up to help vulnerable asylum seekers and migrants which has had strong connections to Emmanuel for several years.

The Church of the Holy Spirit, Clapham

Holy Spirit, Clapham has been working with Syrian refugees since their arrival in Lambeth by hosting social evenings and providing household items including helping to fund TV

Behind the headlines

- The UK currently houses 1% of the world’s refugees.
- Scotland has taken four times as many Syrian refugees as Greater London. Relative to their populations, northern England has taken more than twice as many Syrian refugees as the South.
- While London has accommodated fewer Syrian refugees than other regions (less than one per 10,000 population), it has accepted 10 times that number of asylum seekers with an overall impact of six per 10,000 people.
- At the end of last year, there were just over 40,000 asylum seekers located across the UK. Asylum seekers are from around the
Not just a house but a home.

The Al Hateeb family are one of many refugee families who have been settled in the UK through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS). This is a joint initiative involving the UK Home Office and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to offer protection to people fleeing conflict in Syria and the Middle East.

Refugees who come through this route are identified as having the most severe and pressing needs. These include people who have disabilities, women, children, the elderly and those who have experienced extreme trauma.

In the past two years, more than 16,500 people fleeing Syria have been resettled in the UK through this route.

The UK government under David Cameron committed in 2015 to receiving 20,000 refugees from Syria over a five year period which will end in 2020. This commitment has been expanded to include a further 3,500 people from a number of other surrounding countries in the Middle East at risk of displacement.

The Al Hateeb family arrived just over 14 months ago. All seven members of this family including mum, dad, three sons, grandma and grandpa were flown into the UK from Egypt. Coming into the Borough of Lewisham, which is participating in this scheme, the Al Hateeb family were welcomed by representatives from a coalition of voluntary and faith groups led by the organisation Citizens Lewisham, including St Saviour, Brockley Hill, St Luke, Downham and St Margaret, Lee. With the help of a translator, Fayeze and Asmaa were happy to share a few thoughts on their life in the UK since their arrival.

They are currently living in a property that has been loaned to the council by Southwark Diocese for the express purpose of housing refugee families from Syria.

Why did you leave Syria?

“We left one night when the fighting got too much. We just decided to leave after it all got too frightening. We had one bag of belongings between us and decided to flee. The fighting got too close and we had already lost many neighbours, friends and many members of our family”.

What are your dreams for the future?

Fayeze: “I would like to get better at English so I can make friends and find work so I can support myself and my family. I used to be an accountant but I am prepared to do anything”.

Asmaa: “I would like to make friends and find work too, so we feel we can give something back”.

What three pieces of advice would you give people who want to help refugees?

“Take the initiative to say ‘Hello’. It is difficult for us to make the first move because we’re not very confident and don’t know how to start up conversations.”

“Help us to improve our English. We need people to practise with.”

“Look out for work opportunities for us. We really want to work and we don’t know where to find jobs. If you know of anyone who can offer work experience that would be a big help.”

Have you made friends in the neighbourhood?

“Yes, slowly. Our children have made friends at school. The Reverend Nick [Walsh] has come to visit us too. We are used to living in a Christian area. Even though we are Muslims, we like it and want to be part of the community. We feel settled but can’t help feeling anxious because we don’t see many people and what the future will bring.”

How can you help?

There are a number of straightforward ways in which both churches and individuals can help refugees and asylum seekers.

These include helping to provide more housing options, helping to teach English, befriending, providing advice, donating household items and food and supporting charities that work directly with refugees and asylum seekers through the provision of services.

- Befriending

Would you have time to befriend a refugee or asylum seeker? HostNation is a charity that has been set up to link isolated refugees with people who are willing to befriend them and help them settle into life in the UK. Full training is provided.

- Offering advice

It is very difficult for asylum seekers to find people who are trained to deliver free advice on immigration related issues and guidance so they can access the benefits and services they are entitled to. The charity Refugee Action offers training to enable you to give immigration advice. You will need suitable training to be able to offer this sort of help as it is illegal to offer immigration advice otherwise.

- English lessons

Could you get involved in teaching ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)?

You could easily obtain a CELTA, (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults) by doing an online course. A number of churches and charities run ESOL classes for refugees and asylum seekers at which you could volunteer. Or you could ask your local citizens group if there are any refugees in your area who know whom you could help.

- Donations

Even the refugees who are able to access their benefits struggle to meet the cost of living. Donations of food, clothing and toiletries are often very welcome. Perhaps you could contact your local foodbank or citizens group for further information on where to drop off donations.

If you would like more information about any of the above suggestions, contact me at joanne.mccrone@southwark.anglican.org

As churches, we should both do justice ourselves and witness for a more just society, one in which all people are given the respect that is their due.

Licences and other needs. The Revd Ruth Burge-Thomas has befriended many of the families and has herself started to learn Arabic. Members of the church have even taken some of the families out on day trips. Mawa Belghazi (below), the Senior Resettle Officer from SHP (Single Homelessness Project) who has been commissioned by the Borough of Lambeth to oversee the settlement programme for Syrian refugees in the borough, is full of praise for the way in which this church has taken to welcoming the families.

“I love how so many of the families know of this place. The church has used their space in such a positive way. I would not call myself a person of faith but seeing churches like this one being so welcoming has changed my view of the role of faith groups and the difference that they can make in our communities.

“I now look at churches in a new way. There was never a reason for someone like myself from a Muslim background to go into a church building before and now I spend so much time in them. It’s really good for our society to have groups working together towards this shared goal of helping people like refugees.”

- The facts and figures

- the world and must reach the UK before claiming asylum, unlike those on the VPRS.
- Asylum claims take at least six months to be processed with many people waiting for up to three years before they hear anything. Many fall into destitution as they are not permitted to work, volunteer or study. Many live on just over £5 a day.
- The most vulnerable asylum seekers are unaccompanied minors – young people under 18 who have had to make their way into the UK on their own. In 2017 2,500 children were referred to the Refugee Council’s Children’s section. These children claimed asylum on their own without their families alongside them.
**St Matthew, Redhill**

On the surface Redhill is a prosperous, bustling town. So a foodbank... a drop-in for the homeless... night shelters?

Scratch Redhill’s surface and there are pockets of deprivation and social problems which mean that town centre ministry is more than just Sunday worship and a ‘chatline’ to shop and office workers!

St Matthew’s Church is just across the road from Redhill’s modern and busy Belfry shopping centre. It’s an imposing Victorian structure – last year celebrating 150 years, with a service led by Archbishop Rowan Williams. Built in Reigate stone, with a lofty bell tower and a modern church hall where the vicarage used to be, it is also the base for an impressive range of services aimed at the less fortunate in Redhill’s community.

The Vicar, Canon Andrew Cunningham (right), told me: “Our vision gathered momentum around 10 years ago when I met with other local church leaders to ask ourselves – what is a town centre ministry all about? Is it just a church presence among the shops and offices - or are we called to be something more distinctive. And how can we do that as partners in mission. As a medium sized church our mission can be more effective by working with other partners.”

The first fruits of that partnership was the introduction of street pastors. Street pastors led to working with the homeless, as partners in Renewed Hope Trust which operates a daily drop in centre and a winter night shelter with St Matthew as the venue on Sunday nights in the church hall.

Six years ago St Matthew’s launched a foodbank – initially with just a couple of cupboards – “to see if there was a need in Redhill”, said Andrew. However, once other agencies in the town began to hear about it, the demand rapidly grew to the extent that last year £40,000 worth of food and utility top ups (towards the cost of gas and electricity) were supplied. Andrew said: “We now have about 20 volunteers operating the foodbank. Some 75% are from St Matthews, the remainder from other local churches – again, partnership at work.”

Some 30 agencies hold foodbank vouchers for issuing to families in need. The family make an appointment to come in – but not just to collect food. Volunteers look at their needs, help with menus and so on – which, said Andrew, leads to good conversations about their wider needs and hopes.

As well as churches, local shops and offices have bins for people to donate food. Andrew said “The Co-op in Redhill are particularly supportive. They’ve even invited us to ‘come in whatever you need, help yourself’. They also operate the gas and electricity top ups for us.” As well as food and household items, donations cover the running costs. “Our main problem is storage,” said Andrew. “So we’ve just applied for a faculty for an additional shed.”

Some eight years ago they took an empty space between the church and the church hall and created a coffee shop which now runs three days a week serving shoppers, workers and church hall users. “It’s a great place for meetings and for pastoral conversations – and is completely run by volunteers”, said Andrew. It’s also a popular meeting point for the audiences for the Thursday lunchtime music concerts.

The different activities have led to networking with other churches and agencies – and the local Council, which is struggling to meet people’s needs.

“When I first came and went to council meeting,” said Andrew, “there was a sense of ‘nice to see you but not sure why you are here, Vicar’. Today it’s very different. Today St Matthew’s is involved in the Reigate and Banstead five-year vision. We’re listened to, taken seriously and our support is asked for. It’s a real opportunity, not just to meet needs but also to get back to the essence of the Gospel, to be a prophetic voice saying this is not right, this is not just and speaking out on the basis of our experience on behalf of the community.”

“Worship is very traditional liberal catholic”, Andrew told me. There are three services a Sunday said Communion, the main service at 10am and an evening service. The 10am service usually sees a congregation of about 110 people of all ages. It is usually Common Worship Eucharist with traditional hymns, vestments, servers, choir, organ and children’s church groups. However on one Sunday it is more ‘family-oriented’ and includes more contemporary songs, led by a music group.

In the evenings, on the first Sunday of the month there’s Messy Church at 4pm, followed by Sunday tea. On other Sundays at 6.30pm the programme includes a Healing service, a choral Evensong and Evening Prayer.

“Messy Church has been very good for us,” said Andrew, “with several families moving on into the full life of church. People find their place by getting involved, not just in our community service activities but also in things like the choir, serving, readings and intercessions.

“Vocations has been one of our great joys – both lay and ordained,” said Andrew. “We have also been privileged to be a regular stream of people looking to discover how God is calling them to ministry. They are pointed towards us by vocations advisers, particularly people from an evangelical background who want to experience the breadth of the Church of England. We are also a training parish, so I have a curate. We also have the benefit of three retired clergy, a Reader (and one in training) and two pastoral assistants. I’m very grateful to have such a good team around me especially as I am Area Dean which in Southwark is a busy role.”

The church school, St Matthew’s CofE Primary is now part of the Southwark Academy Trust which Andrew says has “tightened our links to the church and has got just about the right balance between support and challenge. The school has 400 pupils of which 25% are Muslim – who take part in collective worship and visits to the church. The school is there to support all children in their spiritual journey – and in this we work closely with local mosque etc.”

One feature of the church is the boards on the wall with the font with the names of all children baptised at St Matthew’s – and when they come into the church the schoolchildren look to find their name.

So what are the challenges... money? “The building and facilities are in fair shape despite the church being large and expensive to maintain – we’ve just spent £50,000 on work to the tower,” said Andrew. “But somehow we stay just in the black and pay our way. The hall is a valuable asset – a community hub with lots of lets for community groups – we even rent out our car park spaces during the week to local businesses!”

The clergy team celebrate the Eucharist.

“Like many churches we wrestle with the question – does our worship meet all the spiritual needs of our people in order to be of service in the right way? How do we help people to grow in their faith? Home groups have been a struggle to develop – people just don’t have the time,” he said.

With this in mind, this year, they experimented with an online Lent Group based on Sr Wendy Becketts The Art of Lent. Each day they put up a picture and a reflection by Andrew - and at any time people could pick up and comment. Andrew said, “whereas you might expect 7 or 8 in a Lent group, this attracted 30 people.”

Fortunately, St Matthew’s is not a church where members just come on Sunday morning and don’t do anything else. “It’s a church where, if you’re not careful, you get sucked in to all sorts of things,” said Andrew.

“Working with other Christians across the town flushed out the ‘activists’ in our congregation and we discovered we have quite a lot.”

Bearing in mind their impressive programme, this is fortunate to say the least!

The Coffee shop - ‘a great place for meetings and for pastoral conversations’.
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**Nutfield church school ‘outstanding’**

A recent SIAMS (Statutory Inspection for Anglican and Methodist Schools) has judged Nutfield Church (C of E) Primary School as ‘Outstanding’.

The report sets out the strengths of the leadership and governance of the school, the enthusiasm, skill and creativity of teachers, excellent attainment and progress and the high level of children’s involvement in all areas of school life.

The children across the school were celebrated through their involvement in planning collective worships, being involved in the school’s termly ‘Love Projects’ and the partnerships they have enjoyed with two other local church schools, St John’s in Caterham and St Peter’s in Oxted.

Headteacher Imogen Woods said: “I am, as ever, immensely proud of our team. The school has gone from strength to strength due to the high level of support and encouragement from parents and members of the wider community and the staff too”.

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**Afp Tenison pupil wins BBC2 Young Brass Award**

Thomas Nielsen, a Year 12 Student at Archbishop Tenison’s Church of England School, Croydon, has won the BBC Radio 2 Young Brass Award.

The final was broadcast live from the Royal Northern College of Music Manchester on Friday 20 April. The judges were conductor Nicholas Childs, Helen Vollam, Principal Trombone in the BBC Symphony Orchestra, and international trumpet soloist Andrew Crowley.

Thomas, who has been playing the cornet since the age of eight, said: “I’m so surprised. The other players were excellent so winning didn’t really come into my mind. I was just glad to have played as well as I could.

“I am extremely grateful for all the support I have received from my family, friends, instrumental teachers and my school.”

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**School Report**

**Open Season at Saint Cecilia’s**

Saint Cecilia’s, Church of England secondary school, Southfields is holding a number of Open Events for parents of prospective pupils.

Open mornings will be held on Wednesday 20 June, Monday 17 September and Monday 15 October from 9am - 12 midday. An Open evening will held on Thursday 20 September (6.30 - 8.30pm) with a Sixth Form Open Evening on Thursday 4 October (6.30 - 8.30pm).

All welcome - no need to book.

Further information is available from the website: www.saintcecilias.london

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**Prayers go up, blessings come down!**

To celebrate high days and holy days Saint Cecilia’s pupils split into House groups and journey out for a Communion service in one of their local churches. The Chaplain, The Revd Annie Kurk, also receives one House into the Chapel.

At the Ascension Day service in the Chapel prayers were sent by airmail! Pupils wrote their most heartfelt prayer on a piece of paper, folded it into aeroplane shape and launched it towards the cross. Annie Kurk commented that despite concentration on the work of the Holy Spirit, candles were extinguished beforehand for health and safety reasons!

St Andrew’s CE Primary School in Stockwell are celebrating receiving an REQM (Religious Education Quality Mark) silver award for ‘outstanding teaching and learning in Religious Education’. Photo: The Revd Erica Woof, Priest in Charge Stockwell St Andrew & St Michael

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June

Even though I’ve been fortunate enough to fly on many occasions there is something still that is thrilling about arriving at an airport. Even though the reality might be frustrating there is still a touch of glamour that surrounds the experience and often the knowledge that at the end of the flight a wonderful and relaxing experience awaits us.

As you may know, the Diocese of Southwark extends all the way down to Gatwick Airport and this month is the 60th anniversary of The Queen officially opening the new airport.

On 9 June 1958 the young Queen arrived in a place that would over the years millions of people setting off on journeys. But airports are also places of arrival.

As you leave customs and enter the arrivals hall you see the expectant faces of those who have come to meet a friend, a relative. Occasionally you will spot a reunion happening – bags dropped, people running towards each other, arms open, embracing, kissing, tears, laughter. ‘You haven’t changed a bit’. It is lovely, heart-warming to witness.

In the story of the prodigal we hear of something similar – no planes of course – but the father looking for the son’s return and then, against all the conventions of the time, ‘he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him’ (Luke 15.20).

The Very Revd Andrew Nunn, Dean of Southwark

Please follow me on Twitter as I offer a prayer each morning so that you can join me in Morning Prayer. Go to @deansouthwark

Social Care: Whose Problem?

For many people, the challenges and pressures on social care services become increasingly obvious when a relative, neighbour or friend gets older and needs more support and care. Increasingly the demands of an ageing population added to pressures on funding have raised the profile of this issue, so that it is now something of a political ‘hot potato’.

In the face of these challenges, are there responses churches can make to social care needs? This question will be explored in a session on 21 June organised by SAGE – the Diocesan group with a focus on issues relating to older people. Contributors to the session will include Tooting vicar Andrew Davey, whose past experience working for the C of E Board of Social Responsibility gives him an overview of church involvement, which he will share along with theological reflections. Southwark Social Responsibility gives communities with prayers, reading, poetry, dance and testimonies.

SAGE
Southwark
Spirituality and Age Working Group

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Welcare relaunches its services in Greenwich

On Tuesday 1 May, clergy, supporters, staff, volunteers and friends gathered at St Luke’s Church, Charlton for a Service of Thanksgiving to mark the relaunch of Welcare’s services for children and families in the Royal Borough of Greenwich.

The celebratory occasion was attended by Bishop Karowei, who spoke about the need for Welcare’s work, and the current Mayor of Greenwich, Councillor Peter Brooks. Music was provided by The Thorntree Primary School Choir and The Royal Greenwich Brass Band. Following the service, everyone was invited to enjoy the food prepared by the Friends of Greenwich Welcare at a reception held in the church. Southwark Diocesan Welcare supports children up to the age of 13 and their families in the Diocese of Southwark in times of need and crisis.

To find out more visit: welcare.org or follow them on Facebook or Twitter @welcareuk.

New YMCA St Paul’s Group is commissioned

On Tuesday 8 May Bishop Richard led the Act of Commitment at a commissioning service for the new YMCA St Paul’s Group at St Paul’s Cathedral in London. The new group has brought together four YMCAs – West London, London South West (of which Bishop Richard was President), East London and Slough.

Bishop Richard asked the trustees and staff to express their commitment to the newly merged Association and to lead the group “Prayerfully and in a spirit of unity, mutual respect and collaboration...where people of faith and people of none can work together for the transformation of communities”. At the service the group showcased the work it does with young people and communities with prayers, poetry, dance and testimonies.

Peter Posner, President of YMCA World Alliance, gave a reading, and there was an address by the Bishop of Willesden.

The St Paul’s Group is now one of the largest YMCA branches in Europe and has its head office in Surbiton.

‘Growing Together’

In April Ann and Dave Wright from Southwark Diocese took part in the International Rural Churches Association Conference in Lincoln, New Zealand.

Ann writes: Rural churches around the world are facing challenges, but are in good heart and have great confidence for the future. That was the message from the conference. For six days people from around the world met to share stories and experiences and reflect on what it means to be the presence of God in rural communities.

The time together included worship led by people from different continents, cultures and denominations and keynote speakers on rural vision and ministry. We visited Christchurch (the temporary cathedral is amazing but there is still much damage from the earthquakes) and local rural projects.

The full conference statements and links to the presentations can be found at https://irca.online/blog/ conference-statement/

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10  THE BRIDGE... June 2018
June

Lunchtime Concerts at Croydon Minster - Fridays at 1.10pm

June 2018

1st Toby Forster, (Countertenor)
8th Liam Connery (Tenor)
15th David Woods (Tenor)
22nd NO CONCERT
29th Samuel King (Bass)

Free entry - donations invited to Minster funds

Wednesday 6 June

CATERHAM - Munch with Music at St John's Church, Sinfonia Diverse - works by Elgar, Mozart and Trinity Laban composers. Adm.Free - Donations welcome. Tea/coffee from 12.15. Perfo: 12.45 - 1.30pm. Bring your own "munch"

Lunchtime Music at St Matthew's, Redhill
Every Thursday 1.10pm - admission free, donations invited June 2018
7th Piano Recital - Simon Watten
14th Piano Recital - Kyle Nash-Baker
21st Saxophone Recital - Hannah McCarthy w Simon Wattenor (Piano)
28th South London Saxophone Quartet

Friday 8 – Sunday 10 June

OXFORD - Brides and Blooms Festival at St John's Church. 11am-5pm (4pm Saturday). Music recitals 1pm and 3pm on Saturday and Sunday. Refreshments all day

Saturday 9 June

UPPER TOOTING - Holy Trinity Church Open Day 11am - 3pm. Including events for adults and children; tours of the town, open and cold drinks.

UPPER NORWOOD - Art Exhibition exploring the question: "What is an Icon?" All Saints Church, Beulah Hill. 10am to 5pm free entry.

OXFORD - "The Spirit of Britain", a concert by Oxford and Linsliffe Choral Society featuring Ruth Jenkins, "The Spring of Thyme" and Victorian ballads. 4pm at the URC, Bluehouse Lane. Adm £12 inc. afternoon tea. Tickets: 01959 577749 or on the door

Thursday 14 June

UPPER NORWOOD - Organ Concert at St John's. 7.30pm. Paul Hale, Organist Emeritus, Southwell Minster. Free Admission – Retiring Collection

Saturday 16 June

SELSDON - Bric-a-brac and Book Bazaar at St John's Church 2pm-4pm. Stalls, refreshments. Proceeds to church funds

UPPER NORWOOD - Art Exhibition exploring the question: "What is an Icon?" All Saints Church, Beulah Hill. 10am to 5pm free entry

Saturday 23 June

HACKBRIDGE - Taizé at St Mary's at 7pm Saturday every month

KEW - Homemade cakes and teas 3-5pm on Sundays at St Anne's Church.

WARLINGTON - Water Aid lunches in St Ambrose Church Hall, 12-1pm first Wednesday

ZIMBABWE ANGLICAN COMMUNITY at St Mary, Newington - Shona Mass, Second Sunday of month at 2pm. Mothers' Union last Saturday 2pm

Saturday 23 & Sunday 24 June

CROYDON - Minster Flower Festival - 11am - 4pm both days. Summer Fayre - Saturday 11am - 4pm

Saturday 30 June

SUTTON - Christ Church Summer Fair 12.30 - 4pm, cream teas, cake stall, stalls, side shows & musical entertainment.


SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL - Concert by award-winning Bremen Youth Symphony Orchestra. 7pm. Music by Bruckner, Vieuxtemps & Bruch. Free entry with retiring collection.

CROYDON - Croydon Bach Choir Spring Concert - Anthology for Armenia to commemorate the centenary of the end of the Great War (1914-1918) 7.30pm at St John's the Baptist Church, Shirley. Tickets £12 (4 for the price of 3) from www.ticketsource.co.uk/croydonderachoir

Lunchtime Music at St Matthew's, Redhill
Thursday 1.10pm admission free, donations invited

July 2018

5th Violin Recital - Emmanuel Bach w Jenny Stern (Piano)
12th Piano Trio - Ellie Blackshaw (Violin), Paul Gregory (Cello) & Yoko Ono (Piano)
19th Cello Recital - Camilla More-Glover
26th Annual party including "Double Duos" - Alan Lakin (Saxophone/Clarinet), Michael Withall (Saxophone/Clarinet), Trevor Denyer (Horn) & Susan Denyer (Double Bass)

Lunchtime Concerts at Croydon Minster - Fridays at 1.10pm

July 2018

6th Lily Addis, Soprano (Royal Sussex School)
13th Pamela Hall & Paul Guinery - More from the Great American Songbook Free entry - donations invited to Minster funds

Saturday 7 July

REIGATE - Summer Classics: A Night at the Opera, Redhill and Reigate Choral Society at St Mary’s Church at 7pm and 9pm. Drinks reception before each performance

Sunday 8 July

DULWICH - Organ Recital at Christ's Chapel, Dulwich College - Andrew Benson - Wilson 7.45pm. Admission Free

Tuesday 10 July

SOUTH BANK SE1 - Transatlantic Rhapsodies - Lewisham Choral Society concert. 7.30pm Queen Elizabeth Hall. Details from www.lewishamchoralsociety.org.uk

Friday 13 July

WESTCOMBE PARK - Aeris Brass in Concert at St George's Church. 7.30pm inc. Traditional music from Scotland and Scandinavia and some Mozart. Free admission - refreshments provided

Saturday 14 July

DULWICH - Organ recital by Andrew Hills & Paul at St Stephen's Church, 4pm

TANDRIDGE - Village Fair - Glebe Field RH8 9NN 1.30pm - 5.30pm. Adm. £1 - Children free

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Archbishop Justin Welby attended a special service at St Stephen’s Church, Lewisham on 16 May as part of THY KINGDOM COME

He joined Bishop Karowei, the Archdeacon of Lewisham, the Venerable Alastair Cutting and members of local churches. Pupils from St Stephen’s Primary School, took part in the initiative for the first time. Ranging from Years 3 to 5 they are part of the school’s faith team, selected for their passion for putting their faith into action. St Stephen’s Church

has been involved with Thy Kingdom Come since it began. The first year they prayed the Rosary on different days for different intentions. The following year, they focused on the Jesus prayer and this year, they are following the ‘Journey with Mary’ devotional.

The Vicar the Revd Philip Corbett of St Stephen’s Church, who organised the service, said: “It was a joy to have Archbishop Justin pray with us and help us in thinking how we serve our community.”

“Each day from 10am-3pm the church has been open to the public for prayer. People are looking for spaces to pray and the response has been good.”

Members of the Deanery churches set up imaginative prayer stations round the church, in addition to the host church’s ‘Prayer Den’ (below). The 70-strong congregation were invited to spend 15 minutes in prayer for the mission of the church in the Deanery, using the prayer stations to guide them. This is the first time the Deanery has organised a service like this and there were appreciative comments from people who found the time of prayer very significant.

The Revd Paul Roberts, Area Dean, said: “Our Deanery mission plan is for the churches to encourage and learn from each other in the mission we are doing in our parishes. This service was a lovely expression of that mission.”

Croydon South Deanery held a Service of Praise and Prayer at St John, Old Coulsdon, on 13 May to mark THY KINGDOM COME

The preacher was the Archdeacon of Croydon, the Venerable Chris Skilton.

St John, Waterloo set up a THY KINGDOM COME Prayer Station.

It focused on the use of flowers to help those wanting to pray to experience both visual and sensual beauty as they contemplated an icon or used coloured wool to weave whilst they prayed.

The Station also contained guidance on lectio divina and Ignatian prayer to help worshippers try out less familiar ways of praying.

Outside the church, a blackboard encouraged passers-by to write their prayers publicly, while a postbox allowed them to write more discreet prayers for the church community to pray on their behalf each day at Morning Prayer and the Eucharist.

A large sandwich board proclaimed the changing daily prayer provided by the Diocese for those at work during the novena.

The Prayer Station was used mainly by members of the congregation and visitors to the church. However the blackboard and prayer postbox were used extensively (and mostly appropriately) by many of the thousands who pass through Waterloo every day.

Bishop of Southwark’s Lent Call service

Southwark Cathedral was filled with representatives from church schools all over the Diocese on Wednesday 2 May. They were all there to give thanks for the Bishop’s Lent Call and to hand to Bishop Christopher money that they had raised during Lent through ‘dress-down’ days, market stalls and many other activities. The gifts received at the service from schools totalled £5,337.83.

Churches from Reigate Deanery joined together to mark THY KINGDOM COME

Kim Honey, Reader at St Margaret, Chipstead, writes: Beginning with an amazing open-air service on Reigate Hill, at which Bishop Jonathan preached, we gathered to pray and worship.

For the duration of TKC a prayer space opened from 8am-7pm in Redhill centre, inviting passers-by to come and pray…. And they did! We were visited by a steady stream of passers-by.

Pilgrims of all ages and from several churches enjoyed a nine-mile prayer walk from St Margaret, Chipstead to the Mill Church, Reigate Heath on Saturday 19 May, and the whole event culminated in a joyful celebration in Redhill Memorial Park on Pentecost Sunday. Our thanks to all those from many churches across the Deanery who joined in to make this a truly spirit-filled time of prayer.