



# The BRIDGE

Newspaper of the Anglican Diocese of Southwark

Christ  
Centred  
Outward  
Focused

Vol.30 No.4  
May 2025

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climate change  
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## News from our schools

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Bishop Christopher and Nicola Thomas, Diocesan Secretary join  
Parish Conversation at St Peter, Vauxhall.

## Parish Conversations: plans and aspirations for the future

**Parish Conversations is a diocesan initiative that launched in September 2024. It will see senior clergy and diocesan staff meet with every single parish across our diocese over the next two years.**

The Conversations flow from the first priority of Southwark Vision: valuing all our parishes. They are first and foremost an opportunity for listening – for members of the Bishop’s Team to hear about the joys, challenges, concerns and opportunities that each parish is experiencing. They are also opportunities for senior clergy and diocesan colleagues to work with parishes to identify what additional or new support might best benefit local clergy, lay ministers and their

congregations as they seek to thrive in mission and ministry.

At the heart of these plans lies the intention of senior staff to meet with and value every single parish in our diocese, enabling each church to shape and guide their Conversation to highlight what’s most important to them.

Last month, The Rt Revd Christopher Chessun, Bishop of Southwark, joined by The Revd Carol Coslett, Assistant Director of Lay Ministry, visited St Paul, Wimbledon Parkside in Wandsworth. It was an opportunity to meet with parish priest The Revd Susan Bolen and members of the church to hear about their joys, plans and aspirations for the future. Bishop Christopher and Carol engaged with the

ministry and mission teams, including Messy Church, Tea & Toys, the Wednesday after-school Club, the Pantry team and the Eco-committee. The majority of these programmes started during the Covid-19 pandemic and continue to thrive, providing vital support and fellowship. They also heard about how the community centre is strengthening connections with local people through numerous activities held throughout the week. The team are committed to further embedding their engagement through their vision and Mission Action Plan. Bishop Christopher returned the following Sunday to preside and preach.

Susan said, “These Parish Conversations offer valuable insights into the experiences, joys, and challenges faced by local churches. Bishop Christopher

reaffirmed his commitment to supporting parishes, ensuring they have the resources and encouragement needed to thrive. He said the visit to St Paul’s Wimbledon Parkside reflected a strong, vibrant, and forward-looking community, offering much hope for the future.”

Parishes will be contacted directly by their Episcopal Area teams to arrange dates for their Conversations. Until you hear directly from them, you don’t need to do anything – except start thinking about how you might like your local Conversation to run.

For more information visit:  
[tinyurl.com/bdh2sa62](https://tinyurl.com/bdh2sa62)



## Restorative time for reflection

Southwark Cathedral will host a day retreat at St Anne’s Church, Kew and the Royal Botanic Gardens for diocesan clergy on Wednesday 4 June.

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Read more stories at [southwark.anglican.org/blog](https://southwark.anglican.org/blog) or find us on social media @SouthwarkCofE





# A view from The BRIDGE



## How often have you already prayed “Thy Kingdom Come” this week?

These familiar words in the Lord’s Prayer, our ‘family prayer’ in the Church of God, tumble off our lips almost too swiftly sometimes. Between The Ascension and Pentecost this phrase takes on a whole new momentum, culminating this year in the 10th anniversary of the global prayer movement that is *Thy Kingdom Come* (see pages 6–7).

How? Choose five people who mean a lot to you, who don’t yet know Jesus as a friend and saviour, holding them in the heart of your prayers for those 10 days. Praying that in them God’s Kingdom may come in all its richness in their lives. May this – your praying during *Thy Kingdom Come* – change your life; and may it change theirs.

Then, we reach Pentecost, grand finale of our Easter season celebrations – sometimes called the Church’s birthday. God’s anointing Holy Spirit turbo-charged those first disciples. No longer timid or fearful, they tumble from the Upper Room overflowing with God’s Spirit, sharing the Good News with all they met. This was their gear-change from being predominantly Jesus centred, *Christ Centred*: to becoming wholeheartedly: *Outward Focused* in their faith and ministry and service, too. May you, this Pentecost-tide, feel a fresh drenching of God’s Holy Spirit in you, welling up to eternal life. Come Holy Spirit.

For Christians, Easter brings a spiritual lift to our faith: remembering Christ Jesus risen from the dead. The resurrection of the dead is core in our creeds, but we still live with the reality of our mortality, and the bereavement of loved ones lost. During the Covid pandemic *AtaLoss* provided excellent materials and training, and with others involved in chaplaincy and bereavement support, they are resourcing our parish and personal pastoral ministries as we approach *Dying Matters Awareness Week* in May (see page 10).

Despite Neville Chamberlain’s premature 1938 aspiration of ‘Peace in our time’, echoing the evensong response – *Give peace in our time, O Lord: Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God* – it started to bear fruit on 8 May 1945 as Victory in Europe, VE Day, was declared. As the 80th anniversary of VE Day falls in 2025 with many local celebrations, despite the Ukraine and Gaza conflicts so close to European borders, we are conscious and grateful for peace across most of Europe since then.

This post-Easter edition of *The Bridge* helpfully includes information on clergy and lay leader wellbeing, an inter-faith reflection, and much more.

With prayers for God’s every blessing on you.

**Bishop Alastair**



## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Rest in peace Pope Francis

In a statement released by the Vatican, it was announced that Pope Francis – head of the Catholic Church – died on Easter Monday (21 April) at the age of 88. He died at his residence in the Vatican’s Casa Santa Marta building. In a tribute posted on his X account, Bishop Christopher said, “Giving thanks this morning for the life of Pope Francis and praying for RC brothers and sisters in Christ. His legacy is one of deep spirituality and courageous apostolic leadership with a loving heart. It is beautiful that God called him home at Eastertide. May he rest in peace.” At the time of writing, Pope Francis will be laid to rest on 26 April in the Basilica of St Mary Major.



### 80th Anniversary of VE Day



This year marks the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II, making it a perfect time for churches to bring communities together through street parties, commemorative services, school assemblies and events. *Hope Together* is inviting churches to make the most of this mission opportunity by sharing the gospel throughout the celebrations. They have produced a special WWII

Commemorative Gospel of John, featuring real-life stories of courage and faith from WWII. You can order copies via the *Hope Together* website: [tinyurl.com/bdhur4xa](https://tinyurl.com/bdhur4xa)

Find out all about national plans for VE Day celebrations from 5–8 May at: [ve80.com](https://ve80.com)

### Caring for God’s creation

A two-day Connect 2025 Conference (25–26 March), sponsored by *Ecclesiastical Insurance* was held to connect more than 120 people who are working within the Church of England to care for the environment. Together they shared expertise on climate change, carbon net zero work and the theology behind caring for God’s creation. Southwark’s own Jonathan Walter, Net Zero Programme Manager and Sophie Roberts, Diocesan Environment Officer joined colleagues from all 42 dioceses at the headquarters of the British Antarctic Survey in Cambridge to share ideas and learning.



Read the full story here: [southwark.anglican.org/26725-2/](https://southwark.anglican.org/26725-2/)

### All different, all equal



This National Children’s Day (18 May), we celebrate each of us being made different and yet equal. Children from All Saints CofE Primary School, Croydon, recently came together to celebrate their learning under the *Equal Eagles* programme. As part of implementing our Diocesan Anti-Racism Charter, *Equal Eagles* is a six-week course for Key Stage 2 pupils on equality and respect delivered by the *Palace for Life Foundation* – the official charity for Crystal Palace FC. Supported by our diocese and the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education, it aims to help young south Londoners grow through sport. Plans are in place to reach more schools across our diocese over the coming years.

Listen to a prayer by some of the children here: [tinyurl.com/2smf5jb9](https://tinyurl.com/2smf5jb9)

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#### Next Issue: Submission deadline and guidance

The JUNE edition is due to be published online and in print on 1 June 2025. Material for that edition must be with Vernia Mengot by email by **FRIDAY 9 MAY**.

Space limitations mean that we cannot guarantee to publish everything we receive and material may be edited. All photographs submitted for publication are assumed to have the necessary permission for printing. Please ensure that people are happy for their photographs to be submitted before you do so. Forms for permission for the use of photographs of children (Form 10) and adults who may be vulnerable (Form 11) can be found at [southwark.anglican.org/safeguarding/diocesan-policies-procedures](https://southwark.anglican.org/safeguarding/diocesan-policies-procedures)





# Loving Ambassadors for Yeshuah

**The 6th Woolwich Area Lay Conference took place at the Ark All Saints Academy, Camberwell on Saturday 5 April. A Conference for Lay people organised by Lay people, it was an opportunity to join in fellowship and attend workshops all set in the context of praise and prayer. Adrian Greenwood, Lay Canon writes:**

Approximately 100 lay people from different churches and languages across the Woolwich Area turned up at for the 6th Woolwich Area Lay Conference.

To start the day and following the theme of ‘Thy Kingdom Come in Woolwich’ the keynote talk was given by Kemi Bamgbose, National Project Director for the *Thy Kingdom Come* (TKC) – the season of prayer held annually between Ascension Day and Pentecost Sunday.

Following this, delegates participated in two workshops available out of a choice of 12. Workshops were delivered by staff and volunteers from Trinity House, local Lay people and Kemi in preparation for TKC. All sessions were aimed at helping churches to grow in discipleship, numbers and mission.

There was plenty of time to chat and share experiences with members from other churches over a wonderful lunch and an opportunity to browse market stalls offering a range of resources.

The second part of the day and plenary session started with reflection, where participants had time to think about what inspires them and identify specific actions to take forward personally and with their congregations. Archdeacons Chigor (Lewisham & Greenwich) and Jonathan (Southwark) shared the sense of warmth,



openness and participation evident during the conference.

Natalie Walters, Head of JPIC at the Diocese, spoke from the Beatitudes about God’s upside-down Kingdom (Matthew 5:3-12) and how all lay followers are encouraged to be Loving Ambassadors of Yeshuah (Jesus) in word and deed, embracing all five of the Marks of Mission.

Bishop Alastair ended the conference by thanking those present for all they did to advance the Kingdom through the Churches of the episcopal area and by sending us out with the God’s blessing.



**Top: Attendees at the 6th Woolwich Area Lay Conference. Bottom: Adrian Greenwood, Lay Canon.**

# Bishop Rosemarie visits United Nations



**Archbishop Stephen and Bishop Rosemarie at the Ark of Return.**

**Last month, The Rt Revd Dr Rosemarie Mallett, Bishop of Croydon joined The Most Revd, Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York on a visit to the United Nations in New York.**

As part of the United Nations Permanent Forum on People of African Descent, an event was co-hosted by Kenya and the Anglican Communion, with high-level panel participation by Barbados, Jamaica

and Ghana. The gathering on Monday 14 April focused on reparatory justice and institutional accountability, with the Church of England offering a case study.

At the UN event, Bishop Rosemarie also contributed to the panel discussion, featuring David Comissiong, Barbados’ Ambassador to the Caribbean Community and Deputy Chairman of the National Task Force on Reparations, Ambassador Brian Wallace, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the UN, Ambassador Harold

Agyeman, Permanent Representative of Ghana, and Ambassador Yabesh Monari, Deputy Permanent Representative of Kenya.

Bishop Rosemarie said, “The dialogue at the UN represents a new phase of engagement and commitment from the Church of England, one rooted in the hope that – even after deep historical failure – reconciliation and justice are still possible.”

**Read the full article here:**  
[tinyurl.com/m2ccwj7v](https://tinyurl.com/m2ccwj7v)

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The Very Revd Dr Mark Oakley, Dean of Southwark will lead the retreat, which will include a morning to enjoy the Royal Botanic Gardens with local guides, a light lunch, an afternoon of theological reflection at St Anne’s, Kew and conversations with those who work in the Gardens. The evening will conclude with Choral Evensong sung by the Cathedral Choir.

It will be a gentle and restorative time of reflection and prayer in one of the most bio-diverse places on the planet.

Kew Theology and Gardening is a new charity set up by St Anne’s Church at Kew. Its mission is to deepen the Church’s connection with nature – to help develop theology of the environment – and

to enhance the wellbeing of Christian and other communities by providing opportunities to spend time amidst the great diversity of the natural world.

The presence of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, its gardeners and scientists, provides a wonderful opportunity for churches, locally and wider afield, to deepen our connection with creation.

Find out more

For more information visit:  
[tinyurl.com/yv27f2hd](https://tinyurl.com/yv27f2hd)  
To book your place visit:  
[tinyurl.com/yxxkf2b8](https://tinyurl.com/yxxkf2b8)





## NEWS FROM OUR PARISHES

# Kew EcoFair: seeking joy in the face of climate change

**On 22 March, St Luke, Kew hosted the second edition of its award-winning EcoFair.**

The event was once again kicked off by Kew EcoFair patron Jeremy Vine, alongside The Rt Revd Dr Martin Gainsborough, Bishop of Kingston and Cllr Richard Pyne, Mayor of Richmond. All offered effusive words of welcome, with Bishop Martin poignantly reminding visitors how events like this can help people to “find the joy” in the vital fight against climate change.

Kew EcoFair played host to a record number of external organisations who wanted to get involved – with Kew Society, Kew Rotary Club, Richmond Council, Makers United, Darrell School, Flight-Free UK, Habitats and Heritage, Climate Justice Now, and upcycled gift stall Fairground Fish joining for the first time. As well as Richmond Friends of the Earth, Richmond Furniture Scheme, River

+ Park – eco-lifestyle shop, Gardenz in a Jar, King’s School, Richmond Cycling Campaign and Dose of Nature, all returned after taking part in 2023.

Simon from The London Cycle Workshop in Sheen returned to offer free bike health checks and tuned 65 bikes across the day. He was joined by Sheen-based cargo bike shop, Cycle Race – who demonstrated this increasingly popular and greener way to get around.

Kew Transition returned to host a Repair Café, repairing furniture, clothes and small electricals. There was also a second-hand clothes sale throughout the day.

The Kew Society, St Luke’s Junior Church and Darrell School ran children’s activities, along with outdoor nature-themed activities from Dose of Nature and Habitats and Heritage.

New for 2025 was a series of talks. Jeremy Vine opened these by sharing



**Left: Jeremy Vine extols the joys of cycling to youngsters. Right: Cllr Richard Pyne, Mayor of Richmond (centre) with his wife Helen (left) and The Revd Dr Melanie Harrington-Haynes (right).**



the history of the Pennyfarthing (a high wheel bike) and talking about the joys of cycling. Others talked about the future of Hammersmith Bridge, how to see the world without air travel, garden ponds and ‘repairing our way to a better future’.

The Kew Community Choir, 2nd Kew Brownies and the Motleys also provided musical entertainment in the main church.

Charlotte Baker, one of the event organisers said,

*“Once more, the event was a resounding success – with lots of positive feedback from visitors and partners, a wonderful atmosphere on the day, and a true sense of community throughout, uniting the local community and inspiring them to care for God’s planet.”*

“Our visitors clearly came hungry, with soups and jacket potatoes offering something for everyone at lunchtime, alongside some wonderful home produce. Our new vegan bake-off attracted 15 entries in total and sold out within one hour and the children particularly enjoyed getting creative with their cakes.”

“Kew EcoFair is just one part of the EcoChurch activities of St Luke’s, Kew. Working together with Kew Community Trust, who lease a large part of the building, we have worked to install greener lighting, new bike racks, and hosted a series of ‘Climate Chat in the Church’ evening events, to further inform local residents on how they can take steps to fight climate change.”

**Find out more about EcoChurch at St Luke, Kew here: [tinyurl.com/bdhkz2t8](https://tinyurl.com/bdhkz2t8)**

## Easter roundup – photos from around our parishes



**Holy Trinity, South Wimbledon.**



**St John the Divine, Kennington.**



**Christ Church, Brixton.**



**Holy Trinity, Upper Tooting.**



**St Mary the Blessed Virgin, Addington.**



**Holy Trinity, Roehampton.**



**St Barnabas, Dulwich.**



# Paving the road to recovery

**A number of grants help fund and support mission and ministry across our diocese. Micro-grants of up to £300 are available to support social and environmental action as part of our commitment to Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) in parishes and deaneries.**

This might, for example, cover the cost of a training day or some equipment and supplies for a community café.

Having received a grant from the JPIC team, a group of 10 from St Mark's and St Luke's Downham attended *The Recovery Course Conference* at St George the Martyr, Holborn on Saturday 5 April 2025. The team was made up of a mixture of staff, volunteers and members of the local community who have struggled with addiction or have family and friends who are in that battle.

The Recovery Course is a free 15-week course for adults, in person or online,

based on the 12-step programme of Alcoholics Anonymous, incorporating Christian principles, and designed solely for anyone seeking to break a dependence on an addiction.

The Revd Nick Walsh, Team Vicar of St Luke's and St Mark's, Catford and Downham Team Ministry said, "The Conference was an inspiring time hearing about the difference that Jesus has made in the lives of people recovering from many different types of addictions. We also heard about some of the 'thinking outside of the box' that churches running the Recovery Course have done; as well as some of the needs and areas where further development is needed. One area of particular interest to us was around developing the course to support young people who are being affected by the addictive and shadow side of smartphones and social media."

Topics covered in the conference included testimonies from Scott Tuohy – a business

owner – who helps run Alpha courses at HMP Pentonville and is pioneering a Prison Recovery course – and Luke Selway, Founder and Director of Inside Out Rehab – on their journeys of recovery from addiction and discovering the love and grace of Jesus.

Dr Robin Lawrence and Kay Lawrence led a session on 'Healing The Addicted Mind – Trauma and its Part in My Downfall'. This explored the deep connection between past experiences and addictive behaviours. Attendees also heard about faith-driven strategies for prison ministry and stories



from churches who have incorporated the Recovery Course into their life and worship.

Feedback from some those who attended the conference said:

*"The conference really resonated with me, it helped me to realise some of the trauma that had affected me and helped me to start thinking about how to get better."*

"It was encouraging to see so many people who have been through the battle with addiction and have come through because of Jesus."

St Mark's and St Luke's are looking forward to undertaking the Recovery Course training this month and running a pilot of the course once training is completed.

**More information about the Recovery Course is here: [tinyurl.com/ymrw2p9r](https://tinyurl.com/ymrw2p9r)**  
**To find out what is on offer and how you can apply visit: [tinyurl.com/5n74hkja](https://tinyurl.com/5n74hkja)**

# 80 years of church music

**George Gray, Organist at St John the Evangelist, Blindley Heath recently celebrated his 90th birthday. With a musical career that began at the age of ten – in the choir of St Matthew's Church, Redhill – George has more than 80 years' experience in music ministry.**

To celebrate this milestone, The Revd Peter O'Connell, Rector of Godstone Benefice writes:



**George Gray, whose music ministry spans more than 80 years.**

Southwark Cathedral, and always sang a different Cantata on Passion Sunday or Palm Sunday each year.

He attended Church Choir Training at the Royal School of Church Music, when they were at Addington Palace in Croydon.

George retired from St Matthew's in 2005, but not for long. Bletchingley Church required an organist and in September 2005 he took on this role and remained there until 2012.

George began organ lessons when he was sixteen, and his first appointment as an organist was at St Anne's Chapel in Redhill. St Anne's had been a school many years earlier and had become an old people's home. The Chapel had a wonderful acoustic like a cathedral, and an old tracker action organ. The building has now been demolished but the school bells were relocated to the Belfry Shopping Centre in Redhill.

During his time of National Service, George managed to fit in playing the organ in Aldershot and Portsmouth.

After returning to civilian life, he was awarded an assisted place at the London College of Music, studied with Dr Francis Sutton, and was awarded in ALCM.

Following this, he was appointed to the Royal Philanthropic School in Redhill in 1956 for five and half years and then moved on to St Luke's Church, Reigate from 1963 to 1973.

In 1973, George went back to his musical roots when he was appointed Organist and Director of Music back at St Matthew's Church, Redhill, and then stayed there for 32 years. Under his leadership St Matthew's had a very good choir, that sometimes sang evensong in

# St Matthew's on a Mission

**St Matthew's Church in Croydon has received a Benefact Mission Money Grant for a second year to help boost their support offered for local people throughout the year.**

The £300 grant will support the Church's RENEW 121, wellbeing café which runs weekly on a Monday afternoon. The café is a place where it is 'OK not to be OK' and welcomes anybody who wants to drop by for tea, homemade cake and a chat. It's also a place for local people to sit quietly in the company of others. St Matthew's

**Café regulars display their gift bags ready for distribution to care homes.**

is part of a network of churches in Purley and South Croydon offering this support each day of the week.

Revd Ruth Chapman, Vicar at St Matthew's said, "We are very lucky to have been awarded a grant for a second year from Benefact Mission Money Grants 2025. The grant will be put to good use.

"For Easter – while chatting, our café regulars produced little mesh bags containing a small foil wrapped chocolate, a card with bible text and origami folded and decorated crosses. We distributed these to care homes in the parish.

"With the help of the grant, we will be able to make more little bags for the different seasons of the year. The next bags we make will be filled with lavender and the Christmas ones will have a small coloured wooden decoration, a novelty Christmas chocolate and an uplifting bible text."



# God is our shelter

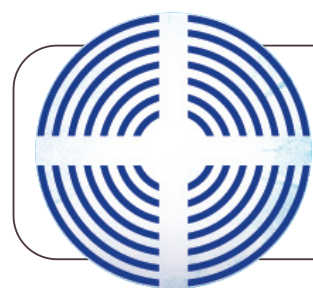
**Earlier this year, St James, Merton together with six other faith-based venues participated in the Merton Winter Night Shelter from 24 January – 7 March.**

The shelter – a Faith in Action project – provides emergency accommodation for 12–14 people experiencing homelessness, between December and March. Teams of around 360 faith group volunteers provide



this vital service for people across a dozen hosting venues in the borough. For more information visit: [tinyurl.com/2k7muw3b](https://tinyurl.com/2k7muw3b)





IN FOCUS...  
*Thy Kingdom Come*

# ‘Light up the world in prayer’

*Thy Kingdom Come (TKC) is a global ecumenical prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray from Ascension to Pentecost (28 May – 8 June) for more people to come to know Jesus.*

This year marks 10th Anniversary of *Thy Kingdom Come*. Since it began in May 2016, God has grown TKC from a dream of possibility into a movement which unites more than a million Christians in prayer – where every person, household and church prays for 11 days in their own way. It takes place in nearly 90% of countries worldwide and 85 different Christian denominations and traditions, all united in prayer that their friends and family, neighbours and colleagues might come to faith in Jesus Christ.

This year’s theme for TKC is ‘*Light up the world in prayer*’ focusing on the Lord’s Prayer that Jesus taught his disciples, which continues to unite Christians across generations, denominations and nations.

Southwark Diocese has been part of TKC’s global movement of prayer from the beginning and to mark the anniversary, we are inviting you to join our family-friendly diocesan celebration on Sunday 8 June, 3–5pm at Southwark Cathedral.

The event is open to all, free to attend and refreshments will be provided.

As part of our Southwark Vision, we are committed to becoming a younger, more diverse diocese. We wish to see our churches evolve to better reflect the communities in which they serve and the gifts of the whole people of God. This event will be an opportunity to engage with children, families and young people,

and together with the Cathedral and our diocesan schools there will be something for everyone. Come along to celebrate the joy of Pentecost with an afternoon filled with fun, creativity and interaction, an exciting programme of activities for all ages.

This multi-sensory celebration has been specially designed by The Revd Rachael Gledhill, Associate Vicar of St John the Evangelist, Upper Norwood and The Revd Sharon Moughtin, Vicar of St Mary in the Wilderness and author of *Diddy Disciples*.

Sharon said, “You will be able to hear the story of Pentecost during an interactive storytelling session using song and movement, created for the wriggliest and chattiest among us. Plus explore and celebrate the many meanings of Pentecost together across different sensory stations – all in the beautiful setting of Southwark Cathedral.”

## Sensory stations to explore

- **Touch:** create swirling patterns of fire with rice dyed with fiery colours.
- **Taste:** make edible friendship bracelets.
- **Smell:** explore the call to be ‘the aroma of Christ’ to others, rubbing herbs to wake up the scent and create mini herb bags to gift to others.
- **Sight:** create a sight for the eyes and make fiery headbands to remember the



story of tongues of fire dancing on the heads of the apostles.

- **Hearing:** make a joyful noise with shakers made from recycled plastic bottles.

We have active links with dioceses in four countries: four of the Anglican dioceses in Zimbabwe, the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem, the Diocese of Bergen in Norway (which is part of the Church of Norway) and the Diocese of Barbados. The service will feature contributions from these partners.

Our suggested Bible verse to help you reflect on this year is ‘*Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold*’ (2 Corinthians 3.12). We invite you to discover where spiritual boldness comes from, what this boldness leads us as Christians to do and what praying boldly means.

Will Cookson, Director of Mission and Dean of Pioneering Ministry & Fresh Expressions said, “The Lord’s Prayer is the



“The Lord’s Prayer is the foundational prayer for us as Christians, teaching us to be attentive to God, ourselves, our neighbour and the world around us.”

foundational prayer for us as Christians, teaching us to be attentive to God, ourselves, our neighbour and the world around us. It locates us in the Kingdom of God and God’s desire to draw people into that Kingdom. On this 10th anniversary, Thy Kingdom Come is a wonderful opportunity to come together to pray in our small groups, churches, deaneries and schools for boldness and for people to have the opportunity to respond to God in Christ through the Holy Spirit.”



L–R: Rachael Gledhill and Sharon Moughtin who have designed a multi-sensory Pentecost celebration for all ages at Southwark Cathedral.





## Seeing growth across all traditions and contexts

**Leading your Church into Growth (LyCiG) is a Christian organisation that equips church leaders and churches of all kinds to grow.**

For over 30 years, LyCiG has been serving local churches across the country with a vision to encourage and equip them to grow in numbers, spiritual depth and in service to their local communities.

LyCiG runs residential conferences, provides training days and resources as well as supporting dioceses in developing their own growth programmes. It helps all kinds of churches – anglocatholic, charismatic, evangelical and liberal, rural and urban, big and small.

In this edition, The Revd Sue Cooke (pictured) talks about LyCiG's support for worshipping communities and Southwark's upcoming conference.

### Sue writes:

At the end of January 2025, I left parish ministry to take up a new role as National Director of LyCiG. I am passionate about the parish and still believe there is hope for the local church. I first came in to contact with LyCiG as a curate, have used its principles in the churches I have led and we definitely saw growth – numerically, spiritually and missionally. A few years ago, I was invited to become part of the volunteer speaking team and loved it, especially when I travelled twice to Australia to launch LyCiG in the Diocese of Melbourne.

Research has shown that churches who come on a LyCiG conference and follow through on its principles and their own action



plan typically grow their worshipping community by 10% per annum and their under 18s worshipping community by 18% above the national average. The success of LyCiG has been recognised by the national Church and we have been given funding to scale up our work over the next three years to reach 1,000 parishes across the country. We teach simple steps culminating in individual parish plans. Key to the success of any conference is the presence of parish teams – clergy and laity working, dreaming and planning together is vital.

I am delighted that Southwark will be hosting a LyCiG conference from 22–24 September this year and I will be joined at that conference by The Revd Canon Anna Norman-Walker and The Rt Revd Rhiannon King, Bishop of Southampton. I really hope parishes will consider sending a team and joining us. LyCiG works across all church traditions and contexts. You do not need to be a resource church or wealthy to be able to learn from the conference, apply the principles and then see growth in your parish.

**For information visit:**  
[tinyurl.com/yr4jxzc7](https://tinyurl.com/yr4jxzc7)

## Engaging your church in prayer

Our diocesan Mission Team has curated resources to help churches engage meaningfully with TKC 2025. There are three main ways for parishes and schools to engage with this year's campaign – and a whole host of resources to help. As well as joining our celebration at the Cathedral, why not use these resources in your context?

### Gather together in church or school

- *Practicing the Way*: prayer stations exploring the spiritual disciplines and building a 'rule of life'.
- *Stations of the Resurrection*: the perfect follow-up to the Easter season.
- *Called to More*: use these podcasts for times of meditation, followed by silent reflection.

### Together – meeting in small groups

- *Sycamore Course*: video-based discussions over a shared meal.
- *Hope and Hospitality*: a study of six transformative Biblical meals.
- *Life in the Spirit*: seminars exploring life in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- *The Lectio Course*: a five-part series on the practice of *Lectio Divina*.

### Sent – times of individual prayer

- *Digital Detox devotional*: designed for young people, this offers 11 days of technology-free reflections on the Lord's Prayer.
- *The Prayer Journal*: with ecumenical contributions from Cardinal Vincent Nichols, The Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin, His Eminence Archbishop Angaelos and others.
- *The Novena*: '10 lessons and one hope', written by Archbishop Stephen Cottrell.

### Digital resources

- *The Cheeky Pandas*: four brand new episodes for children exploring different ways to pray – presented by CBeebies' Gemma Hunt and guests.
- *Youth resources*: study guides for youth leaders, teachers and parents.
- *The Way UK*: a special podcast episode, video content and Bible study on the Lord's Prayer.
- *Films*: a selection of TKC's films from the last decade, along with some brand new content.
- *The TKC App*: new content will soon be available on the award-winning app.

**To find out more about this year's resources, visit our dedicated webpage:** [southwark.anglican.org/thy-kingdom-come](https://southwark.anglican.org/thy-kingdom-come) or TKC's website: [thykingdomcome.global](https://thykingdomcome.global)

### Special all-age Pentecost celebration

To mark the global wave of prayer, Southwark Diocese is inviting people to join a family-friendly diocesan celebration on Sunday 8 June 2025 from 3–5pm at Southwark Cathedral. The event is open to all and free to attend. Refreshments will be provided. Come along to celebrate the joy of Pentecost with an afternoon filled with fun, creativity and interaction, and an exciting programme of activities for all ages!

**Sign up online for this special all-age Pentecost celebration:**  
[tinyurl.com/y7hjmhrx](https://tinyurl.com/y7hjmhrx)





## DISCIPLESHIP & MINISTRY

# A step forward in our vision to nurture ministry

**By September 2025, our diocese hopes to place eight children and youth apprentice-style workers in selected parishes as part of a three-year programme that combines practical experience with structured theological training with Ridley Hall, Cambridge. This initiative is another significant step forward in our vision to nurture ministry that is both Christ Centred and Outward Focused – especially among the youngest in our communities.**

Each apprentice-style worker will work part-time in a parish, helping to grow and lead children's and youth ministry, while also dedicating one day a week to online study, working towards a Certificate in Higher Education in Theology, Mission, and Ministry. The exciting new programme has been made possible through national funding from the Church of England, and forms part of the wider Southwark Diocesan Investment Programme (DIP) – a long-term initiative designed to support mission, ministry, and growth across our diocese.

These roles are open to anyone who feels called to ministry with children and young people (CYP), including those at different stages of life, not just young people. It might be someone in their 20s exploring a possible calling to ministry, or maybe someone later in life, with a growing sense that God is stirring them to something

new. Whatever their age or background, it is an opportunity for those with a heart for children and young people to work within a parish and gain a qualification.



Apprentice-style workers will be supported by a local parish supervisor and members of the diocesan team who will be looking after the programme. They will also be part of a wider community of learners.

Louisa Ley, Apprentice Programme Coordinator (pictured) said, "We hope this will be a life-shaping experience – for the apprentice-style workers themselves, and for the parishes and communities they serve."

We will begin to advertise these roles in May. Interviews will take place in June and those appointed will begin their roles in September. If you – or someone you know – might be interested, it would be good to hear from you. Find future vacancies here: [southwark.anglican.org/vacancies](https://southwark.anglican.org/vacancies)

In addition, we are launching a new local CYP Missional Practitioners programme for experienced CYP workers within our diocese (see page 10).

Contact Louisa by email at: [Louisa.ley@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:Louisa.ley@southwark.anglican.org)

## Vocations Sunday

**Vocations Sunday is a day dedicated to praying for vocations and reflecting on God's call in our lives.**

The next Vocations Sunday will take place on 11 May 2025 – the fourth Sunday of Easter, also known as 'Good Shepherd Sunday'.

We believe all are called to serve God according to their given gifts, talents and context. Every Christian has a vocation, and it is the task of all those serving in ministry to help identify and nurture the gifts and callings of every member of the Church.

The national Church has put together a range of worship resources, including a service of the word, holy communion and alternative texts. Download these at: [tinyurl.com/yfy4etjc](https://tinyurl.com/yfy4etjc)

### A prayer for Vocations Sunday

*God our Father,  
Lord of all the world,  
through your Son you have called  
us into the fellowship  
of your universal Church:  
hear our prayer for your  
faithful people  
that in their vocation  
and ministry  
each may be an instrument  
of your love,  
through our Lord and Saviour  
Jesus Christ.  
Amen.*

# Curates journey through Revelation

**In April's issue of *The Bridge*, we shared a group photo of Bishop Christopher, members of the diocesan staff team and 24 curates from across our diocese who travelled on a pilgrimage to the seven churches named by St John in the book of Revelation: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.**

In this edition, The Revd Canon Wendy Robins, Director of Discipleship, Lay Ministry and Continuing Ministerial Education, shares more about the sites they visited and reflects on their journey as disciples.

### Wendy writes:

The ruins of Ephesus, now known as Selcuk, in Türkiye (Turkey) is an amazing place to visit. There is so much left to see and explore and they are excavating all the time so there is always something new. But, if Ephesus is the most preserved and extraordinary to visit, then for many of the curates on the pilgrimage, Smyrna was the most evocative. There are far fewer remains to see but they are in the midst of everyday life in the bustling town of Izmir, home of dental work and plastic surgery.

Bishop Christopher is a firm believer in the value of pilgrimage and has taken many curates on such journeys. This time, as a pilgrimage to the Holy Land felt unwise, the curates were given the opportunity to explore the sites of the seven churches written to in the book of Revelation. Leaving on Monday 10 March for seven nights, we were led by our excellent guide – Yaman – and during the time we saw all of the sites of the seven churches: Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, making the seven.

At the beginning of the pilgrimage some of us found it quite hard to look beyond the ruins and see why what we were doing was important. But as we travelled around

and found out more about the places we visited and why they had fallen into ruin, we began to focus more on what the Spirit was saying to the churches to whom the letter was written. More than that, we began to ask ourselves what the Spirit was saying to the churches now, today, in our world. After all there is so much happening that it seems so important that we listen to the Spirit and act accordingly.

During our time together, we read each letter and listened to a reflection on them. Each evening groups of the curates led bible studies on the places that we had visited. It was a truly wonderful experience to get to know each other – some for the first time and some in deeper ways – and to share worship and study scripture together.

As we travelled together, we also had the chance for some fun and at Pamukkale a few brave souls ventured into the freezing swimming pool.

*"Pilgrimage is a wonderful way to go deeper into scripture and to learn more about our faith..."*

It was a busy time, and we returned home tired but full of new insights into the letters to the churches and grateful for new friendships made. Pilgrimage is a wonderful way to go deeper into scripture and to learn more about our faith, but it is also a time for being with others, having fun and building friendships that will stand the test of time. More than that, it was a time for our curates to learn about the value of pilgrimage for themselves and Bishop Christopher hopes that they will share that love and the opportunities for pilgrimage with those in their parishes.

**A series of blogs written by curates are on our website. You can read them here: [tinyurl.com/2tj2p95d](https://tinyurl.com/2tj2p95d)**



Curates visit the house of the Virgin Mary.





## IN FOCUS...

News from our diocese

# Supporting those at a loss

AtaLoss

*Dying Matters Awareness Week (5–11 May) takes place annually to encourage open conversations about death, dying, and grief.*

Led by national charity, *Hospice UK*, it aims to bring attention to the importance of talking about death and planning for the end of life. The week sees hospices, charities, care organisations, the Church and various community groups come together to help foster a more supportive environment around these significant discussions, reducing fear and anxiety about death.

One of the charities on a mission to change the culture of bereavement is *AtaLoss*. Founded by The Revd Canon Yvonne Tulloch – formerly Bishop's Officer for Clergy Bereavement for Southwark Diocese. It was established as a charity in 2016, to ensure that no one in the UK should be left without support when someone dies.

In this edition, The Revd Nicky Grey (pictured), Head of Church Engagement for *AtaLoss*, shares how the charity helps to equip churches to offer bereavement support to their communities and what you can do to support bereaved people around you.

### Nicky writes:

*AtaLoss.org* is a website hub signposting services, resources and information for UK bereaved people to find all the help they need according to their circumstances, for their holistic support and wellbeing. We also train and equip churches to offer bereavement support to their communities through our 'Loss and Hope' project, and in particular to run *The Bereavement Journey*® programme. This addresses the ever-pressing need for bereavement support for both recent and unprocessed grief. Death has been taboo for a long time in UK society and as the subject is opening up there is a growing need to support those dealing with past, as well as, current losses.



Someone dying can affect every aspect of a person's life – their physical health, mental health, relationships and behaviour – as well as their emotions. Grief is natural. It can be the cause of anger and guilt, inability to concentrate, memory loss, psychosis and fears, and it can have many ongoing effects if repressed and unresolved. However, the grief journey can usually be navigated healthily and successfully if timely understanding support is found from people around the bereaved person. This is why we are so keen to encourage churches to reach out to bereaved people in their communities, especially because bereavement almost always challenges people spiritually.

In addition, despite demand for religious funerals being in decline, churches are often wanted when it comes to grief. Church of England life events research in the pandemic showed that as many as 90% of the public want, or are open to, churches helping them with their grief. This is borne out by our recently published mission impact report *The Bereavement Journey*®, which showed that:

- 89% of courses are welcoming participants with no previous church connection.
- 80% of participants are choosing to attend the final optional session on faith.
- 95% of all age groups are finding the optional faith session helpful, with younger adults (aged 18–30s) attending and appreciating at 100%.

- 90% of course leaders report that some of their participants want to stay connected with church afterwards, with many expressing interest in exploring faith further.

You can read or download the full report here: [tinyurl.com/532vfmz4](https://tinyurl.com/532vfmz4)

Due to the demand and effectiveness of *The Bereavement Journey*®, courses have spread in just over a year to over four hundred locations across the UK, and the impact of and potential for the programme has been recognised in Parliament. We're delighted that six churches in Southwark Diocese are running *The Bereavement Journey*® as well as striving to become more bereavement friendly by committing to fulfil our Bereavement Friendly Church Charter. You can see the six locations here: [tinyurl.com/2p82x7dc](https://tinyurl.com/2p82x7dc). You can read a case study about one bereavement friendly church here: [tinyurl.com/2fhu98u8](https://tinyurl.com/2fhu98u8)

So, what can churches do to equip themselves to better support bereaved people?

- Learn about the opportunities and challenges that bereavement presents by attending our 'Bereavement Friendly Church' webinar. See [lossandhope.org](https://lossandhope.org)
- Consider running *The Bereavement Journey*®. Discover for yourself the difference the programme can make to people's lives and to church growth and faith. See [tinyurl.com/23ma82zs](https://tinyurl.com/23ma82zs)
- Hosting a death café or a discussion about dying. There are many resources available for table-top discussions at [tinyurl.com/4yhxu8c2](https://tinyurl.com/4yhxu8c2) and the CoFE resource 'Grave Talk Cards' are ideal for use in a café space to talk about death, dying and funerals, available at [tinyurl.com/mt497ee9](https://tinyurl.com/mt497ee9)
- Provide a set of bereavement support resources in your church entrance or foyer.
- Set up a special prayer station or outdoor prayer space with comforting scriptures available for those who have been bereaved.
- Create a special act of worship for during the week, or include prayers for those who have been bereaved in your regular worship. If your church follows the lectionary, the readings especially lend themselves to the subject that day.

Please also signpost to *AtaLoss.org* so that bereaved people around you can find the support they so need. See [tinyurl.com/zejfk4t9](https://tinyurl.com/zejfk4t9)

For further information contact: [Nicky.grey@ataloss.org](mailto:Nicky.grey@ataloss.org)

## Abseiling to make a difference

**On 14 March Revd Obaka Chike, Chaplain at St George's Hospital Tooting, abseiled down the Pelican Hotel to raise funds for the hospital's charity.**

She thanks her supporters and well-wishers for their prayers, encouragement and donations. To date, Obi has raised nearly £600.

**You can donate here:**  
[tinyurl.com/bdh3s3mh](https://tinyurl.com/bdh3s3mh)



**Revd Obi abseiling for St George's Hospital Charity.**

## We Believe: exploring the Nicene Creed

This year marks the 1700th anniversary of the original development of the Nicene Creed – a summary of what the whole Church believes about the great doctrines of the Christian faith. To celebrate this, a variety of resources have been produced for use by churches, groups and individuals.

The resources unpack the significance of each part of the Creed through daily biblical reflections, which offer prompts to reflect and pray. These will be available in print and online, and via the Everyday Faith app.

**Look out for more information in the coming weeks.**

"Grief is natural."





## IN FOCUS...

### Southwark Vision

# Catalysing children and young people's ministry in local parishes

*In our series unpacking the priorities of the Southwark Vision, Imani McEwen writes...*

Through our Diocesan Investment Programme, we will soon be launching a new children's and Young People (CYP) focused initiative, as part of a suite of interventions to achieve our Vision of becoming a younger and more diverse diocese.

We are seeking experienced children, family and youth workers from across our diocese to come alongside a local church's existing and new volunteers and be a catalyst to help them grow their ministries with children, young people and families.

Known as Missional Practitioners, they will provide guidance and practical support in growing the faith of children and young people – especially at key transition phases in their lives. They will support and advise parishes to build volunteer capacity by modelling CYP ministry in action – enabling volunteers to take the lead and grow in confidence in delivering effective ministry with children, young people and families.

Each Mission Practitioner will commit up to one day a week, either in a paid or volunteer capacity, working with parishes.

In return, Mission Practitioners will be part of a CYP leader 'progression pathway', receiving support and training from within our diocese to ensure they have what they need to thrive in their role. Parishes working with a Mission Practitioner are encouraged to provide a welcoming and supportive environment and understanding that the success of their partnership lies in the hands of the local church, supported by our diocesan team.

We are seeking to identify existing successful parish CYP practitioners in this vital area of work, to celebrate them and to encourage learning and development between parishes. If you know somebody who would be attracted to this programme and could be a Missional Practitioner, please encourage them to enquire. Age and educational qualifications are no barrier to participation. We are simply looking for those who are successful already in this work, who are interested in learning and contributing more.

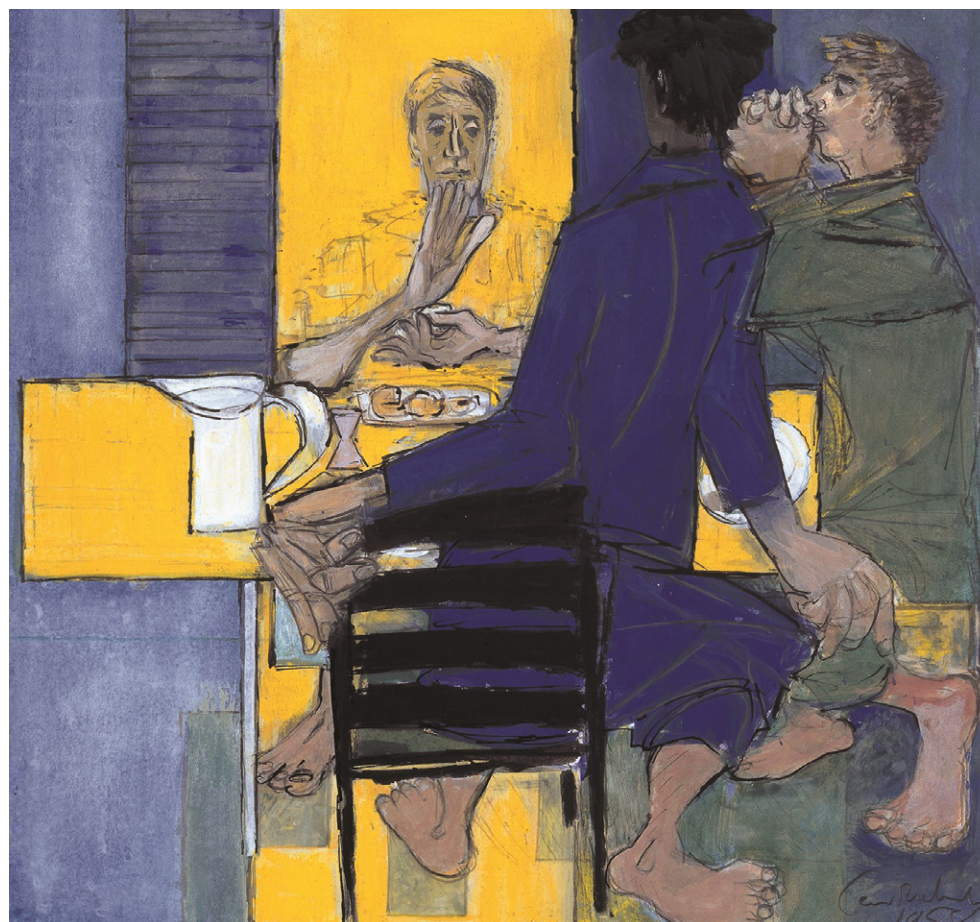


Image: © Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes, Ceri Richards The Supper at Emmaus, MMAC.

If you are a parish that has the potential to share your own Missional Practitioner, don't worry – you won't lose them, as they will still be able to work with you. But this programme means they would also need to be released to share their skills with at least one other parish – and to have an opportunity for development and learning.

Our Mission Practitioner initiative is all about equipping and enabling parishes to grow and invest in the future of our Church, helping parishes to become more diverse, vibrant, and reflective of the communities they serve.

If you feel that your parish would benefit from support to further develop CYP ministry and you have volunteers who would benefit from working with a Missional Practitioner, please contact: [imani.mcewen@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:imani.mcewen@southwark.anglican.org)

*Imani is Mission Support Officer (Children & Young People) for the Diocese of Southwark.*

**Details of Southwark Vision and the core document can be downloaded at: [southwark.anglican.org/southwark-vision](https://southwark.anglican.org/southwark-vision)**



## LET US PRAY...

### MAY

**The Venerable John Kiddle**

*Archdeacon of Wandsworth*

#### May Week

I began my ministry in the Diocese of Liverpool, serving my curacy in the Lancashire market town of Ormskirk and then as an incumbent in Huyton on a Liverpool outer estate.

In those days there was a strong tradition of holidays in May, often linked to local factories closing for a week. Whole communities taking a break from work at the same time.

Local parish churches were part of this seasonal rhythm, running holiday clubs, organising parades and celebrations such as the May Queen. It was a season in which the life of the church felt deeply woven into the life of the community.

Such events were a celebration of spring and life, but also very much a celebration of the working and economic life of the community. May Day (1 May) is itself a day on which we commemorate work and labour.

We are going through a time when the world is uncertain, economic stability is fragile and decisions made by a handful of powerful people have an increasingly drastic effect on the working life of many people across the globe.

Might May, this year, be an especially appropriate month in which to think and pray about work?

Take time to thank God for the gift of work – for opportunities for creativity,



for production, for service and self-fulfilment and for opportunities for rest.

Take time to thank God for all those whose labour sustains you, feeds you, heals you, transports you, teaches you, entertains you and guides you.

Take time to pray to God for all whose work is shaped by exploitation, uncertainty and poverty. Pray for all who seek work and cannot find it.

*God of creation*

*We give you thanks for all that is fruitful and productive in our world  
And for the joy and fulfilment we find in work*

*God of love*

*We give you thanks for all those who labour nurtures and shapes our lives*

*And for the opportunities we have, through our work, to provide for others*

*God of justice*

*We pray for those whose work is toil and struggle*

*And we seek strength that we might bring change and fair reward*

*God of rest*

*We thank you for holidays and recreation*

*And for the renewal and restoration that is your eternal gift.*

**Amen.**



# WHAT'S ON

Please send details of your next events for JUNE ONWARDS to Trinity House **BY MONDAY 12 MAY**

## May

### FRIDAY 9 MAY

- \* **WATERLOO** – Lecture – *Life above: Birds, Ecology and Us*: Is Christian life just about heaven above? Or is there an ecological form of discipleship that pays attention to the birds in the skies too? Lecture by Professor Colin Beale, a world expert in ecology. In association with St Augustine's College of Theology and St John's Waterloo. 5–7.30pm at St John's Waterloo. Free, book at: [tinyurl.com/2ca2vrps](http://tinyurl.com/2ca2vrps)

### SATURDAY 17 MAY

- ♪ **PUTNEY** – Putney Choral Society: Mozart Requiem & Pergolesi Magnificat. Music Director Jamie Powe; professional orchestra & soloists. 7pm at St Paul's Church, Augustus Rd, Southfields, SW1 6EW. Tickets £25 (incl. prog. & refreshments), booking: [tinyurl.com/5bc2s2se](http://tinyurl.com/5bc2s2se) or on the door (card only).

## June

### SATURDAY 7 & 14 JUNE

- \* **TANDRIDGE** – Big Green Week, Churches Count on Nature and Love Your Burial Ground Week. Butterfly talk on Saturday 7 June, 3pm, to mark the beginning of the Big Green Week. Churches Count on Nature Wildlife –count and afternoon tea on Saturday 14 June, 3pm. Both events at St Mary the Virgin, Church Road, Horne, RH6 9LA. Free to attend (donations welcome).

### SUNDAY 8 JUNE

- \* **SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL** – *Thy Kingdom Come*. 10th anniversary celebration. This year's theme is 'Light up the world in prayer' and to mark the global wave of prayer, we're inviting you to join a family-friendly diocesan celebration, 3–5pm at Southwark Cathedral. The event is open to all and free to attend.

### THURSDAY 12 JUNE

- \* **WESTMINSTER** – A Service of Thanksgiving and Reflection to mark the 80th Anniversary of Christian Aid. 12pm at Westminster Abbey, Dean's Yard, London, SW1P 3PA. Free. Register to attend: [tinyurl.com/47ccyzvr](http://tinyurl.com/47ccyzvr)

### FRIDAY 13 JUNE

- \* **GREENWICH** – 'The Beloved Son'. A play about the life of the spiritual writer and priest Henri Nouwen, written by Murray Watts and performed by Andrew Harrison. The play explores hope and longing, family dynamics, sexual and emotional crisis and the profound insights of a man who became one of the greatest spiritual writers of the Twentieth Century. 7.30pm at St Alfege Church, Greenwich SE10 9BJ. Tickets £13.70 via: [tinyurl.com/3vaery3s](http://tinyurl.com/3vaery3s)

### TUESDAY 24 JUNE

- \* **WESTMINSTER** – National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast, 7.30–9.00am, Westminster Hall, Houses of Parliament. Rachael Maskell MP and the Christians in Parliament APPG invite all clergy in the diocese. Theme 'God in the public square?', speaker John Lennox, Emeritus Professor of Mathematics at Oxford University. Music and

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singing led by Keith and Kristyn Getty. Details: [tinyurl.com/bddnjbv](http://tinyurl.com/bddnjbv). MPs and church leaders to attend together, see example invitation: [tinyurl.com/CHL25MP](http://tinyurl.com/CHL25MP). Tickets £25, available if your MP confirms attendance: [tinyurl.com/NPPBCHL25](http://tinyurl.com/NPPBCHL25).

### FRIDAY 27–SATURDAY 29 JUNE

- \* **STAFFORDSHIRE** – Rural Renewal Leaders' Gathering. Led by ReSource Ministers David & Meg Heywood and Jolyon Trickey, with additional input from ReSource Director Christopher Landau. Open to anyone engaged in church leadership in a rural context. 12pm at Yarnfield Park, Staffordshire, ST15 0NL. £145 per person incl. all meals and refreshments. For details, call ReSource on: 01952 371300 or book at: [tinyurl.com/3rp22bjb](http://tinyurl.com/3rp22bjb)

## Job vacancies

Our diocese offers a variety of roles that support our mission and ministry. You will find current vacancies on our website: [southwark.anglican.org/vacancies](http://southwark.anglican.org/vacancies)

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Email your upcoming events to [bridge@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:bridge@southwark.anglican.org)





## IN FOCUS...

News from our schools

# St Mark's: transforming lives through love, hope and trust

**St Mark's Church of England Academy, Merton is the second highest-ranking state school in the country for 'academic value added' in sixth form.**

A report published by the Department for Education shows that sixth formers at St Mark's achieved well above expectations in their A-levels last year. St Mark's is also the fourth highest-ranking school in England – and the second highest-ranking state school – in the Government's Progress Score category, which tracks students' progress from GCSE to A-level.

The figures – also known as 'value added' scores – show how much progress A-level students made between the end of Key Stage 4 (GCSEs) and the end of their sixth form studies, compared to similar students in England. A score above zero means students made more progress, on average, than students across England who got similar GCSEs, while a score below zero means students made less progress.



St Mark's has a score of 0.88, indicating that it is well above average for progress, with students achieving almost one grade higher in each subject than students who achieved similar grades to them at GCSE. This rating is the latest feather in the cap

of St Mark's, which last year was rated as 'outstanding' in all categories by Ofsted – the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills – and praised for going "above and beyond to support pupils in all aspects of their education".

The St Mark's vision is to provide an outstanding quality of education, dedicated to academic and character excellence, underpinned by the inclusive Christian values of love, hope and trust. The school is committed to seeing 'transformation for all' and wants young people, of all faiths and none, to be 'transformed by the renewing of their minds' (Romans 12:2) through learning, and to live 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). Above all, its aim is to ensure that students realise their God-given potential and have the ambition, confidence, cultural capital and employability skills to be successful in their future university and professional careers.

Hannah Fahey, Executive Headteacher of St Mark's CofE Academy said,

*"I am incredibly proud of every member of our community for the part they have played in securing these record breaking outcomes."*

"Our mission at St Mark's Academy is to transform lives through the inclusive Christian values of love, hope, and trust. These results remind us what is possible when a whole body of staff and students live and breathe that mission. I can't wait to hear about the positive contribution our sensational young people make on this world."



Children 'make some noise' at St Mark, Kennington.

## Big Spring Sing – raising voices and awareness

**'Make your choice, use your voice, make some noise' echoed around St Mark, Kennington as a service to celebrate and to raise awareness of Christian Aid drew to a close.**

Around 400 children, with their teachers and helpers from ten diocesan schools came together to sing and pray for Christian Aid. The pupils from St Stephen's, Lewisham, St George's Southwark, St Peter's and Peter Hills, Southwark, St John's, Kingston, Christ Church Surbiton, Eltham, All Saints Putney, All Saints, Benhilton and Malden Parochial joined together having learnt the songs in school.

Sara Sanbrook-Davies, Education Consultant, Southwark Diocesan Board of Education said, "The Big Spring Sing was a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the courageous advocacy that is already happening in our schools. It allowed our schools to engage more thoroughly with the work of Christian Aid. The event provided a platform for children to use their voices on issues of injustice while also showcasing the vital work that Christian Aid is doing. We were joined by Richard Baker (Campaigns, Youth and Schools Lead at Christian Aid) who spoke to the children about the work Christian Aid does across the world and he made the point to the children that it is up to all of us to make a difference and that they had already started on that journey. A joyful and enthusiastic occasion in the wonderful St Marks Kennington, whose

hospitality was instrumental in making the day a success."

**A poem about Christian Aid read by Christ Church Surbiton**

In lands both near and far, Christian Aid shines like a star.

They help the hungry, the sick, the poor, opening up humanity's door.

When disaster strikes, they rush to assist, with hands outstretched, no one is missed. From floods that wash all hope away, to earthquakes that turn night into day.

They build up schools and share the light, teach children to dream, to reach new heights. They dig for water where streams are dry and give hope to those who wonder why.

Fighting for justice, they raise their voice, in a world of sorrow, they make a choice. To challenge the systems that keep people down, to wear kindness proudly, like a crown.

For us, they show what kindness can do, a reminder that sharing is up to me and you. With every little action, we can help make a change, through love and support, the world can rearrange.

So, as we learn and grow each day, Let's follow their path, let's find our way. For in helping others, we find our place, With Christian Aid, we share 'Love' and 'Grace.'

## Christ's School basketball champs

**Christ's School, Richmond has emerged victorious in the U16 Dynamik National Schools Premier Basketball Championship, defeating John Fisher School (Croydon) 84–67 on Thursday 27 March.**

The game took place at the Manchester Performance Centre. This triumph marks the fifth time in the past nine years that Christ's School has claimed a National School Basketball Championship. In a

thrilling final, the Christ's School team showed exceptional skill, teamwork, and determination to secure their victory.

Will Wise, Head Coach of Christ's School Basketball Team said, "We are incredibly proud of our team's dedication and hard work throughout the season. This win is a testament to the talent and commitment of these young athletes. It's an honor to bring the championship home once again, and we're excited for what the future holds for this team."



Christ's School, Richmond – champions for a fifth time in nine years.