



The BRIDGE

Newspaper of the Anglican Diocese of Southwark



Christ
Centred
Outward
Focused

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Archbishop Justin

Three-day mission visit
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Southwark
Faith & Belief
Community
Awards 2024



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Archbishop Justin's mission visit to the diocese



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Archbishop Justin being interviewed by some of the children from St Peter, Brockley.

On 4–6 October, the Archbishop of Canterbury – the Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby – spent a weekend visiting churches and parish projects across Southwark Diocese. Canon Will Cookson, Director of Mission, organised the weekend – he shares with us what happened...

It was an intense three days filled with much laughter, joy and the undeniable movement of the Holy Spirit. As someone who had a ringside view of these visits and Archbishop Justin's passion to share the love of Jesus and to see God at work in very diverse settings, all I can say is what a privilege it was to see God's Spirit at work.

For many years, Archbishop Justin has been visiting parishes in different dioceses across the Province of Canterbury, with a focus on mission – and Bishop Christopher welcomed this opportunity for him to come to the Diocese of Southwark. One of the key ideas behind the weekend was that it should not so much be a "show and tell" for churches, but rather an opportunity for parishes of different contexts and traditions to pray with the Archbishop and use his presence with them to focus afresh on sharing faith, deepening discipleship and growing younger. Our parishes welcomed this opportunity with enthusiasm and creativity offering both the Archbishop and all who were present some truly God-filled moments.

Each day of the visit was packed with life, colour and worship – and Archbishop

Justin spoke of how inspired he was by what he saw and experienced in our parishes. The churches he visited spanned the full spectrum of traditions and contexts – Anglo-Catholic, sacramental, evangelical, estates, bilingual, inner city, suburbs... and in each of these we witnessed God's spirit at work. One of the refrains Archbishop Justin regularly heard upon leaving a place was "Thank you for seeing us," – and many churches felt that the visits highlighted their work, bringing encouragement and affirmation. For several of the churches there was a sense that they had been challenged to take a step of faith and 'push their boat out into deeper waters' and Archbishop Justin's time with them gave them the confidence to want to stay out there!

It was a rich, wonderful weekend and I give thanks to God for the Archbishop and his ministry amongst us.

See pages 3, 6 & 7 for a day-by-day account of the mission visit.



"They came because it was the Archbishop but they heard Jesus."

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A view from The BRIDGE



In this season of remembrance, the Church remembers Martin of Tours (316–397). I have always had a soft spot for Bishop Martin not just because we share a Christian name and a job title but also because of his journey from soldier to Bishop.

Martin of Tours served in the Roman army in Gaul before coming under the influence of Hilary of Poitiers and declaring that he had switched his allegiance to a new commanding officer, namely Jesus. In my life, I have had much involvement in the military, as a teenager in the cadets, in the officer training corps at University, and finally as a chaplain to a Royal Marine unit. But in the end, I found my true vocation as a disciple of Jesus not as a soldier.

As part of my training to be a military chaplain, I spent two weeks on a Royal Navy ship in the Gulf as part of a multilateral operation that seeks to keep the sea lanes open and monitor criminal activity. As the ship pulled out of the harbour, I felt a distinct sense of a loss of liberty. For two weeks we didn't see land. Conditions on board were basic (though the food was very good) and it was unbelievably hot. Most of the people on the ship had been away from their families for six months and still had many weeks to go. It taught me a huge amount about the sacrifices our servicemen and women make. War and preparation for war point to our fallenness as human beings but I am in no doubt about the importance of the Church

being present among those who serve, speaking of Jesus' love for all people, and praying for the healing of the world.

Recently, the Bishop to the Armed Forces, the Rt Revd Hugh Nelson, wrote out to parishes, encouraging them to reach out to military personnel and their families in the area to show that the Church cares and wishes to offer a warm welcome in the name of Christ. Bishop Hugh suggested three ways churches might do this: contacting your local armed forces chaplain; setting up a prayer station for those serving in the forces and their families; and seeing if your local primary school has a *Little Troopers*' group for children of serving personnel.

In this remembrance season, let us remember all those, civilian and military, in harms way this day, praying for an end to conflict, and remembering Martin of Tours journey from soldier to disciple.

*God all powerful,
who called Martin from the armies
of this world
to be a faithful soldier of Christ:
give us grace to follow him
in his love and compassion for the needy,
and enable your Church to claim for
all people
their inheritance as children of God;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit
One God, now and for ever.
Amen*

Bishop Martin



NEWS IN BRIEF

Walkers from Richmond and Kew step out to raise money for Christian Aid

The Richmond and Kew Christian Aid Group welcomed more than 30 people to take part in their annual Richmond Riverside Sponsored Walk. The walk raised more than £1,200 for the work of Christian Aid partner organisations around the world on projects supporting communities battling poverty and the climate crisis.



Walkers set off on an 8.5 mile route, through Richmond and Kew Gardens, and along the Thames Path, finishing at St Anne's in Kew. Liz Kearns, one of the organisers, said "Our numbers have grown since last year and we're looking forward to boosting this even further in 2025. We had great weather and a strong sense of community spirit and our thanks go to all those who took part and donated."

To find out more about the event or to donate please go to: bit.ly/3Njfu01

Community Fridge receives finalist award

Last month, Tandridge District Council hosted its inaugural Tandridge Business Awards at Lingfield Park Resort. At the ceremony, The Community Fridge at St John the Evangelist, Hurst Green received an award as a finalist under the category 'Community Service Provider'. The Fridge was set up by The Revd Lotwina Farodoye, Vicar at Christ Church – who was the then curate at St John's. It has been thriving in recent years and is now led by Ché Ramsden.

Inspired by a need to reduce food waste and to get fresh food to people who can use it, the Fridge is supported by several local organisations and is free for everyone to use. Its run by a team of committed volunteers and serves approximately 70 people each week. The Hurst Green Community Fridge runs on Wednesdays at *Aggies on the Green*, 11.15am–12.30pm.

To find out more visit: bit.ly/3BGI7ml

Help us shape our new TikTok

We're looking for regular and guest contributors to help us on TikTok! Have a clip from your parish you want to share, or perhaps a few words about your faith or favourite scripture? Help us bring the good news of Christ to new audiences. If you or your church are already active on TikTok let us know so we can connect with you. WhatsApp any short clips to George, Digital Communications Manager on 07496887522 or email communications@southwark.anglican.org Follow us at: tiktok.com/@southwarkdiocese



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Next Issue: Submission deadline and guidance

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Archbishop Justin mission visit
DAY 1: AROUND THE PARISHES



All photos © Andrew Moss. **Top: Playtime!** at St John the Evangelist, Upper Norwood, where Archbishop Justin presided over 34 baptisms. **Bottom (l-r): Joy at the Meal and Meditation at Springfield Church on the Roundshaw Estate, Sutton; St Peter, Saint Helier where amazing testimonies of faith were shared; Emma Borquaye, Youth Worker at St James, Deptford, interviews Archbishop Justin.**

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Day 1

Will Cookson writes:

Friday 4 October began with a visit to *Playtime!* at St John the Evangelist, Upper Norwood. Each Friday in term time, The Revd John Pritchard and The Revd Rachael Gledhill host this large gathering for pre-school aged children and their parents and carers. It features stories, craft and messy play on biblical themes, as well as a time of worship and reflection. Archbishop Justin remarked that, with over 300 people present, it had the largest buggie park he had ever seen. He presided over *Playtime!*'s first ever baptisms, baptising 34 adults and children in total. The most moving was a young boy living in foster care who had been desperate to be baptised, but needed the permission of his birth parents. Not only did they agree and come along – they decided they would like to be baptised, too, along with their youngest child. It was an incredibly poignant moment.

Rachael commented: "Friday was a really special day for us and our community and a turning point for us. Eighteen months ago when we opened the doors to *Playtime!* we had no idea that anyone would come. It was amazing that Archbishop Justin could meet so many of our regular under 5s and their grown-ups, baptise 24 of our children and have 10 adults respond to the call and be baptised, too.

We've had so many messages about everyone feeling the presence of God and wanting more.

This will be a huge turning point for us in the growth of faith and mission in this community. We are really excited to consider how we will continue with baptisms at *Playtime!* and *Messy Church* and how this fresh expression will grow. It was also amazing for everyone to meet Archbishop Justin and see him as a normal person with good and bad parts to his story just like them: this changed their relationship with the institution of the Church in a way that we couldn't have done on our own. It needed the Archbishop of Canterbury!"

"We welcomed an Archbishop but met a fellow Christian who brought the joy of the Gospel and the life of Jesus in the present moment to *Playtime!*" added John. "What a privilege to kneel amongst all of God's children and for them to be wholly welcomed and celebrated. Profound. Moving. We worship an awesome God who is with us."

Our second visit of the day was to Springfield Church in the Vanguard Community Centre in the Roundshaw Estate, Sutton. The Church has been working with people on the estate for some years now and is creating pathways to faith that make sense for those who live there. Working closely with the local community their Pioneer Vicar, The

Revd David Atkinson, has created trust and openness through his incarnational approach to estates ministry.

Archbishop Justin participated in their weekly *Meal and Meditation* where, after a community bring and share meal, there was a meditation on a short verse from the Bible and he shared a powerful reflection on reconciliation.

"Our community was blown away by the visit from Archbishop Justin – people just couldn't believe he would want to come to a place like the Roundshaw Estate..."

"...Many local residents were impacted by the visit and the incredibly down-to-earth conversations they had about life and faith. There has been such a buzz around the place ever since," said David.

The next visit was to St Peter's Church at St Helier – a large post-war housing estate in Sutton. Vicar, The Revd Tracy Marlow leads a *Church Army Centre of Mission* there and is working hard to develop relationships and mission in the community. They have an arts project, a community choir and are always looking at how they can build and strengthen local partnerships. The time there was very special, with people sharing amazing testimonies of faith – spoken, sung and in poetry! Archbishop Justin gave his own testimony, the community choir sang and the group used art to explore faith together. When the Archbishop offered

to pray for people, a long queue formed! Tracy commented:

"They came because it was the Archbishop, but they heard Jesus".

The final event of the day was a visit to the Friday night youth event at St James' Church in Deptford. This is made up of a group of young people from the local estate who mostly are not part of any church. They have been using the Archbishop's *Difference* course to explore how to navigate difference between people. Archbishop Justin shared his testimony with them and was interviewed by the brilliant Emma Borquaye, St James' Youth Worker, in a compelling and relevant way for the young people.

"It was incredible to have Archbishop Justin with us at our most recent youth night," said Emma. "He shared a personal story about forgiveness which really resonated with many of our young people, as we have been exploring the topic of broken relationships through the *Difference* course since the beginning of term.

"It meant a lot to us all for him to come and visit and it really helped to bridge the gap between teenagers and senior leaders in the Church."

Continued on pages 6–7 ▶

NEWS FROM OUR PARISHES



Award wins for Southwark churches

St Peter, Walworth received a Southwark Faith and Belief recognition award for their community work and event *Party in the Park*.

The awards ceremony took place on Thursday 26 September at Southwark Council House.

St Peter's *Party in the Park* is the parish's annual flagship community event, started in 2012, which gives people of all faiths and backgrounds the chance to meet new and old friends and neighbours, as well as

being a great shop window for St Peter's with a chance for the community to meet St Peter's volunteers, members and clergy.

The Revd Andrew Mumby, Rector at St Peter's said, "*Party in the Park* is much more than just an event; it is the heartbeat of our community. It's a space where people of all ages, backgrounds, and walks of life come together to celebrate unity, friendship, and shared values. It's a moment when the spirit of Walworth shines brightest, bringing together families, neighbours, and strangers who leave as friends. For St Peter's, this event is a reflection of our mission – to serve, to



Left: Joanna Johnson, Serena Dyett, Toro Ahmed and The Revd Andrew Mumby, Rector of St Peter's. Right: The Revd Dr Emmanuel Adeloye, Vicar at St John's and volunteer nurses at the award ceremony.



uplift, and to offer a place of belonging to everyone in our community."

Serena Dyett, Volunteers Coordinator at St Peter's said, "The award is a testament to the hard work and dedication of volunteers and so many who pour their hearts into making sure our community is supported and celebrated. It recognises the power of faith in action – faith that goes beyond the walls of the church and reaches out to those who need it most.

"We are motivated to continue to grow, serve, and bring light to the people of Walworth. Together, we will keep building a community that thrives in kindness, compassion, and togetherness."

St John, Peckham also won the runner-up award at the ceremony. The award commends the church for actively contributing to community wellness through setting up its Clinical Basic Vital Organs Health checks project.

St Mary's Therapeutic Garden, Lewisham wins Green Church Award

St Mary the Virgin, Lewisham has won a Green Church Award in the Green Health category for its therapeutic garden. The garden was granted Green Flag status last summer.

The Revd Steve Hall, Vicar of St Mary's said, "We're delighted that St Mary's Therapeutic Garden has won another award. It has grown into a wonderful project for church and community and a haven of healing and peace for so many people, including the many volunteers who help. And of course it's a home for increasing biodiversity for nature and wildlife."

A haven of calm and tranquillity in the heart of Lewisham, the garden is open to anyone who would like a place to sit quietly, and enjoy the beauty and peace it offers. It was created through a joint collaboration between the Ladywell Unit

(SLaM) and St Mary's Church in 2017, to promote mental wellbeing through gardening. It has perennial beds, wildflower meadows, an orchard, a woodland area and raised beds for vegetables and salads. These are looked after by volunteers, including some from the Ladywell Unit, Mind, and referrals from GP surgeries. Regular gardening sessions take place every Tuesday afternoon, 1–3pm, when everyone is welcome to join in. It is open for visitors to enjoy every day.

Saint Cecilia's Church of England School, Southfields was also highly commended in the Green Building category for the green technology in its new teaching wing, as well as for the efforts to increase biodiversity with new planting and habitat for wildlife.

Watch this video to find out more about St Mary's Lewisham Therapeutic Garden: bit.ly/3Aa4GhS

Read more about the Green Church Awards at: bit.ly/4fh16Ur



L–R: Mark Symons and Jane Boggan (members of the Therapeutic Garden Committee), Eddie Tebbutt (volunteer) and Sue Luxton (garden advisor and professional gardener).

Consecration of new Garden of Remembrance

Earlier in the summer, the congregation at All Saints, Tooting were joined by Bishop Christopher to consecrate a special part of the church garden for the interment of cremated ashes.

Jill Kaufeler, Churchwarden said, "The Diocesan Registrar, Mr Jon Baldwin, attended to undertake the legal aspects of this process. All Saints is now legally able to inter the ashes of not only members



and former members of the congregation but also members of the community living in the parish.

"This had long been a project dear to the heart of The Revd Mae Christie, Vicar at All Saints. It was a very joyful occasion, followed by a celebratory lunch. The church is now very happy to remember its old friends and neighbours in this loving way."

A walk of blessings

To mark the start of his new ministry as Rector of the Windmill United Benefice, The Revd Alan Bayes led a special blessing walk.

The Benefice is made up of three rural parishes on the Surrey–Sussex border and includes St Bartholomew, Burstow (with Smallfield Church Hall and Chapel), St Mary the Virgin, Horne and St John the Baptist, Outwood.

Alan was joined by parishioners to offer prayers of blessing to the local community. He said, "We set off at 10am on Saturday 28 September from The Rectory at Smallfield then walked to the Church of St Bartholomew's at Burstow, where we said morning prayer outside in the



churchyard. We then walked along some country lanes to St Mary the Virgin, Horne where we said midday prayer and continued through the fields to Outwood where we were joined by others from the Benefice for a pub lunch at the Bell Inn.

"For evening prayer, we walked to St John's, Outwood and then back down the hill to Smallfield – having walked 12 miles in total. Along the way we said blessings at significant places in the community and on fields and open farmland. It was a very popular event and we hope to have similar blessing walks in the future."

Our Canterbury tale...

In this interview, Ché Ramsden and Joseph from St John, Hurst Green share details of their cycling adventure to Canterbury.

When our now-6-year-old, Joseph, was in Reception, his class learned all about caring for the environment. From then, he was insisting we should no longer drive the three miles to school. We invested in a cargo bike, which I cycle while he sits in the front with his school bag, chattering away and enjoying the sights and sounds of the journey. Eight minutes in the car has become 15 on the bike, but the experience really enhanced the journey that bookends his school day.

We then decided to undertake a pilgrimage during the summer holiday, using the cargo bike. It seemed like a purposeful and fitting way to make the journey as a family, from our church (St John the Evangelist, Hurst Green) to Canterbury Cathedral, mostly following the Pilgrim's Way, and an exciting challenge to do it over a long weekend. Having now completed it, I asked Joseph a few questions about our pilgrimage, to understand it from his perspective.

What is a pilgrimage?

It's an adventure to Canterbury. People have done it for hundreds of years and even wrote stories about it. Is the adventure always to Canterbury?

There are actually pilgrimages all over the world. People make pilgrimages to holy places to help them feel closer to God by doing something different from their ordinary routines.

We did pray a lot when we stopped at churches.

What did we pray for?

We found prayers to say when we were in a church, but one of the first church doors we saw had a sign on it telling us to pray for the people who go to that church. So we did that at every church we went to.

What was the best bit of the pilgrimage for you?

The best part was... everything! I liked everything. I liked talking about different cultures and what makes my culture while we were on the bike. I liked stopping at



Ché, Charlotte and their son Joseph at Canterbury Cathedral.

different churches and seeing inside them and saying a prayer, and singing *One More Step Along the World I Go* every time we got on the bike. Canterbury Cathedral was nice on Sunday morning – they had good hymns. I also liked that when we got to Canterbury our pilgrimage wasn't over, because we had to cycle all the way back home again! Some people might have thought we were finished, but we were actually only half way. If I had to choose one, probably the best moment was when we finally arrived at our hotel for dinner on the first night, because we were three hours late!

What was the biggest challenge?

I know what your and Mummy's biggest challenge was: that hill on the first day!

Do you mean Vigo Hill, when we took a wrong turn and went up the ridiculously steep road?

I mean the one in the forest, with the stone that you said was going to be a horse but it was actually just a rock.

Ah, yes! Even though we were already quite behind on our plan for the day – thanks to my navigational skills – I didn't allow us to take a shortcut, because I wanted us to see the White Horse Stone. It turned out you and Mummy were expecting a horse-shaped stone, or at least a stone with a horse on it, and you were a little surprised when I led us up a gravel path to an ancient stone which was not in the shape of anything! It was starting to get dark and we had to push our bikes.

That was definitely your biggest challenge!

You're probably right. So what did you learn on our pilgrimage?

I learned that you can't trust maps! Sometimes they say you are on a road and you are actually getting stuck on a footpath with a kissing gate that the bike can't go through!

I think that was more about my ability to read the map than the map's fault...

But we had that prayer, saying there are no wrong turnings with God – even though you made a lot of wrong turnings!

I did make a lot of wrong turnings. Did you mind all my wrong turnings?

No. It was quite funny. Especially that time we got stuck on the little footpath with the gate we couldn't go through! It took such a long time to get back to the right place and I kept laughing.

I didn't mind them either. It was all part of the adventure, and I really liked that we found that prayer on our first stop to remind us of that. It made me feel relaxed when things went a bit wrong. Would you like to do a pilgrimage again?

Yes! I want to cycle it myself next year.

That's a great idea. We can take it a bit more slowly and get the train home from Canterbury. Maybe some people from church will join us... one of them can be in charge of map reading instead of me!

'Ordinary Time' vestments

Vestments are liturgical garments worn by clergy. Specific colours for vestments are used within the context of Christian liturgy and each colour symbolises a season of the liturgical year or is worn to highlight a special occasion.

During liturgies in *Ordinary Time* – the period between Epiphany and Lent, and Easter and Advent – green is the colour worn most often.

Vestments are tailor-made and include unique patterns, symbols and designs. In The United Benefice of Bletchingley and Nutfield, The Revd Paul Fitzpatrick, Interim Priest-in-Charge enlisted the help of church member Averil Trott and Sacristan, Cyril Mighall to design a new set of green vestments for St Mary the Virgin Church.

Paul said, "Last year, I asked Averil if she would help design and make a set of green vestments. The ones we had were approaching the end of their useful life. With the invaluable input of Cyril, we settled on the exquisite Ely Brocade. Saying 'thank you' is an understatement! The hand-



stitched embroidery is exquisite. As a symbol of our appreciation, we gave Averil flowers."

The vestments – a pattern cut by Juliet Hemingray of Church Textiles – include a burse and veil embroidered with gold cyphers on each element, a chasuble and stole and a uniquely designed altar frontal. The full set – material, pattern and cutting – cost £1,350.

Lancelot Andrewes medal

Barbara Marcham has been awarded the Bishop of Southwark's Lancelot Andrewes medal, recognising her long-standing and dedicated service in the Parish of St Philip's, Queenstown Road and latterly at the Ascension, Lavender Hill.

Barbara has been a SPA since 2005, and spent 15 years as part of the chaplaincy team at King's College Hospital. She was presented with the medal by The Revd Philip Kennedy on Sunday 22 September, to coincide with her 80th birthday celebrations. She is pictured with Philip and the churchwardens (Ann Warwick



and Cheryl Harper) of the Ascension, Lavender Hill.

New vicar of St Philip, Reigate

On Sunday 8 September, The Revd Lindsay Meader, currently with Permission to Officiate in the Diocese of London, was collated as Vicar of Reigate St Philip by The Bishop of Southwark.

In a post on X Bishop Christopher said, "A joy to collate @LindsayMeader to St Philip's Reigate – a very happy and blessed service filled with anticipation and hope – thanks be to God! @SouthwarkCofE"



Archbishop Justin mission visit DAY 2: BLACK HISTORY MONTH SERVICE

◀ Continued from page 3



Following the BHM service, The Revd Canon Roxanne Eversley, Dean of Cultural Diversity facilitated a panel discussion, joined by (from l-r) Archbishop Justin, Sophia Jones (Communications Consultant), Karen Gibson MBE (Founder and Conductor of The Kingdom Choir), The Revd Andrew Mumby (Rector at St Peter, Walworth), and Joseph Gilder (Director of Music at St Saviour's and St Olave's C of E School).

On Saturday 5 October, the Diocese of Southwark held its 17th annual thanksgiving service to celebrate Black History Month (BHM). Archbishop Justin presided over the service and gave an address recognising and celebrating the contribution of Southwark's Global Majority Heritage church communities.

Vernia Mengot writes...

This year's BHM event was hosted at Southwark Cathedral in partnership with The Southwark Diocesan Board of Education. It focused on the role of music, inspired by the words of Psalm 119: "My soul shall sing of your word, for all your commandments are righteous" (v172). Entitled 'Music at the Heart of Change', the event included a eucharistic service, followed by a panel discussion. Both the service and the discussion explored the profound positive impact that music has had on the black community, as well as its power to transform worship and enhance witness – bringing hope, healing, restoration and justice.

The Very Revd Andrew Zihni, Dean of Gloucester preached. He remarked: "There is something about music that simply transforms, that brings hope and provides a space for healing. All of us are the musicians of God's love."

During the service there were performances by St Saviour's and St Olave's School Gospel Choir and the Nigerian Chaplaincy Worship Team, based in south London. A reading from the book of Job was said in Tamil by the Revd Canon Prem Dhanaraj, Honorary Canon and member of the Diocesan Racial Justice committee, and the responsorial psalm was read by the Revd Cordella Dawson, Vicar

at St Philip's Church in Norbury. Prayers were led by students from St Saviour's & St Olave's School and after the service, Archbishop Justin addressed the congregation.

Following the Archbishop's address, attendees listened to a panel discussion facilitated by the Revd Canon Roxanne Eversley, Dean of Cultural Diversity. Archbishop Justin was joined by The Revd Andrew Mumby (Rector at St Peter, Walworth), Sophia Jones (Communications Consultant), Joseph Gilder (Director of Music at St Saviour's and St Olave's C of E School) and Karen Gibson MBE (Founder and Conductor of The Kingdom Choir).

The discussion focused on exploring the powerful impact and influence music has to bring change in various contexts – each panellist answered a series of questions and was invited to share their own personal testimony and connection with music.

The Bishop of Croydon, The Rt Revd Dr Rosemarie Mallett – Southwark's Lead Bishop for Racial Justice – said, "This year's service was an opportunity for us to come together in unity to worship, sing and dance as we celebrate the power of music. The national BHM theme - 'Reclaiming Narratives' – marks a significant shift towards recognising and correcting the narratives of black history and



All photos © Tom Bradley. **Left: Olive Fadayomi leads the Nigerian Chaplaincy Worship Team. Right: Bishop Rosemarie and Archbishop Justin enjoying BHM celebration at the Cathedral.**

culture and our service enabled us to listen to the diverse musical narratives of the Church across all its traditions.

"We are thankful to the Archbishop for his presence and are grateful to have welcomed back Andrew, who shared deeply encouraging words during his sermon. This is a time where we can surely come together and celebrate the rich diversity that is Southwark Diocese, as we reflect on music and its power to restore hope and transform our lives."

The day concluded with everyone singing in unison a chorus of 'How Great Thou Art'.

“

"This is a time where we can surely come together and celebrate the rich diversity that is Southwark, as we reflect on music and its power to restore hope and transform our lives."



All photos © Caro Swan. **Top: Young people at St Mary, Putney's regularly-held Youth Ministry Communion. Bottom (l-r): Archbishop Justin at St Peter, Brockley's vibrant morning service; Spanish-language Mass at St Matthew's, Elephant and Castle; Rector Fr Hugo Adán preaching at the bilingual service.**

Day 3

Will Cookson writes:

The third and final day of the Archbishop's mission visit to the parishes of Southwark Diocese began at St Peter's Church in Brockley with a lively and vibrant morning worship service. Archbishop Justin was interviewed by some of the children and then gave a sermon focusing on the call for us all to bear witness to Christ with those around us. St Peter's Vicar, The Revd Ben Jones, commented:

"Having Archbishop Justin with us on Sunday was a huge encouragement. He shared his heart for the Church and inspired us to be witnesses of the gospel in the power of the Spirit."

We then went to St Matthew's, Elephant and Castle, a Spanish and English bilingual church for their Spanish-language Mass. It was a joyous, uplifting service with a large, mainly Latino congregation. Archbishop Justin presided over Holy Communion

and preached, The Revd Dr Hugo Adán Fernández, Rector, offering a translation.

Fr Hugo said:

"The visit of Archbishop Justin to our Spanish congregation was a real blessing. Everybody enjoyed his presence among us and for all of us it was a joy and feast. To be seen is so important. We want to be seen by the people we love, the people we work with, the people with whom we interact. That's precisely how we all felt. We felt seen."

"Having the Archbishop with us, worshipping with us in Spanish, singing with us in Spanish, rejoicing with us and making explicit the joy of the Church of England for welcoming us was fantastic. He made sure to share the peace with everybody in the church, and the church was packed! He took his time to greet, to bless, to take pictures with everyone who approached him at the end of Mass. Everybody felt seen and we all, as

a bilingual parish, felt part of the wider Church. It was a real blessing for us all."

This was followed by a meeting over lunch with many of Southwark's second-language congregation leaders. It was a rich and encouraging experience with leaders empowered to share with the Archbishop about the joys and challenges of their own contexts. They discussed how they are working to share the good news of Christ with those of different communities in one of the most diverse cities in the world.

Discussions ranged from the ethno-linguistic communities that we currently reach to the different structures that are appropriate for different groups, and the barriers to expanding these ministries in terms of fostering vocations amongst those for whom English is a second language.

The final visit of the day was to Youth Ministry in Communion at St Mary's Church in Putney. This regular event is a coming-together of sacramentally-focused churches in south west London

to grow their ministry among young people. It began with a time of activities and games – including graffiti art and laser quest – with food available from a pizza van. This was followed by a beautiful and simple reflective Taizé-style communion service. The Revd John Whittaker, Team Rector, commented: "Youth Ministry in Communion London started two years ago and is now being set up in Southwark Diocese as well."

"This service marked that wonderful expansion of valuable ministry amongst secondary school-aged young people and we felt hugely affirmed by having the Archbishop lead the service. The feedback from our young people was hugely positive and it was clear that the Archbishop had engaged and connected at a deep level with the youth and staff."



DISCIPLESHIP & MINISTRY

Lay ministry

New lay ministers licensed and commissioned

Sixteen Lay Ministers were licensed or commissioned in a joyful service on 13 October in Southwark Cathedral. Bishop Rosemarie led the service, supported by The Rt Revd Alastair Cutting, Bishop of Woolwich and The Rt Revd Dr Martin Gainsborough, Bishop of Kingston.

Attendees enjoyed a sermon by Wendy Stephens, Diocesan Lead for Pastoral Lay Ministers, and a lively reception afterwards to toast the culmination of the years of training the new Lay Ministers have undertaken to prepare for their ministries.

Readers who were licensed included two new Readers and seven who received a renewed license having completed two

years of in-parish training. Two new Pastoral Lay Ministers were also licensed. Two Pastoral Lay Ministers (formerly SPAs) and three Children, Youth, and Families (CYF) Ministers were commissioned. The choir of All Saints, West Dulwich provided glorious music for the service, including an anthem written by their late Director of Music, Timothy Penrose.

Lay Ministers from across the diocese attended to renew their commitment to ministry in their parishes, chaplaincies, and other contexts. Bishop Rosemarie thanked those retiring from active ministry after many years of service on behalf of Bishop Christopher and a grateful diocese. The cathedral was filled with Lay Ministers, their friends and family, and supporters from their parishes.

The licensing and commissioning service was preceded by a retreat at Wychcroft, led by Wendy Stephens, on the theme of 'Come, Take, Learn, Listen and Find'. Clare Dowding, Warden of Readers, and Michael Brockett, Diocesan Lay Ministry Consultant, provided support. Canon Wendy Robins, Director of Discipleship, Lay Ministry, and Continuing Ministerial Education, gave the Bishop's Charge on behalf of Bishop Christopher.

Michael Brockett writes:

The retreat was a joyous and reflective occasion following their many months of study and extended placements. It was filled with opportunities to share



Lay ministers, newly licensed and commissioned.

experiences, consider our relationship with God, and for the new ministers to reflect on how they will take their new knowledge and understanding from the retreat into their daily lives.



"The retreat was filled with opportunities to share... and for the new ministers to reflect on how they will take their new knowledge and understanding from the retreat into their daily lives."

The tranquil setting of Wychcroft enabled the retreatants to experience the wonder and power of silence. We were able to enjoy fellowship and good humour over delicious food, and experienced a variety of styles of collective worship in the beauty of the chapel. Wendy Stephens provided opportunities for us to listen and learn from each other and introduced *Lectio Divina*, the traditional practice used for centuries in spiritual reflection.

Lay ministers undertake many roles in the Diocese of Southwark, including preaching, teaching, and leading worship; working with children and young people; offering pastoral support; reaching out to those on the margins or those who may not know Christ, and more.

We will be offering resources for our 'Celebration of Lay Ministry' on Sunday 2 February – more details in the December/January edition of *The Bridge*. Our next Lay ministry taster day is at Trinity House on Saturday 25 January 2025, 10am–2pm.

Explore your call



To express your interest in the taster day or for more information about lay ministry, contact The Venerable Carol Coslett, Assistant Director of Lay Ministry, at carol.coslett@southwark.anglican.org

Find out about lay ministries at: bit.ly/4eUR0pU



Wendy Stephens, Diocesan Lead for Pastoral Lay Ministers.

40 years of lay ministry

On Sunday 6 October, Nicole Burgum celebrated 40 years of Reader ministry in the Diocese of Southwark during a special eucharist.

Nicole (pictured) was the first commissioned non-clergy Southwark Warden of Readers and is a Pastoral Group Leader for Trainee Readers, a Lay Canon Emerita of Southwark Cathedral. She is on the Committee for the Gilmore Fund which offers grants to licensed, commissioned or ordained women who are in active ministry in the Diocese of Southwark.



Reflecting on this milestone, Nicole said, "I have been very blessed with my 40 years in ministry and I give thanks to God for calling me to this wonderful vocation which has brought me great joy. I have always been loved and well-

supported by the parish and that has meant so much. During those years I have had the privilege and honour of being able to encourage people in their faith through preaching and Bible studies and leading worship. This for me is the cornerstone of my ministry but is just one part of it. I always champion lay ministry in whatever form it takes although perhaps I do have a bias to Reader ministry! I have had the privilege of being a Warden for the Woolwich Area Readers, being the Sub-warden of Readers and subsequently being the Warden of the Southwark Readers. Encouraging and supporting Readers has always been one of my passions and joys in life and I was very humbled when Bishop Christopher and Revd Andrew Nunn, Dean Emeritus of Southwark, appointed me a Lay Canon for my service to Readers. I look forward to many more years of ministry."

Crystal Callow, licensed Lay Minister at St Andrew's – who was in a pastoral group led by Nicole when she trained 10 years ago – said, "It was a wonderful celebration. We are so blessed to have this gifted and inspiring leader at St Andrew's for so long, and it was so good to see many friends and family gathering to celebrate. The Revd Anne Stevens presided and preached. They were joined by Readers from across the diocese and one from the Diocese of Winchester in a glorious sea of white and blue!

"Nicole is very warmly admired and loved by so many across the diocese as well as all of us here."



IN FOCUS...
News from the diocese

Installations and collations at Southwark Cathedral

Archdeacon of Lewisham & Greenwich steps into new role

Early in the summer, it was announced that Bishop Christopher appointed The Revd Canon Dr Chigor Chike to succeed The Rt Revd Alastair Cutting as the next Archdeacon of Lewisham & Greenwich. Chigor has now stepped into the role, having been collated during a special service of Choral Evensong at Southwark Cathedral on Sunday 29 September. During the same service, Bishop Martin and Bishop Alastair were installed in the Cathedral.

Speaking on the occasion, Bishop Christopher said, "Today has been a triple celebration in our wonderful cathedral

church. It is a delight to welcome Chigor to our diocesan leadership team. He brings with him the experience of many years of parish ministry, a passion for social justice and great theological insight. I am also delighted to celebrate the installation of Bishops Martin and Alastair, who are a great gift to their respective Episcopal Areas as well as the wider diocesan family."

"It is such a privilege to be called to serve God in this new role," added Chigor. "The boroughs of Lewisham & Greenwich are where my ministry journey started many years ago – and it's wonderful to



L-R: Bishop Alastair, Archdeacon Chigor, Bishop Christopher and Bishop Martin.

be returning home. At the heart of my calling is a commitment to advocating for those who are marginalised – for whatever reason – by society. I can't wait to begin my work with our parishes and all those seeking to bless and serve the communities of Lewisham & Greenwich."

Watch this video to meet the new Archdeacon of Lewisham & Greenwich: bit.ly/3ZWNCGM

Roehampton Forest School celebration

On Friday 6 September, Roehampton Church Forest School celebrated the official status, new name and opening of its Forest School.

Headteacher, Lynn Anderson, and Governors, staff, children and their families welcomed Bishop Martin, Fleur Anderson MP for Putney and Colin Cooper, Chief Executive of Wandsworth and Putney Commons, to celebrate the opening.



During the church service, led by Bishop Martin, the whole school community reflected on the wonder of God's world and our connection with creation. Prayers, songs and readings all acclaimed the beauty of the world and inspiring opportunities of nature.

There were contributions from pupils at Roehampton Church Forest School and Noor Al-Yassin, Early Years Leader about the joy and learning some children in nursery, reception and year six had already experienced at the forest school.

The Revd Joshua Rey, Chair of Governors, Esther Mirrielees, Foundation Governor and guests spoke about the enthusiasm for, and the benefits of, the new forest school. Fleur Anderson MP, who read the gospel during the service, said:

"There are so many opportunities in connecting children to the heath and nature through the forest school, including to their health. This is a fantastic initiative by the school".

The service concluded with the whole school and visitors coming together in the new forest school classroom for prayer and a blessing said by Bishop Martin, encouraging all to "be among God's creation. Treasure it. Learn from it".

A spokesperson from the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education said, "This year, Roehampton Church Forest School will be delivering Forest School learning across all year groups. Staff and Governors are very excited about this great opportunity for all the children and their parents/carers. The school will provide a fully inclusive and engaging forest school experience, with exciting outdoor learning opportunities.

"Carefully planned by Level three trained Forest School staff, sessions develop, compliment and extend the curriculum. The Forest School makes the most of a hands-on approach, encouraging children to make decisions, work as a team, and to take risks, with certain boundaries. Along with the curriculum, values and ethos – the principles of the Forest School extend children's resilience, social development, self-esteem, confidence and self-reliance, through creative engagement with the natural world."

RISE UP against domestic abuse

RISE UP Against Domestic Abuse is Mothers' Union's (MU) campaign to raise awareness about domestic abuse across Britain and Ireland.

RISE UP is an acronym for Respond, Inform, Support, Empower, Unite and Pray.

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone from any walk of life. As part of 16 Days of Activism against gender based violence, Mothers' Union branches are being encouraged to RISE UP and take action. The campaign runs from 25 November (United Nations Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) to 10 December (Human Rights Day) and encourages action and awareness against all forms of violence against women and girls.

Branches can sign up and pledge a series of actions which includes several

opportunities to affirm their commitment to end domestic violence and pray regularly for victims of domestic abuse throughout the whole world.

Branches can achieve a bronze, silver and gold award once they sign up. Find out more about the requirements at: bit.ly/4ff359p

Congratulations to St Mildred, Addiscombe, Christ Church, Purley, St Francis, Horley, St Andrew and St Mark, Surbiton and St John the Baptist, Old Malden (representatives pictured below) who have already led their churches towards this pledge are now working towards achieving a silver award. .

For more information on making your pledge, please contact your local MU branch or email the diocesan office at: mu@southwark.anglican.org



MU branch representatives with their bronze award certificates.



IN FOCUS...

Southwark Vision

Our values: justice

In our series unpacking the priorities of the Southwark Vision, The Revd Vanessa Elston writes...

Justice is one of the seven values that underpins our diocesan vision for being Christ Centred and Outward Focused – values which shape the kind of people and church we are seeking to become. Justice is a big concept that carries a sense of fairness. A just society is one in which the truth of a situation is actively sought-out to ensure sound and balanced judgement comes before self-interest or institutional bias, where people are valued equally and their dignity is protected. A just society will not allow the rich and powerful to work the system to their own advantage but considers the rights, needs and wellbeing of all, particularly those who are most vulnerable. Justice is concerned for the flourishing of all of God's creation, for safeguarding the integrity and interdependence of the created order on which all of life depends. Justice hears the cry of the earth and the poor.

Justice can feel like something for 'someone else' to worry about – lawyers, politicians, young activists, people with power and influence – something 'ordinary' people cannot have much impact on. But Jesus calls us to be people who hunger and thirst for justice, who

are not satisfied until the hungry are fed, the homeless housed, the wrongly imprisoned set free, the bullied, abused and downtrodden empowered and released from oppression. We are to become as persistent and dogged in our pursuit of justice as Alan Bates who fought a 20-year campaign against the post office on behalf of the sub-postmasters who had been wrongly accused of mismanagement and theft. We are called to be courageous whistleblowers, calling out corruption, racism, homophobia, and all forms of prejudice. We are called to question our comfortable, consumer ways of living that lay waste to the earth and disrupt the climate. We are called to work out what is causing suffering, violence, poverty and the destruction of God's creation, to understand that sin is at work in our economics and politics, often hidden, or just accepted as the water in which we swim.

Where do we find the strength for this kind of work? What sustains the imagination that another world is possible? In the Hebrew scriptures we learn that righteousness and justice are the foundation of God's throne, that they underpin God's action in our world and



are at the heart of who God is. God's justice will one day liberate the whole creation from the oppression of injustice and greed. The truth of God's judgement will cut through all the half-truths, arrogance, self-deception and denial that keep our world locked in darkness and sin. The cross of Christ brings us face to face with this reality we want to avoid, the truth we run away from. In the cross we begin to grasp God's solidarity with all victims of injustice and violence, our part

in the sin of the world – but also the path of grace and mercy that is held out to us, to being shaped and formed anew in God's justice and truth.

Vanessa Elston is Chaplain to the Bishop of Kingston for the Diocese of Southwark.

Details of Southwark Vision and the core document can be downloaded at: southwark.anglican.org/southwark-vision



LET US PRAY...

NOVEMBER

The Venerable John Kiddle

Archdeacon of Wandsworth

Close the door

At this time of year the hours of daylight get noticeably shorter and, in that resonant phrase, the nights draw in. We sense the dark closing in on us, the world around us feels smaller. The days of summer which stretched long into the evening and offered open horizons are gone, for now.

I was reflecting on this recently in a conversation about Julian of Norwich. There's a paradox that merits further exploration. It goes something like this.

We often talk about encountering God in liminal or 'thin' places. I have tended to think of these as innately open, or wide, places; mountains where you can see

for miles, coastlines where the distant horizon shapes your sense of space, or simply the open beauty of creation lifting your heart outwards and upwards.

Julian, however, chose to shut herself up. Her thin place, in which she encountered God, was a cell. The walls, like the night, drew in around her and in that place she found space and freedom.

As the introduction to Claire Gilbert's new book '*I, Julian*' puts it. "Battling grief, the plague and societal expectations, and compelled by her powerful vision, Julian seeks freedom as an anchoress, bricked up in a small room on the side of a church."

Jesus, who escaped to the hills to pray, also teaches his disciples that whenever



you pray you should, "go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

I wonder whether, as the nights draw in, we might find in secret, in a small space, with walls around us and the door shut, that God draws near to us. I wonder whether in that small place and that silent place we might rediscover prayer and rediscover God. I wonder whether in that wrapped place, that safe place we might know afresh we are embraced in the love of God.

So might this approaching winter be to each of us an unexpected gift?

A prayer of Julian of Norwich²

In you, Father all-mighty, we have our preservation and our bliss.

In you, Christ, we have our restoring and our saving.

You are our mother, brother, and Saviour. In you, our Lord the Holy Spirit, is marvellous and plenteous grace.

You are our clothing; for love you wrap us and embrace us.

You are our maker, our lover, our keeper.

Teach us to believe that by your grace all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.

Amen

¹ A fictional autobiography, Hodder & Stoughton 2023.
² Attributed to Julian of Norwich.

WHAT'S ON

Please send details of your next events for DECEMBER ONWARDS to Trinity House **BY MONDAY 11 NOVEMBER**

November

SATURDAY 9 NOVEMBER

* **WATERLOO** – Southwark Diocese Children, youth & families ministry conference. *Growing Younger Together: how small changes create big impact.* 10am–3:30pm at St John's Church, 73 Waterloo Road, SE1 8TY. Tickets £15 each (incl. lunch). £10 each for groups of four or more from one parish. Details and booking at: bit.ly/3AZV8Go

SATURDAY 9 NOVEMBER

♪ **LEWISHAM** – Lewisham Choral Society presents Handel's Messiah. 7.30pm at Great Hall, Goldsmiths College, Lewisham Way, London SE14 6PP. Tickets £2-£18 from bit.ly/3MFaliv

SATURDAY 9 NOVEMBER

♪ **CROYDON** – Croydon Philharmonic Choir: *Misa Criolla (Ramirez)*, *Pachabel Canon (Chilcott)*, *Hope is The Thing With Feathers (Christopher Tin)* and *Dirait-on (Morten Lauridsen)*. 7.30pm at St Mildred's Church, Bingham Road, Croydon CR0 7EB. Tickets: at the door or at bit.ly/3TRfYOL

♪ Croydon Minster

40 minutes of music – lunchtime recitals, Fridays 1.10pm

1 Nov June Lee, Violin
8 Nov Barnaby Silverstone, Organ
15 Nov Nicolas Ventura, piano
22 Nov Elizaveta Saul, violin
29 Nov Grace Dong, Piano
6 Dec Laine Theatre Arts Choir
Free but donations gratefully received.
Details: croydonminster.org/events

SATURDAY 9 NOVEMBER

* **SOUTHWARK** – Company of Servers (Southwark & London Chapter) Autumn meeting. All Servers from across London & the South East are welcome. Presentation by the Precentor, Canon Kathryn Fleming "Liturgy & Music" starts 10am. Mass 12pm. Southwark Cathedral, London Bridge, London SE1 9DA. Details: michaeljlewis17@gmail.com

SATURDAY 9 NOVEMBER

☩ **ONLINE** – Life as a Franciscan Sister or Brother... could this be for you? Explore Franciscan community life in the Church of England. Zoom meeting 9.30am–1pm. Booking essential (by 7 November), contact Sister Maureen CSF, noviceguardianscsf@franciscans.org.uk

WEDNESDAY 13 NOVEMBER

* **SOUTHWARK** – Leading worship with the Book of Common Prayer. A workshop to show you how to use the prayer book to lead worship in your church. Open to all who lead worship in parishes, schools and chaplaincies. 6.30–8.30pm at Trinity House, 4 Chapel Court, Borough High Street, London SE1 1HW. Free. To book email learning@southwark.anglican.org

THURSDAY 14 NOVEMBER

* **BATTERSEA** – The St Luke's Discussion 2024: Building Communities – connecting and inspiring change. 7.15–9.15pm (doors open 6.30pm) at St Luke's Church, Ramsden Road, SW12 8RQ. Entry free, donations appreciated. Details and register: bit.ly/4esTEDg

SATURDAY 16 NOVEMBER

* **BATTERSEA** – Join us to celebrate our 150th anniversary open day at St Luke's Church, Ramsden Road, SW12 8RQ, 10.30am–4pm. Music, talks, flower festival, children's activities, food and exhibitions. Free. There will also be a celebration service on Sunday.

SATURDAY 16 NOVEMBER

* **DORKING** – *The Surrey Churches Preservation Trust* public talk: Explore the Legacy of George Edmund Street: Victorian Gothic Revival Mastermind. Join us for a talk at St Mary's Church, Holmbury, Horsham Road, Dorking RH5 6PF, at 10:30am. Funds raised support the mission of conserving Surrey's historic churches. Tickets £8–£12 book at: bit.ly/4ePff9r. Details on SCPT website: bit.ly/47Wk2mu

SATURDAY 16 NOVEMBER

♪ **CROYDON** – St Mildred's Church, Croydon, presents the inaugural concert featuring the world-renowned organist of Notre-Dame, Olivier Latry. 7.30–9.30pm at St Mildred's Church, 30 Bingham Road, CR0 7EB. Tickets: £7.50–£50 from: bit.ly/4bumvoH

UNTIL 30 NOVEMBER

* **CROFTON PARK** – *Glowing Wisdom Art exhibition* by local artist Carry Hornby at St Hilda's Church, Brockley Road SE23 1LA. Free.

December

SATURDAY 7 DECEMBER

* **SALFORDS** – Visit from St Nicholas, 4pm at Christ the King, Honeycrock Lane, Salfords, Surrey RH1 5DF. Free.

SATURDAY 7 DECEMBER

* **WEST WICKHAM** – St Francis of Assisi will be holding its 11th Annual Big Christmas Sing. Join for carols sung by the West Wickham Choir and choirs from local primary schools; and hear Christmas readings. All welcome. 4pm at St Francis of Assisi, Ravenswood Avenue BR4 0PA.

Share your church Christmas photos

We're looking for 'Christmassy' photos to feature on this year's diocesan Christmas cards. Please provide high-quality, original large images, a caption and credit (if a professional photograph). Please ensure you have consent to use the image – ensuring that no children or vulnerable adults are pictured.

Send photos by 11 November to: bridge@southwark.anglican.org

SATURDAY 7 DECEMBER

* **WIMBLEDON** – *The Hill Singers* Chamber Choir begin their 2024/25 season with a concert at St Matthew's Church, Durham Road, SW20 0DE. Featuring Charpentier's 'Messe de Minuit', with carols for choir and audience. Tickets on the door £14; £12 concessions, cash only, children under 16 free. Details: hillsingers.co.uk

SATURDAY 7 DECEMBER

♪ **SOUTHFIELDS** – Rossini Petite Messe Solennelle: Music Director Jamie Powe, with professional orchestra and soloists. 7pm at St Paul's Church, Augustus Road, Southfields, SW11 6EW. Tickets: £25 on the door (card only) or at: bit.ly/3NzzuM5.

SUNDAY 8 DECEMBER

♪ **PETERSHAM** – Handel Messiah – highlights. The Elysian Singers and Players, Sam Laughton conductor. Concert in aid of St Peter's music and the Vineyard Community & Richmond Foodbank. 6pm at St Peter's Church, Church Lane, Petersham, Surrey TW10 7AB. Tickets £15 tinyurl.com/PetershamMessiah. Enquiries events. stpeterspetersham@gmail.com

SUNDAY 8 DECEMBER

* **REDHILL** – Visit from St Nicholas with Christingle, 4pm at St John's Church Road, Redhill RH1 6QA.



This newspaper is printed with premier paper and the diocese is part of the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) and a Carbon Capture customer. This means that we are part of the Woodland Trust's Woodland Carbon scheme, a scheme that aims to mitigate the CO2 emissions generated by the production, storage and distribution of the paper purchased. For every pack of the paper sold, 5p of the wholesale price goes directly to the Trust. Of this, 2p goes towards Woodland Carbon and 3p to their other work, such as the protection and restoration of ancient woodland.

Email your upcoming events to bridge@southwark.anglican.org

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IN FOCUS...

News from the diocese

Parish Conversations – valuing our parishes

Parish Conversations is a diocesan initiative that will see senior clergy and diocesan staff meet with every single parish across our diocese over two years.

The Conversations – which began in September – 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 will also be 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.

Each Bishop or Archdeacon will be joined on their visit by a member of diocesan staff – usually someone from the Senior Management or the Bishop’s Staff Team.

At the heart of these plans lies the intention of senior staff to visit with and value every single parish in our diocese, enabling each parish to shape and guide their Conversation to highlight what’s most important to them. Having begun this Autumn, a number of Parish Conversations have already taken place.



Archdeacon John joins the parish community at Holy Trinity, Roehampton.

The Venerable John Kiddle, Archdeacon of Wandsworth said, “The four visits that I have made so far, accompanied by members of diocesan staff, have been brilliant. Hospitality has been warm and conversation thoughtful and encouraging. What has been so interesting and exciting is that, amidst the very real challenges, at the heart of each conversation have been beautiful and unique stories of individual people encountering God and finding faith,

through the welcome, prayers of local church communities.”

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:
bit.ly/3A2f197

A 200-year pilgrimage

This month the congregation at St John, Waterloo mark the 200th anniversary of the church. Celebrating with a unique historical extravaganza at the church on Saturday 2 November and a special service that took place on Sunday 3 November. To kick off celebrations St John’s held a pilgrimage walk organised with St Matthew, Brixton and St Mark, Kennington.

Georgia Ashwell, Curate at St John’s writes:

On Saturday 14 September, around 100 of us pilgrimaged from St Luke, West

*For the Traveller
by John O’Donohue
(final stanza)*

*May you travel safely, arrive refreshed,
And live your time away to its fullest;
Return home more enriched, and free
To balance the gift of days which
call you.*

Norwood to St Matthew, Brixton, to St Mark, Kennington and finishing at St John’s. And, it was all that John O’Donohue hopes a pilgrimage will be.

The collective movement enabled us to travel as companions – on the same journey – with equal time, at the same pace, with a united destination. Rarely, as we make our way through life does this ring true – often we can find ourselves out of pace with others, or going in different directions. The act of pilgrimage brought us together and everyone I spoke to said how blessed they had been by the conversations they had along the way – often with people they had never met before.

It wasn’t just that we were gathering to celebrate 200 years of the Waterloo churches. Through the act of pilgrimage, the shared journey enabled refreshment and enriched us all along the way. A huge thank you to everyone who was a part of it.

Details of St John’s celebrations are at:
bit.ly/4dYSY7F



© Eleanor Bertall

Croydon Black History Walks

Black History Walks offer walking tours, educational talks and films in London. The organisation was set up in 2007 and works with museums, schools, communities and universities to deliver a diverse and engaging programme of educational experiences for –anyone with an interest in history and learning.

Presented in association with the Diocese of Southwark, the next Croydon History Walk will take place on Saturday 9 November, from 10am–12.15pm.

The unique tour we will cover:

- Ancient African civilisations, the East Croydon links in your face.
- Christianity and black people, The under-recognised influence of the Black Church.
- Invisible black banks of the 1970s and their concrete legacy in 2024.
- 40 years of successful black educational establishments.
- Diabetes, sickle cell, Supacell and the Kidnap Industrial Complex.
- The house of the Moon, Asylum, the National Front/White Defenders.



Walkers join Bishop Rosemarie on a recent tour of Croydon.

- Nicki Minaj, Marvin Gaye, Sam Cooke, Stormzy and SCT.
- Black British Civil Rights, Pan Africanism and Sierra Leone.

- How to clean your clothes without water.
- Art, acting, dance and theatre as resistance; little but mighty.
- Barbados, Brutality, Bishops and the Church of England.
- What can be done with 1 billion pounds?
- Multi-nationals, East Croydon and infant mortality in Africa.

To register and join the walk for free, visit: bit.ly/3YE8OPF. The meeting point and joining instructions will be sent after booking.

Find out more about Black History Walks at: blackhistorywalks.co.uk