

The BRIDGE

Newspaper of the Anglican Diocese of Southwark

Walking
Welcoming
Growing

Vol.28 No.2
March 2023



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in their lives, schools
and communities

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Eco Church registrations pass 150 across the Diocese

Data released by global conservation organisation, *A Rocha*, verifies that the Diocese of Southwark has more than 150 church communities registered for the Eco Church Awards Scheme. This news comes less than a year after the Diocese reached the standard of commitment to ecological care required by *A Rocha* to become a registered Bronze Level Eco Diocese. Jack Edwards, Diocesan Environmental Officer, writes:

This journey involved, among other things, passing an Environment Policy through Diocesan Synod which was approved in 2021 and getting Trinity House, the Diocesan Office, and the Cathedral up to Bronze Award standard for creation care in their running. This commitment to the care of creation has led to signs of missional growth in the Diocese including an Eco Fair soon to happen at St Luke, Kew; and the creation of a therapy garden for mental health and

well-being at St Mary the Virgin, Lewisham in partnership with the local NHS Trust. creation care is an important and growing part of the daily life in our parishes, and representation of Southwark can be seen amongst the central Church of England case studies profiled around creation care, such as St John, Waterloo and the installation of solar panels.

To celebrate this milestone, the Diocese will host a celebratory event at St John, Waterloo on Earth Day – 22 April. This is aimed at anyone seeking to support their church along its Eco Church journey, particularly those involved in an eco group. A range of talks and workshops will help support churches through the *A Rocha* journey, whether you are one of the 15 churches in the Diocese racing to be our first Gold Award or taking your first steps and thinking about registering. Importantly, there will be time to network with others also trying to help their community to appreciate the value of creation care, one of the Church of England's *Five Marks of Mission*.



The therapy garden for well-being at St Mary, Lewisham.

Earth Day is opportunity for us to share how the Diocese aims to support and resource our parish communities as we start the journey to Carbon Net Zero. The event will end with a Service

of Thanksgiving led by The Rt Revd Dr Martin Gainsborough, Bishop of Kingston.

To register for this free event please see page 11 (22 April entry).

Warm space lunch club for families seeking asylum



St Peter, Streatham have organised a warm space lunch club for families seeking asylum to welcome them to the UK, meet new people and enjoy

a meal together. The Revd Dr Steffan Mathias, Vicar at St Peter writes:

Last summer, a family, seeking asylum in the UK, arrived at church one morning. Almost overnight, a local hotel had gone from operating as a hotel to being used to house over 100 people seeking asylum. Keen to reach out to those in the hotel, we wanted to find ways to serve them and through conversations with the residents and local groups the issue of food was reoccurring.

In December, with funding from our Christmas collections, we launched a Warm Space Lunch Club to open over the holidays. Volunteers from St Peter, Streatham together with a group of ordinands from St Augustine's and other local groups began providing warm, healthy food and space to get out of the hotel and meet people. With over 20 people at the first session, it was clear there was a real appetite for the club. One resident from Lebanon was a chef and other residents helped with cooking, serving and clearing up. Over the weeks friendships have grown and it has been wonderful to see residents, who arrived with almost no spoken English, start being able to talk about life, their stories from home and their faith.

Although the provision at the hotel has recently changed, we are using this opportunity to take a break and work out the next steps for the project, including partnering with local organisations to provide English language classes.

We recently invited families to join Evensong at St Paul's Cathedral, to hear St Peter's choir (pictured) sing, directed by Thomas Chapman. For some of our St Peter's supporters it was the first time visiting the Cathedral. One family from Lebanon said: "It was amazing to come to St Paul's Cathedral. I have never seen a church like it or so big. The service was very different to the churches we had been to in Lebanon. The singing was beautiful. I felt very proud to see St Peter's choir there." We look forward to seeing what comes next.

A view from The BRIDGE



Dovedale in the Derbyshire Peak District is a favourite countryside beauty-spot in our family; we've known it from day trips whilst at theological college in Nottingham, and a curacy on the west side of Sheffield, through subsequent visits as a holiday haunt over the years since.

A famous Dovedale feature is one of the country's most noted stepping stone crossings. Standing on those large solid rocks in the water, you can get from one side of the River Dove to the other, without getting wet – if you are careful!

Sundays – always a feast day; never a fast day – are like stepping stones for us to navigate through Lent. Mothering Sunday in particular, with its daffodil-bouquet promise of colour and joy, brings light and a smile in many-a church on a dark Spring morning. The centre-page spread in this edition of *The Bridge* has a focus on Mothers' Union and the support provided for Christian families.

A line in the lesser litany in Evensong intercedes of God: Give peace in our time, O Lord. We have just marked the first year of war in Europe since the start of Russia's 'special military operation' invading the Ukraine. There have been many events in our church communities marking

the anniversary, praying for peace and supporting the dispossessed, injured, and bereaved. Many new relationships filled with love and hope have flourished as a result of refugees from Ukraine and elsewhere settling in our communities; but the scars left on body, mind and spirit by their experience will remain.

Across our Diocese, many of the post-war housing estates brought hope of a new life for communities from London's overcrowded and bomb-shelled slums. In time, some of these estates have bred different problems and issues of their own. Southwark is one of a number of dioceses seeking to address the particular circumstances of ministry on these estates, through the appointment of Revd Canon Gary Jenkins as Dean of Estates Ministry.

These signs of faith and hope, of joy and love in action, are like the stepping stones that help lift our hearts as we journey through Lent with our Lord Jesus. May you know God's sure presence with you and those you love and pray for, as we approach Passion-tide and Easter.

Alastair Cutting



NEWS IN BRIEF

The Bridge is returning to print

As you may remember, as result of the pandemic, we took the difficult decision to stop printing *The Bridge* and it became an online publication available on our website. After several months of preparation we have decided to start printing the newspaper again, so that parishes can have copies to distribute and display in their churches. We will still have the online version but from the April edition we will begin distributing the printed version of *The Bridge* again. These will be delivered directly to each parish.



In the coming months, we hope to share materials with you that will enable people across the Diocese to access the newspaper online, even quicker by scanning a QR code. We look forward to sharing more information about this soon.

Don't forget that you can advertise in *The Bridge* – for more information and charge rates, please email: bridge@southwark.anglican.org

Ecumenical Pilgrimage 2023



Bishop Christopher, with Bishop Paul Hendricks, Assistant Bishop in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark, The Very Revd Andrew Nunn, the Dean of Southwark, and Michael Branch, the new Dean of St George's Cathedral have set off on this year's Ecumenical Pilgrimage to Holy Land.

The pilgrimage began in Jerusalem, with visits to Bethlehem and all the holy sites before travelling to the Sea of Galilee where the group will stay in a hotel on its shores and experience Nazareth and the other sites in the area.

Support for Turkey and Syria

The devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Syria have killed thousands of people. At the time of writing 18 million people in the affected area were in need of urgent help, shelter, food and medical supplies.



Churches Together in Britain and Ireland have shared information on appeals and responses, including *The Disasters Emergencies Committee*, *Christian Aid* and many other organisations – several charity events and appeals are also taking place across our Diocese.

For more information and to find out how you can help, visit: <https://ctbi.org.uk/syria-turkey-earthquake-appeals-and-responses/>

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Next Issue: Submission deadline and guidance

The APRIL edition is due to be published online and in print on 1 April 2023. Material for that edition must be with Vernia Mengot by email by **FRIDAY 10 MARCH**.

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



IN FOCUS...
News from the Diocese

Students flourish together for a sustainable future

Earlier this year, the Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership held their fifth national conference: *Flourishing Together*. The conference was an opportunity for students to hear from a range of keynote speakers, attend practical workshops and network.

In this edition, Imani McEwen, Diocesan Mission Support Officer for Children and Young People, gives us a round up of four workshops focused on sustainability, that were led by the Diocese of Southwark with the Archbishop's Young Leaders Award and climate change organisation, Zellar.

Imani writes: Prior to the conference, the students who were part of the Young Leaders stream of the conference, identified areas in which their schools could become more sustainable.

During the conference, students were encouraged to go out and LEAD – Love Example Action Dream – the change they want to see in their schools and this was done through four workshops.



“LEAD in your brains, your homes, schools and your communities!”

They identified those that they love around them, learnt examples of sustainable young pioneers, thought through actions they can do to become more sustainable and dreamt their school's next steps to becoming more sustainable.

The first workshop was based on **love** and the students identified how they show love to those closest to them and further away and realised that their actions to be more sustainable have not only a local, but a global effect in other parts of the world.

In the second workshop, focused on **examples**, it was an opportunity for participants to see how other young people in their circles of influence make active change. For example, less waste – Laura focused on plastic waste; Lesein Mutunkei a tree planting football player; Emma Greenwood a youth MP, campaigning for a more sustainable future and climate activist Greta Thunberg. During a Q&A session, participants had their questions answered by a panel, with Sarah, from Bin Twinning, which helps to fund sustainable projects to collect people's rubbish; Mary a sustainable fashion designer who has previously worked for Vogue; and Gary Styles from Zellar.

Workshop three was based on **action** and the students used a 'problem tree' to identify the problem, root causes and the consequences of not being sustainable. For example, one school identified the problem of vandalism, which meant that materials were being used to replace the



Above: students share their dreams and solutions for more sustainable schools. Below: Imani McEwen, Diocesan Mission Support Officer for Children and Young People.



wind turbines, compost heaps to reduce food waste, beehives to produce honey to sell and eat and an allotment to grow seasonal food.

Following the conference, the next steps are for the students to go out and LEAD the change in their lives, their schools and their communities. Love those around them, be examples of sustainable pioneers, through the actions they do and dream the next steps to implement practical sustainability in their schools.

vandalised doors. They identified the root cause as students having a lack of activities during break and lunch time. Another school identified that food in the canteen came from abroad, which caused pollution due to air miles.

The fourth and final workshop focused on **dream**, where the students shared their dreams and solutions for more sustainable schools. There were lots of ideas including, use of solar panels and

Find out more

Guidance for schools across the UK to help lead change can be found on the Department for Education website: <https://bit.ly/3EErrtd>

Estates ministry across the parishes

At the end of last year, The Bishop of Southwark, The Rt Revd Christopher Chessun, initiated a new Diocesan role – Dean of Estates Ministry. The Revd Canon Gary Jenkins, former Vicar of St James and St Anne, Bermondsey, and Area Dean of Bermondsey and Rotherhithe Deanery, took up the appointment in January 2023.

A licensing service took place last month at St Peter, St Helier, a special parish to Revd Gary having returned to a place where he once ministered, to reaffirm his commitment to estates. During the service, The Revd Canon Leslie (Les) Wells, Rector of Horley Parish Team,

preached about Mark 6:34 and described it as 'an honour' to be part of the service, having been inspired to become a Priest by Revd Gary over 20 years ago on his journey to ordination in 2004.



The licensing service with (l-r) Revd Canon Les Wells, Revd Canon Gary Jenkins and Bishop Christopher.

Estates Ministry in the Diocese of Southwark goes as far back as the 1930s when the Diocese built 25 new churches, many on estates, as part of the Twenty-Five Churches Project.

At the time of his appointment, Revd Gary said: "We are in a season where the Church is renewing its concern for our people in these communities."

In a recent blog post Revd Gary explored 'what does an estate look like' – noting that though our estates have both similarities and unique features, they all have one thing in common – people. Much of Revd Gary's role is to minister to people in their communities as a way of sharing God's grace and love through developing

projects across estates, bringing them closer to God's Kingdom. You can read the blog post here: <https://bit.ly/3m1nKHW>.

In an interview with Revd Gary and Revd Les we discover what led them both to ministry and keeps them inspired, and the importance and impact of Estates Ministry within communities across the Diocese and the wider church.

Read the interview on page 8



IN FOCUS...

News from our parishes

Blessing and celebration of work at St Edward, Mottingham

After several years of planning, consulting and fundraising, St Edward, Mottingham celebrated with the community during a blessing led by Bishop Christopher on the eve of Candlemas.

The newly renovated, decorated and re-ordered church's aim has always been to improve the building, making it more fit to serve the wider community as well as the church and to make it more environmentally sustainable and easier to maintain. With the work of architects and contractors, St Edward now has new toilet and kitchen facilities, accessible ramps, a sound system and AV point, improved insulation, lighting and flooring as well as a new chapel and quiet meeting place. Work also took place to create a new office space.

In addition, the church and community have worked with arts organisation *Kinetika*, which specialises in creating large-scale hand-painted silks, funded by

Mottingham Big Local, to create a set of six movable silk hangings and flags which will be used by the community or displayed at community events. The silk hangings and flags have been created with residents of Mottingham to reflect the local area and the people who live within it. The hangings feature vibrant, hand painted designs, reflective of stained glass windows.



Paul Bragman, interim Chair of the *Mottingham Big Local Refocussed* said: "it is great we have been able to contribute



Above: the newly renovated and re-ordered interior. Left: the specially commissioned silk hangings for use by the community.

and support *Kinetika* and to help create a vibrant legacy for the area. It is also great that we have been able to support local people through the training and mentoring project. What a super showcase for local talent and Lottery investment".

Revd Dr Catherine Shelley said: "Thanks are owed to the huge numbers of people, funders and volunteers who have contributed to the building work."



Celebrating 40 years as Organist and Choirmaster

Last month, the congregation at All Saints, South Wimbledon celebrated David Coram for 40 years as organist and choirmaster.

David has lived in Wimbledon since he became a schoolmaster at Rutlish a decade ago and during much of that time he was organist and choirmaster at St Mark, Wimbledon and he has been a member of the Servants of the Guild of the Sanctuary while at All Saints, South Wimbledon. When he was an undergraduate at Durham University, David was organist

and choirmaster at St Oswald, Durham, and successor to Arthur Hutchings, Professor of Music. David has also been active in music locally with several other groups, performing at a number of concerts and recitals over the years.

Chris Maurice, Churchwarden at All Saints, said: "As a church and congregation we send our best wishes, enormous thanks, and immense gratitude to David. Not only is he there for our week-on-week services, but when asked to play for additional services, whatever the reason may be, his support, and that of the choir is – and has always been – unwavering. I recall that, even after seriously injuring his hand following an altercation with an avocado, David continued to play the organ single-handed. That is commitment, that is dedication and that is loyalty."



"David's support, and that of the choir is – and has always been – unwavering."

Ring ‘Bells, Ring Ring Ring’...

On Sunday 13 February All Saints, Kingston was featured on ‘Love Your Weekend’ with Alan Titchmarsh, exploring the traditional sound of church bells, and the people who ring them on a Sunday.

As bell ringers across the country prepare to ‘Ring for the King’ to celebrate the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III on 6 May, there was a visit to All Saints, Kingston to discover more about the history behind bell ringing and meet The Revd Joe Moffatt, Pippa Joiner, Learning and Engagement Officer, and the band of bell ringers. A segment of this was broadcast during the program.

Revd Joe Moffatt said: “This year is special because of the coronation of King Charles. It is something that we have a particular interest in because this is the site where seven Saxon Kings are known to have been crowned and Athelstan, one of those kings, was said to be the first king of all England and so this is where, we claim, England began.”

Pippa also shared a glimpse of history in talking about King Athelstan who was the first king to wear a crown and said “He had a special kind of coronation designed for him, which kind of formed the backbone of coronation services today.”

Change ringing – the rhythmic ringing of church bells in a coordinated sequence – is something that husband and wife, David and Judith, have been doing together since they met over 60 years ago and they have both been part of the band of bell ringers at All Saints, Kingston for many years.

David, 90, said: “Well, the story for me started at the age of 18 when I went to university. I heard two of my fellow students talking about bell ringing. It sounded fascinating and I decided to learn. After several years, at the University of

London Society of Change Ringers Annual Dinner, I met Judith.”

Judith, 83, said “I was about 15 and went to an all girls school. I came from an all girls family and I wanted to meet some boys. A request was put out for young people to come and learn bell ringing. I thought, ah, that might answer my question! I wasn’t part of a church, but it sounded fun. I first learned to handle a bell and then to ring methods. Then I went off to university and went to my first annual dinner and sat opposite me was this young man – David – and we had quite a lot of the same interests.”

Bell ringing requires a lot of skill and coordination. Judith describes bell ringing as “an art and a science, it’s physical and intellectual. You never stop learning: it requires coordination, listening, rhythm, and it’s very much about teamwork.” The band at All Saints practice once a week on Wednesdays and ring twice for services on Sundays. In the tower there is a peal of 12 bells, with the weight of the tenor bell at 900kg. The word ‘peal’ also refers to a length of continuous ringing which can last for about three hours non-stop and comprises upwards of 5,000 changes.



“Bell ringing is like riding a bicycle... once you can do it, you don’t understand quite why other people can’t.”



Bell ringers for over 60 years, Judith and David Robinson master the joy of bell ringing.

David likened bell ringing to riding a bicycle and said: “Once you can do it, you don’t understand quite why other people can’t.”

David and Judith now live in Cobham, but over the years they have rung and worshipped at churches in various parts of the country. For the last 30 years they have rung with the band at All Saints, Kingston. Change ringing is an essentially English tradition, but it has spread to a number of places around the world and David has taken the opportunity to ring bells in America and South Africa. Bell ringing can be enjoyed by people of all ages and

at All Saints there is a diverse band, with different levels of skill and experience in ringing and a group of people who have formed lasting friendships.

In sharing a message to interested bell ringers, Judith said: “Find a tower near you, find out who the master is, make contact and just arrange a time to meet to see what it’s like”.

Watch ‘Love Your Weekend’ on ITVx where you can see All Saints, Kingston from 57 minutes into the program: <https://bit.ly/3KyIR39>.

Diocesan Bells Advisor and former Tower Captain to retire

Robert (Bob) Cooles, Bells Advisor to the Diocesan Advisory Committee, will be retiring after 48 years and will step down in May.

Bob was awarded a Lancelot Andrewes Medal by Bishop Christopher in recognition of his ‘zeal for the Gospel and Godly service’. Bob has worshipped at St Mary, Battersea since 1965, where he began bell ringing as a teenager, having started his bell ringing ministry in Clapham. It was at St Mary that Bob met



Bob Cooles, proud recipient of his Lancelot Andrewes Medal.

his wife Carole, who persuaded him to join the choir, and in exchange he taught her to ring bells.

Bob has previously served as Tower Captain and in numerous capacities at St Mary, Battersea over the years including PCC Secretary, Treasurer, PCC Vice Chair and Churchwarden. He was also on the Diocesan Pastoral Committee and its sub committees.

On his retirement, Bob said: “It has always been a great privilege to serve the Diocese and I would have liked to do a lot more. Everyone has always been supportive. As far as bells are concerned in the mid 1970s the bells of St George, Camberwell and Holy Trinity, Southwark were taken out; and St Mary, Lambeth were due to follow but we were then able to transfer Lambeth bells to Caterham Valley, followed by Immanuel, Streatham to Chelsea Old Church.

There then followed a programme (in conjunction with the Surrey Association of Church Bell Ringers) to get all the rings of bells in the Diocese to a proper mechanical and musical first rate standard – a programme largely achieved. The Diocese can be proud of its rings of bells! My successor will continue the good work!”

Find out more



Are you interested in bell ringing?

The ‘Ring for the King’ initiative are seeking more bell ringers in advance of the Coronation. Find out more here: <https://ringfortheking.org/>



IN FOCUS...
Mothers' Union

Mothers' Union – Building supportive and loving relationships

The Mothers' Union (MU) has more than four million members in 84 countries around the world. It was founded in England in 1876 by Mary Sumner and membership rapidly spread throughout the world. The Mothers' Union play an active role in building supportive and loving relationships.

As a strong advocate for Christian care for families, Susan Gibbin, Fundraising and Communications Lead, shares the numerous ways that Southwark branches of MU and its members support families across the Diocese. Susan also shares some of the initiatives and activities parishes are doing to celebrate Mothering Sunday on 19 March 2023.

Supporting families coming for baptism

Members provide support in many forms, as they are often involved in baptismal services, providing flowers for the parents, cards for Dads, bible stories and prayer books, as well as keeping in touch with families following baptism by sending anniversary cards.

Connecting families through worship and social events

Family fun days and pre-Easter parties are a regular annual occurrence in Purley and Caterham. On Mothering Sunday, flowers and cards are also given out with love from MU members across the Diocese. Branches including St Barnabas, Sutton,



Children enjoying the Mothers' Union pre-Easter fun day.

St Matthew, Redhill, and St Mark, Surbiton work closely with Messy Church, pre-school and toddler groups to help bring children in closer connection to faith.

Reaching out to the wider community

MU members in Horley reach out to their community by distributing wooden crosses for school children in year six as they move on to secondary school. They



MU provide tea in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit of St Thomas' Hospital.

also plant bags containing knitted angels, under cover of darkness in different places around the town. These Angels are left to be discovered by children and their families in the town centre, a local park, near schools and churches as a symbol of love at Christmas. One grandparent shared a message with delight saying, "Aphelia was so pleased to find an Angel at school!"

Reaching out to families who are facing challenging times

For more than 10 years the MU have been providing Tea@Two in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit of St Thomas' Hospital known as The Evelina London Children's Hospital. Members provide a relaxed space, homemade cakes and a listening ear for the parents of the tiny babies being cared for. Some of the babies are in the unit for several months and the parents are there most of the time. It is hugely rewarding listening to the parents, and offering support whilst they are in these stressful situations. It also provides an opportunity for parents who haven't met before to come together to share experiences and reassure one another.

Supporting those in prison

As well as providing MU funds for Christmas presents for the children of those in Belmarsh Prison, lots of members have recently been involved in a nationwide initiative to provide woolly hats for prisoners. The Horley MU Branch also sent 30 mini felt trees to HMP Wandsworth last Christmas, where the Chaplains helped to distribute to prisoners and decorate the tree. In response to the trees given to Wandsworth Prison, Wendy Stephens, SPA and Prison Chaplain said: "The trees are now adorning our Christmas Tree in the centre and making it look very festive... Your contribution is



Felt trees distributed to HMP Wandsworth prison.

very much appreciated and a new addition to the assortment of decorations that have been collected over the years."

Strengthening communities all over the world

Make A Mother's Day is one of the MU's annual flagship fundraising campaigns raising money for our global community and important projects around the world that transform lives. We all know how important mothers, caregivers and grandmothers are. Much of what they do to help their children, families and communities thrive is often unnoticed and without thanks. For Mothering Sunday, please consider buying a 'Gift of Perseverance' to help empower women to transform their lives and reach their potential. In buying these life-changing gifts the MU send you details of your donation and a Mothering Sunday card, which you can give to a loved one. You are also able to give a gift in memory of someone special. Find out more here: <https://makeamothersday.org/shop/>

A prayer by Comfort Fearon, President of MU Southwark

Comfort Fearon, President of MU in the Diocese of Southwark, prays:

Loving Lord, we are gathered today to celebrate this special Sunday sharing love within families.

Today, we pray for mothers and all caregivers who give up so much time to care for loved ones.

Loving God, thank you for the gift of family.

We pray for many of those for whom today is not a joyful day for various reasons.

We ask that you grant them comfort and peace in their lives.

May your love reign in our lives and help us to love one another in Jesus name we pray.

Amen.



Horley MU members distributed wooden crosses to year six school children.

Generosity can help change a individual's life

Here is an example of how your generosity can make a powerful change to someone's life.

Aquiline lives in north-east Burundi. She was unable to attend school as she had to help her mother with the care of her younger siblings. Due to her illiteracy, she and her husband have been scammed several times at the market, causing their family to lose essential income. Thanks to *Mothers' Union Sustainable Literacy, Economic and Social Empowerment* project, Aquiline is no longer scammed and she was able to start her own business and send her six children to school. With your gift, you are helping women like Aquiline lift themselves out of poverty and illiteracy, which will have a ripple effect on her family, community and church.

Interested in becoming a member?

Membership of the Mothers' Union is open to all who have been baptised, affirm their belief in the aim and objects of the Mothers' Union and pay a subscription to Mothers' Union funds.

Branch membership is currently the most common form of membership. Branches are usually (though not always) attached to an Anglican church in the Diocese. Southwark currently has around 85 branches. They offer fellowship, organise meetings, events and fundraising and decide on how they can best offer their membership of the Mothers' Union to their own communities.

For details of your nearest branch, conditions and forms of membership, please contact the Diocesan Secretary by email: mu@southwark.anglican.org

A reflection and prayer for Mothering Sunday

On Mothering Sunday in the 16th century, people used to return to the church where they were baptised, or to the local parish church. This was known as their 'mother church'. The actual service took place on the fourth Sunday of Lent and symbolised the coming together of families.

Social togetherness is more important now than it ever was, with traditional festival days and celebration events in the calendar to bring people together and strengthen communities. Mothering Sunday has come a long way from its origins but remains a means of fostering closeness.

Take a moment to bring your own response to God and to remember those you know for whom it is particularly relevant.

*In every family there are seasons of joys and challenges:
Seasons of laughter and seasons of sadness.
Times of unexpected joy and times of unwanted trauma.
Circumstances to cherish and circumstances to overcome.
Seasons of harmony and seasons of discord.
Times of resilience and times of weakness.
Moments to look forward with hope and moments to look back with thanksgiving.
God in every circumstance and season we bring you our worship and praise.
Amen.*

Remembering Maureen Edwards

Well known and well loved former Churchwarden receives Lancelot Andrewes Medal.

Devout member of St Anne, Wandsworth, Maureen Edwards received a Lancelot Andrewes Medal before her death at Trinity Hospice on Thursday 9 February.

Maureen and her husband, The Revd Stephen Edwards, moved from the North-East to Wandsworth in the late 60's, where after starting their family, they joined St Anne's Church.

In 1982, Revd Stephen was ordained and the family moved away from Wandsworth. After 12 years in parochial ministry, he took the position of Chaplain at Wandsworth Prison in 2001. This meant Maureen could return to Wandsworth and back to St Anne's Church – a place that felt like home.

On Saturday 28 January, The Revd Cécile Schnyder presented Maureen with a Lancelot Andrewes Medal in recognition for her years of Godly service. Although Maureen had a long history of ill health, she was well enough to join the congregation, virtually via



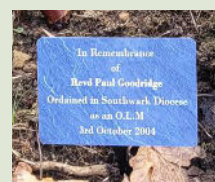
Zoom, for a celebration Eucharist that ended with rapturous applause.

Clare Green, one of Maureen's three daughters said: "Mum was very hands-on in the church. She became Churchwarden in 2003, helping with the flowers, cleaning, looking after the elderly in the community and managing all hall bookings for 12 years. She was well known and well loved and played an active role in the church up until the end of last year. Mum always wanted to be at Church on a Sunday and never missed Wednesdays at Messy Church."

Commemoration trees planted at Wychcroft

The Revd Canon Les Wells, Revd Marie Johns, Revd Annie Kirk, Revd Anne Clark, Revd David Weightman, Revd William David and Revd Robert Norbury – all part of the same ordination group – have planted three trees to commemorate their ordination year as 'Ordained Local Ministers 2004'.

Two of the trees have been planted in memory of Revd Paul Goodridge and Revd Irene Thomas, who were also part of the same group of ordinands but have since died.



would be a good way of supporting the natural environment and highlighting Wychcroft as the Diocesan retreat centre, which is to me, a home where we have memories of how the Lord has shaped us in our ministries over the years. I am grateful to all the support from Richard Ellis at Wychcroft in purchasing and planting the trees."

Inspired by trees planted by Bishop Christopher and Dame Sara Goad JP in memory of Uvedale Lambeth while at a service celebrating 60 years of Wychcroft as a retreat centre last year, Revd Les said: "Wychcroft throughout our training became our spiritual home and it was where our pre-ordinations took place in the wonderful surroundings. I thought this

Wychcroft, the Southwark Diocesan Retreat and Resource Centre, is located in the heart of the Surrey countryside. Find out more here: <https://bit.ly/41ivxRI>.



DISCIPLESHIP & MINISTRY

Estates Ministry

◀ Continued from page 3

The Battersea boys banging the drum for Estates Ministry

Both born in Southwark and growing up as 'Battersea boys', Revd Canon Gary and Revd Canon Les have known each other since the 1990s through their involvement in the parish of St Helier.

Following Revd Canon Gary's licensing service at St Peter, St Helier, Revd Canon Les who preached during the service, said "The estate was built in the late 1920s. It was the biggest council estate in Europe at the time and is still the biggest estate in the Diocese. It is divided into two – Sutton and Merton Councils, covering two episcopal areas, Croydon and Kingston."

An estate parish has been defined by the National Estates Strategy as a parish that has 500 units of social housing or more and in Southwark there are nearly 200 parishes that have estates.

In talking about how Estates Ministry incorporates Fresh Expression within the Church, Revd Gary said: "Very often when we think about Estates Ministry, we are thinking of starting new communities of God's kingdom and often we are thinking about Fresh Expressions. The national goal is for there to be a Christian community on every Local Authority estate in the country and for that to happen there would need to be lots of new congregations and Fresh

Expressions. That's very much thinking about reaching previously unreached areas on our estates."

Revd Gary has been the Diocesan Focal Lead for Estates Ministry and as part of the National Strategy there is a Focal Lead in every Diocese. When the opportunity arose for Revd Gary to concentrate on Estates Ministry full-time, he said: "I feel really blessed to have this role. Bishop Christopher had the inspired idea that the licensing could take place at St Helier because it's the largest estate and it's where I had previously been the Vicar... it was great that Les could come and preach, because Les was a member of the congregation, and his faith and vocation was nurtured in that Parish... It was a special place for us, it was really wonderful."

As estates are places where there are lots of people, Revd Les went on to say, "Gary's ministry in St Helier has a massive impact. If we think of Mark 6:34 when Jesus got out of the boat and saw the people that needed to be fed and were hungry... Estates Ministry is very much



Revd Canon Gary Jenkins, Dean of Estates Ministry.

like that – people are there to be fed, not physically necessarily, but spiritually and... Gary has had that vision for years, not just in St Helier, but wherever he has been, he has gone there with a message that Christ is for all people... It was an honour for me to preach."

On talking about what inspired him to follow God's calling, Revd Les said: "Gary was the inspiration for me to going forward to being a priest, as I would never have recognised that in myself... I trained as what was called an OLM (Ordained Local Minister) at the time and then I became self supporting and ended up being Rector of Horley. With Gary seeing that vision in me and sharing that with me, I was able to follow God's calling."

Revd Gary also shared what influenced his ministry, he said: "I was a science teacher, which I loved but I felt increasingly called, that God was calling me to teach the faith and I wanted to be able to concentrate on teaching the faith. I went to the church my parents-in-law attend and the Principal of Trinity College Bristol, George Carey (who later became the Archbishop) was preaching and he was preaching about people devoting service to ordained ministry and so it was through that sermon, in particular, that I felt that it was time to go forward."



The Revd Canon Les Wells, Team Rector of Horley Team Ministry.

During Revd Gary's licensing service, in the scripture Revd Les preached on (one of his favourites), he said: "What I love about that verse is that it speaks about the compassion of Jesus and he sees that people are like sheep without a shepherd, but what really strikes me is the word 'so – so he taught them many things' and that just says something about people's need to receive the love, care and compassion of Christ, but they need to be taught about him and they need to be taught the Gospel."



"We see the need to focus on Estates Ministry, because it's very easy for estates and people on estates to be overlooked."

The life changing power of the Gospel in people's lives is the inspiration behind Revd Gary's devotion to Estates Ministry and he told us what we can expect to see in the future, as it grows within communities and across the wider church. He said: "We see the need to focus on Estates Ministry, because it's very easy for estates and people on estates to be overlooked. Sometimes it's reaching areas that haven't been reached and sometimes it is areas that have been marginalised. It's very early days, but I am really enjoying meeting Estates Ministers and they seem to be pleased that the Diocese is taking an interest. We want to share the love of God with them and draw them into God's community. At the licensing there was a drum and Bishop Christopher saw that drum and then saw my task as 'banging the drum for Estates Ministry', so that's what I am going to be doing."

With Revd Gary's support, Revd Les looks forward to developing Fresh Expressions within more areas in Horley and create an impact with Estates Ministry, especially around new housing developments in the parish to build new Christian communities.



Clockwise from left: St Helier estate in Sutton (the largest in the Diocese); Comber Estate in Camberwell; and Roehampton Estate in Roehampton.



IN FOCUS...
Travelling through Lent

A Holy and prayerful Lent

The season of Lent is always a time of prayer and reflection, and with troubling times faced by so many this year, The Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call takes Psalm 137v4 – "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" – as its scriptural focus.



Asking parishes to pray for and support local projects in Southwark and our Link Dioceses in Zimbabwe and Jerusalem, working to improve the mental health and well-being of people across local communities (see right for link to watch the full video).

As you keep a holy and prayerful Lent, you are encouraged to remember those in situations in which they find themselves and their mental health and well-being suffering. We are all called to give in response to all that God has given to us to offer more help to those around us, even in these difficult times and we hope that you will feel able to generously support the projects we have chosen this year.

We have created Lent Call resources which have already been delivered to clergy and lay ministers, and further copies can be downloaded (see box below).

Every pound you raise for the Lent Call will go towards helping projects working to improve the mental health and well-being of people in your local community and our link dioceses.

Find out more



Listen to Bishop Christopher's Lent Call message here: <https://youtu.be/pzrfqf6Q3vw>.

To read more about the Lent Call projects and to donate, visit: <https://bit.ly/40CqYkT>.

Download our Lent Call resources here: <https://bit.ly/41bolGV>.

A round-up of other Lenten resources available for use over the coming six weeks

Dust and Glory

£1.99: <https://bit.ly/3So9WTN>

Dust and Glory: A Lent journey of faith, failure and forgiveness is the Church of England's Lent campaign for 2023. Informed and inspired by the Archbishop of Canterbury's 2023 Lent Book, *Failure*, and co-written by Bishop Emma Ineson.

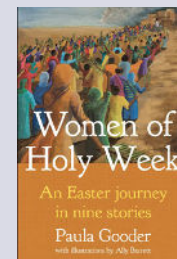


Each week considers the idea of failure from a different angle and explores the difference God's redeeming work in Jesus makes to the shortcomings of human life. The booklet offers daily Bible readings, short reflections, prayers and practical ideas to help you make sense of life's challenges and draw closer to God during Lent. Further details: <https://bit.ly/3EojLvc>.

Women of Holy Week

Available as a free podcast, or book £9.99: <https://bit.ly/3IGQEps>

Women of Holy Week is a series of nine stories written by Paula Gooder who uses her extensive biblical expertise to retell the events of the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension through the eyes of nine female characters; she imagines accompanying Jesus during these momentous days. The illustrated stories bring to life the tension, drama and shock of the events of Holy Week. Originally given as a series of addresses at Southwark Cathedral during Holy Week 2021, these stories are for all who long to encounter Jesus afresh through the Easter Story. <https://bit.ly/3IGQEps>.



Church Army Lent Resources

From £10: <https://bit.ly/3Kpu2ew>

Church Army Lent Resources have been designed to give you, your small group or your church space and time throughout Lent to listen to God, reflect on the Bible and see how and where you can listen to his leading in your actions and attitudes. Action cards, character cards, reflection cards and marks of mission cards are available to purchase on the Church Army Website: <https://bit.ly/3Kpu2ew>.



The Hour is Come: the Passion in Real Time

£12.99 southwarkcathedralshop.org

Andrew Nunn, Dean of Southwark, has created a timeline to take us through the last two weeks of Jesus' earthly life, through his passion, death and to his resurrection. He provides meditations and prayers to help us enter into the reality of these and bring their power into our own daily lives.



Praying for Peace: 1st Anniversary of the war in Ukraine



Southwark Cathedral, like many churches and communities in the Diocese, marked the first anniversary of the war in Ukraine with prayer.

Members of the Ukrainian community had been invited to join a special act of midday prayer on Friday 24 February. Each Friday, the Cathedral prays for peace and justice, as part of the Community of the Cross of Nails. Using the Litany of Reconciliation, prayers for peace were offered.

The Dean of Southwark, The Very Revd Andrew Nunn, also prayed for Russian families who had been affected by the war through separation or grief.



ST OLAVE'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AND THE KING'S CHAPEL
OF THE SAVOY

WAKEHAM CHORISTERSHIPS



Applications are invited from boys whose *tenth* birthday falls between **1 September 2022** and **31 August 2023**

Under the scheme, run jointly by St Olave's Grammar School and The Duchy of Lancaster, boys commence at The King's Chapel of the Savoy in September 2023 and in Year 7 at St Olave's Grammar School in September 2024

- Singing in a Chapel Royal Choir
- Musical training at the highest standard
- Admission to one of the country's best state schools

Further details are available to download via www.saintolaves.net

The closing date for applications is Monday, 27 March 2023



DISCIPLESHIP & MINISTRY

Hospital chaplaincy

Licensed Well-being Chaplain joins dedicated hospital chaplaincy team

Revd Deborah Premraj was licensed as a Well-being Chaplain at Croydon Health Services NHS Trust.

Croydon Health Services NHS Trust welcomed guests to join a service for Volunteer Chaplains to renew their promises and also witness the licensing of Revd Deborah Premraj as the new Well-being Chaplain. The service which took place on 24 January at the worship centre made history, as the hospital celebrated three substantive Chaplains as part of the team in the history of chaplaincy at the hospital.

Leading up to the service, Revd Andy Dovey said: "This is one of the most important roles that Chaplaincy has had over the years and is a development following the pandemic." The licensing of Revd Deborah was carried out by The Rt Revd Dr Rosemarie Mallet, Bishop of Croydon; and Cllr Alisa Flemming, The Civic Mayor of Croydon also attended the service.



"We recognise the impact and difference the team makes to patients and their families."

On her licensing, Revd Deborah said: "I deem it a blessing and honour to be licensed as a Well-being Chaplain for

the staff, patients, and family. For me personally, to work in the context of multi-faith and UKME communities and support them in their times of anxiety, pain and loss, is a deeply fulfilling pastoral ministry. I feel great joy in teamwork and am enriched by the work of the chaplaincy. It was very meaningful to see that the contributions of so many people of different faiths to the chaplaincy team were recognised; and the chaplaincy team rededicate themselves to their ministry. I was very happy and greatly honoured to join all these friends who care for others, it was indeed an exhilarating experience and affirms my calling."

Elaine Clancy, Chief Nurse at the hospital said: "I am privileged to work with such a committed and dedicated Chaplaincy and spiritual care team – on behalf of the Trust Board we recognise the impact and difference the team makes to patients and their families, alongside the support and care provided for our staff."



Bishop Rosemarie and Revd Deborah Premraj at the licensing service.



LET US PRAY...

MARCH

The Very Revd Andrew Nunn

Dean of Southwark

(follow @deansouthwark to see the Dean's daily morning prayers on Twitter)

My mum was born in a council house on an estate on the outskirts of Leicester. I was born on a post-war housing estate, private rather than council, but an estate nevertheless. My parents had managed to save enough to put down a deposit on a house as they married and that was why they began their move up the property ladder. But in one way or another many of us have grown up on estates of housing.

Before I went off to the College of the Resurrection to be trained to be a priest, I was a door-to-door rent collector. I had three rounds to collect from in a town called Wellingborough. A lot of the residents had been moved out of central London, some from places like Bermondsey and had ended up in Northamptonshire, still regretting the loss of their old communities. I was a terrible rent collector; the arrears on my rounds went up and up as I accepted any reason for the tenants not paying their rent that week! But I was good at taking back all the messages to the maintenance team about broken loos and leaking roofs.

That was almost 45 years ago; it's 66 years since I was born on an estate and last month it was 92 years since my mum was born in the terraced council house my grandparents lived in for the whole of their lives. Estate life has changed in those years and the pressures of life have changed. That means that the way that our churches operate on estates has also changed.

It has been so good to see Canon Gary Jenkins taking up his role as Dean of Estates Ministry and visiting so many



estate churches in the Diocese and giving encouragement to the ministry teams there. Whatever community we live in we need to know that God tabernacles with us, that our incarnate God dwells with us, the one born in a borrowed stable, the one who lived with 'no where to lay his head' (Luke 9.58). He is neighbour to us and neighbour to our neighbours and our calling is to be salt and light wherever we are.

**God with us,
bless our communities,
our neighbourhoods, our
estates, and make them
good places to live,
healthy places to thrive
and vibrant places to grow
in love with you
and with each other.
Amen.**

'Wren 300 celebration'

On the afternoon of Saturday 25 February, people gathered in the Chapel of St Peter and St Paul at the Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich for a service of Choral Evensong marking the tercentenary of the death of Sir Christopher Wren (1632–1723).

The service was one of the many services and events being held in 2023 as part of the 'Wren300' celebrations. As the original designer of the buildings that

comprise the College site, Wren and his legacy are of particular significance to those who work, study, and worship in this beautiful setting.

The Chapel Choir, under the direction of Dr Ralph Allwood MBE, and augmented by additional singers from Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, sang music by Purcell, Howells, and Parry. The preacher was the Revd Prof William Whyte, Professor of Social and Architectural History at the University of Oxford. Invoking Wren's famous dictum



L-R: John Furlonger (Verger), the Revd Dr Susan Blackall, the Venerable Alistair Cutting, the Revd Prof William Whyte, and the Revd Dr Robert Tobin (Chaplain).

that 'architecture aims at eternity', Prof Whyte explored the ways in which Wren's Christian spiritual convictions found

expression in his elegant designs and his other achievements as one of the great polymaths of his age.

WHAT'S ON



Please send details of your next events for APRIL ONWARDS to Trinity House **BY FRIDAY 10 MARCH**

March

WEDNESDAY 8 MARCH

* **WANDSWORTH** – Talk at St Mary, Wandsworth Common. Guest speaker Isabel Losada (Author of ‘The Joyful Environmentalist’) speaks about ‘Life, happiness and saving the planet’. Plus time for questions, discussion and refreshments. All welcome. Doors open 7.30pm for 8pm start at St Mary Magdalene, 210 Trinity Road, Wandsworth, London, SW17 7HP. Free.

SATURDAY 11 MARCH

* **MUSWELL HILL** – Equip Youth and Kids Leaders’ Conference. Transform your youth and kids ministry with practical training while connecting and worshipping with hundreds of youth and kids ministry leaders from across the UK. 10am–4pm, St James Church, St James Lane, Muswell Hill, London N10 3DB. £18. More information: <https://bit.ly/3Xo1ZPS>. For a CYP grant visit: <https://bit.ly/3W4WX9P>.

SATURDAY 11 MARCH

* **WIMBLEDON** – *Glad in Him with Psalms*. Join us for a Lenten Quiet Day on the theme of Praying the Psalms with St Augustine of Hippo. Guest Speaker, The Ven Dr Edward Dowler, Archdeacon of Hastings. 10am–4pm at St James’, Garlickhythe, London. EC4V 2AF. All welcome. Free. Details: <http://ow.ly/Q4y650MTRSO>.

🎵 Croydon Minster Lunchtime Recitals 2023

40 minutes of music on Fridays at 1.10pm. Bring a packed lunch.

10 March: Daphne Trio.

17 March: Antonio Morabito, piano.

24 March: Vanessa Hristova, viola & Lily Petrova, piano.

Croydon Minster, Church Street, Croydon CRO 1RN. Details: croydonminster.org. Free entry – donations to Minster funds.

🎵 St Peter, Streatham

Upcoming concerts and recitals.

Saturday 25 March, 7.30pm: Concert by Opus XVI Chamber Choir – Brahms’ Requiem. Details from St Peter (see below).

Sunday 26 March, 11.50am–12.50pm: Recital by Tom Chippendale (tenor) and James Furniss-Roe (piano). Free entry (retiring collection in support of Blood Cancer UK).

Saturday 1 April, 7.30pm: Dixit – A concert by Streatham Choral. Tickets: £10 (£8.50 concessions), online from <https://bit.ly/40UqHJZ>.

St Peter’s Church, Leigham Court Road, Streatham SW16 2SD.

For further details please contact: www.stpeters-streatham.org

SATURDAY 11 MARCH

🕊️ **ONLINE** – Lay Ministry information morning. Anybody who wishes to take their first tentative steps in exploring a vocation to a lay ministry is welcome to attend, discover more, and ask questions. Run by members of the Discipleship, Lay Ministry and Continuing Ministerial Education team. 10am–1pm, Zoom. Free. To book your place email Helen Medland: learning@southwark.anglican.org.

TUESDAY 14 MARCH

🕊️ **ONLINE** – How to start or restart a fresh expression of church. Fresh expressions grow new Christian communities as an extension of parish life. How can you do this in your context? This session is led by the Pioneering Ministry and Fresh Expressions team. 2–3.30pm, Zoom. Free. To book your place email pioneering@southwark.anglican.org.

WEDNESDAY 15 MARCH

* **WANDSWORTH** – Talk at St Mary, Wandsworth Common. Guest speaker

HHJ the Revd Sarah Whitehouse KC speaks about ‘A Judge in the pulpit and a Priest on the bench’. Plus time for questions, discussion and refreshments. All welcome. Doors open 7.30pm for 8pm start at St Mary Magdalene, 210 Trinity Road, Wandsworth, London, SW17 7HP. Free.

WEDNESDAY 22 MARCH

🕊️ **ONLINE** – How to start or restart a fresh expression of church. Fresh expressions grow new Christian communities as an extension of parish life. How can you do this in your context? This session is led by the Pioneering Ministry and Fresh Expressions team. 7.30–9.30pm, Zoom. Free. To book your place email pioneering@southwark.anglican.org.

SATURDAY 25 MARCH

* **WOOLWICH** – Woolwich Youth Forum. Encourage your young people (aged 13+) to join the Bishop and Archdeacons of their Episcopal Area to have their say on topics important to them and build connections with other young people. In person, 1–3pm. Free. Details: imani.mcewen@southwark.

SATURDAY 25 MARCH

🎵 **CROYDON** – Croydon Bach Choir Spring Concert. Performance of Handel’s dramatic oratorio ‘Samson’. 7.30pm at St Matthew, Croydon CRO 5NQ. Tickets £16 (buy 3 get 4th free!) via <https://bit.ly/3XJY3sX>.

SATURDAY 25 MARCH

* **CANTERBURY** – The Centre for Anglican History and Theology Day Conference. ‘Our Image of God Must Go’. 60 years since John Robinson’s famous text *Honest to God*, the conference will explore the significance of his text. 9.30am–5pm, at the University of Kent, Canterbury, Eliot Lecture Theatre 2. Free. Register via email: CentreAnglicanHistoryTheology@gmail.com.

April

SATURDAY 1 APRIL

* **CAMBERWELL** – Woolwich Area Lay Conference: ‘Walking through walls’. How to break through barriers to inspire and equip the people of God to serve Him better. Bookings now open for all lay people in the Woolwich Episcopal Area to attend

the conference. 10am–4pm, at Ark All Saints Academy, 140 Wyndham Road, London SE5 0UB. Free. Find out more or book ticket: <https://bit.ly/3XKgUUL>.

SATURDAY 22 APRIL

* **WATERLOO** – Eco Church Celebration! Join us to celebrate those churches who have begun their Eco Church journey. Shared learning of churches with Silver and Bronze awards; an update on Eco Diocese status; and workshops delivered by A Rocha Eco Church. Suitable for anyone interested in assisting their church progress on the eco church awards journey. 10am–2pm at St John, Waterloo. Followed by a liturgy led by Bishop Martin. Lunch provided. Free. To register email: JPICAdmin@southwark.anglican.org.

23 APRIL – 7 MAY 2023

* **CATERHAM** – Exhibition of Icons, drawings, frescos and illuminations by the traditional Byzantine iconographer Hanna-Leena Ward. Open daily, 12–7pm at St Lawrence Church, Church Hill, Caterham, CR3 6SJ. Free. There are also daily icon painting classes 10am–2pm during the exhibition, cost £35 daily. All levels welcome. Details from: hannalward@hotmail.com.

May

SATURDAY 13 MAY

🎵 **CROYDON** – Croydon Bach Choir ‘Come and Sing’ Day. Join the Croydon Bach Choir for a one-day workshop exploring and performing Rossini’s ‘Petite Messe Solenne’. 10am at St Matthew, Croydon CRO 5NQ. Tickets £25 via <https://bit.ly/3XJY3sX>.

THURSDAY 25 MAY

🎵 **WESTMINSTER** – 37th Eric Symes Abbott Memorial Lecture. Professor Anthony Reddie speaks on the subject ‘From Black Theology to Black Lives Matter and Back Again’. 6.30pm at Westminster Abbey, SW1P 3PA. Free, but tickets must be booked online in advance: <https://bit.ly/3YmjLE8>.

All Aboard at St Peter, Walworth!

St Peter, Walworth are host to the Crystal Palace High Level model railway layout, owned by the Southwark and District Model Railway Club, currently stored in the gallery on the south side of the church. The layout is currently undergoing a major refurbishment. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3YKTIfu>.



© Edward Gormley

If you wish to include details of your upcoming events, please email bridge@southwark.anglican.org



IN FOCUS...
News from the Diocese

Racial justice – commemorating Stephen Lawrence

This year will mark the 30th anniversary of the death of Stephen Lawrence who was murdered in a racist attack in Eltham, south-east London.

Racial Justice Sunday (12 February 2023) is one of the many legacies of Stephen's life and in commemoration churches across the Diocese observed *Racial Justice Sunday* as an opportunity to pray and act on racial justice-related matters.

Like most young people, Stephen juggled an active social life, school work, family commitments, and part-time employment. But he also had ambitions to become an architect and wanted to have a positive impact on his community. Tragically, his dream of becoming an architect was never realised. On 22 April 1993, at the age of just 18, Stephen was stabbed to death in

an unprovoked racist attack. Stephen's murder led to profound cultural changes in attitudes to racism, to the law and to Police practice and so much in his honour has created a difference in society.



This year at St Luke, Camberwell, The Revd Joanna Lewis Burgess (pictured) led the Youth Church in a drama production about the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

Revd Jo writes:

At St Luke, Camberwell the sermon and prayers on *Racial Justice Sunday* were led by members of our Youth Church.

The young people staged a drama about the murder of Stephen Lawrence, which brought the events to life in a starkly effective way. Using skills they learnt in drama at school, they followed the performance with a monologue explaining the events of his murder and some of its repercussions.

They group then presented a reflection in the form of an interview, where they explained what racial justice is and why we observe *Racial Justice Sunday*, noting that our faith tells us that every human being, whatever the colour of their skin, has been created by God and that we should therefore respect every person's God-given value and dignity. Racism goes against God, and we can oppose it through our choices to stand up against racist behaviour and attitudes and by prayer for the world to become a more just and equal place.

The reflection was followed by prayers prepared by the Church of England and read by the young people. Candles were lit to remember the love in which God has created all people, to give thanks for the people of all ethnicities and who have contributed to this country, to remember those who are still mistreated or discriminated against and to express our hope for racial justice, as God continues to work in us and in the world.

Standing together to oppose and disrupt injustice

A joint statement has been released by the church leaders who make up the ecumenical partnership of Churches Together In South London, chaired by The Rt Revd Dr Karowei Dorgu, Bishop of Woolwich.

In the statement which marked the end of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (18–25 January), and in anticipation of the 30th anniversary of the murder of Stephen Lawrence, church leaders call on the Government to pursue the dismantling of racism in all its structures including the police, schools, hospitals and employers. Part of the statement reads: "We ask the Government to root out misogyny and sexism from the police and fire services and to protect women and all victims of predatory behaviour. We ask the Government to intervene to stop serious youth violence so that our young people can become old people. We want to be a society where everyone can walk home free from fear and knowing they can trust in the services designed to protect them."

The statement also refers to all that faith communities are doing during this cost of living crisis to address the impacts of climate injustice.

Read the full statement here:
<https://bit.ly/3Zgw7gV>

Public Spirit share their views at Croydon Citizens Youth Safety Listening Event

Croydon North Deanery's youth group, Public Spirit, are working alongside other faith and community groups as part of the alliance with Croydon Citizens to develop a Youth Safety Strategy.

In a bid to hear the views of young people, a Youth Safety Listening Event hosted by Croydon Citizens took place at Woodside Baptist Church to focus on young people's safety on the streets and in their schools.

Young people, Youth Leaders and Clergy from Croydon North Deanery alongside others from local churches, youth groups and schools met with Jason Perry, Croydon Executive Mayor. Croydon Council representatives from the community and education, local police, youth and schools teams, as well as local clergy and Diocesan representatives and other community supporters were also in attendance.

The young people spoke about what makes them feel safe at school and ways to feel safer on the streets and the Council proposed knife bins, safe spaces and gang mediation for discussion. Attendees also heard testimonies from young people aged 11 and above about their experiences. Young refugees spoke about encountering discrimination and how stop and search impacts them disproportionately in school and on the streets, creating conversation around what the police could do differently to ensure youth feel safer in the borough.

Public Spirit were at the forefront of pressing for a youth safety strategy for Croydon following listening sessions and a dinner event held last year. It was an opportunity to speak directly to the Council about what should be included in the strategy and have their voices heard.



Local church youth groups voiced their views.

Veve Benn, Youth Group Leader at St Oswald, Norbury said: "The young people supported each other to share their views with the adults on a range of Council proposals. The event successfully brought a wide range of people together to begin new conversations and it was truly inspiring to see our young people

communicating with confidence, showing leadership, commitment and faith as they play their part in working with others to achieve positive change."