



Vestry and Annual Parochial Meetings
Sunday, 25th April 2010
11.30am

Agenda
Minutes
Accounts
Reports

The Parish Church of St Leonard, Streatham
The Vestry and Annual Parochial Church Meetings
Sunday 25th April, 2010

AGENDA

1. Opening Prayer
2. Appointment of clerk to the vestry meeting and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
3. Apologies:

The Vestry Meeting

1. Election of Church Wardens

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Minutes of the APCM 2009
2. Matters Arising
3. Elections:
 - a. Members of the PCC to serve for 3 years (3 places)
4. Appointments:
 - a. Sidespeople
 - b. Auditor – Jane Yan
5. Rector's report
6. Electoral Roll report
7. Secretary and Treasurer's report
8. Church Warden's report
9. Deanery Synod report
10. Other reports
11. Any other business
12. Closing prayer

St Leonard's Church, Streatham

Minutes of the Vestry and Annual Parochial Church Meetings held in St Leonard's Church on Sunday 26th April, 2009

Present: see attendance book with the Rector in the chair

- 1 The meeting opened with a prayer
- 2 Sarah Dennis was appointed clerk of the meeting
- 3 Apologies: Charlie and Sheila Mitchell, Vita La Porta, Francis and Luke Yarlett, Tony Nunn, Gill Tomlinson, Ian Yates

The Vestry Meeting

- 1 Election of churchwardens: Moyra Heggie was nominated by Tony Nunn and seconded by Mimi Heinrichs. Robert Edmondson was nominated by Mimi Heinrichs and seconded by Tony Nunn. They were duly elected Churchwardens there being no other candidates. They were both thanked by the Rector for their service to the parish in the past year.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting

- 1 Minutes of the 2008 APCM: After minor typing errors were corrected, the minutes were signed as an accurate record. Proposed by Henry Fergusson, seconded by Petra Mitchinson. Unanimously accepted.
- 2 No matters arising
- 3 Elections
 - a. Members of the PCC to serve for three years:
Merdiline Allerdycce (nominated by Moyra Heggie, seconded by Lisa Wright); Ann Davies (nominated by Robert Edmondson, seconded by Sarah Dennis); Amanda Austin (nominated by Sarah Dennis, seconded by Robert Edmondson); Caroline Levaeux (nominated by Sarah Dennis, seconded by Nicci Yarlett), Kusumlata McWann (nominated by Moyra Heggie and seconded by Lisa Wright). They were duly elected there being no other candidates.
 - b. Members to serve for two years:
Rosalind Gardyne (nominated by Robert Edmondson and seconded by Jim Yarlett), Sarah Parry (nominated by Alice Hicks and seconded by Andrew Johnson). They were duly elected there being no other candidates.
 - c. Members to serve for one year:
Sarah Robinson (nominated by Robert Edmondson and seconded by Moyra Heggie). She was duly elected there being no other candidates.
 - d. Deanery Synod to serve for two years

Donna Thomsson (nominated by Petra Mitchinson and seconded by Robert Edmondson). They were duly elected there being no other candidates.

4 Appointments:

a. Sidespeople: Liz Urben, Ethline Jarrett, Oona Emerson, Helen Blakely, Jane Yann, Richard Clarke, Ian Pratt, Andrew Hicks, Penny Lee, Eileen Power, Ann Davies, Charles Gibson, Sue Gibson, Claudette Cole, Petra Mitchinson (reserve), Patricia Dillon, Christine Schulkes, Jim Yarlett, Caroline Taninona, Caroline Leveaux (not first Sundays), Caroline Taruwona were duly appointed

b. Auditor: Andrew Thurburn was proposed by Robert Edmondson and seconded by Phil Heeley. He was duly appointed.

5 Rector's report

See attached report. The Rector's report was accepted and the Rector was thanked for her contribution.

6 Electoral Roll report: see pack

7 The Secretary and Treasurer's report was accepted with no questions.

8 The Church Wardens' report:

The church wardens were asked when we found out that our lighting system is not approved by the diocese and the work needs to be redone. This became clear in April 2008 after meeting with the DAC. A proper plan is needed in order to make the lighting adequate.

9 The Deanery Synod report was accepted with no questions.

10 Other reports: see pack

Those who prepared reports were formally thanked by the Rector

11 A.O.B:

The church wardens formally thanked the Rector on behalf of the congregation.

12 The meeting closed with a prayer

Electoral Roll Report

The Electoral Roll currently stands at 317, there having been 17 names added and one removed since last year's APCM.

Tony Nunn
Electoral Roll Officer

Secretary and Treasurers' Report

Financial overview as at 31st December 2009

Income

Planned Giving & Donations	Budget Year	Budget 12 month period	Actual	Variance
Planned Giving	99300	99300	86056	-13244
Plate Collections	16000	16000	19607	3607
Donations/Legacies	2000	2000	3212	1212
Sub Total	£117,300	£117,300	£108,875	-£8,425

Other Income				
Fees, Rent & Church Hire	21600	21600	22476	876
Fundraising Events	3000	3000	572	-2428
Investments	2800	2800	684	-2116
Lettings	15120	15120	13860	-1260
Vodafone	10500	10500	12981	2481
Sub Total	£53,020	£53,020	£50,572	-£2,448

	Budget Year	Budget Period	Actual	Variance
Total Income	£170,320	£170,320	£159,447	-£10,873*

Expenditure

	Budget Year	Budget Period	Actual	Variance
Ministry	99,479	99,479	99,548	69
Altar & Music	4,400	4,400	3,421	-979
Running Expenses	17,300	17,300	14,916	-2384
Maintenance/Major Wks	75,300	75,300	43,364	-31936
Management/Admin	4,400	4,400	4,117	-283
Fundraising/Lettings	6,074	6,074	3,705	-2369
Designated Funds	750	750	1,250	500
Total	£207,703	£207,703	£170,321	-£37,382

Overall Deficit	-£37,383	-£37,383	-£10,874	-£26,509**
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Income and expenditure were below budget by £10,873 * & £37,382 ** respectively.

Andrew Hicks and Robert Owen - Joint Treasurers

**St Leonard's PCC - Schedule
of Funds 31st December 2009**

Designated - Unrestricted Funds

<u>Name</u>	<u>Amount b/f to 2009</u>	<u>Income 2009</u>	<u>Expenditure 2009 (Transfers To Current)</u>	<u>Available 2010</u>	<u>Purpose for spending</u>
Clock Tower	250.00			250.00	Repairs and overhaul
Music + choir	0.00	332.14		332.14	Music related purchases
St Leonard's Fund D/T A/C	10243.02	10,000	7000.00	13,243.02	Reserve Fund
Fabric Fund Deposit A/C	19521.31	248.86	19770.17	0.00	Major renovation of church
Organ Fund Deposit A/C	2739.17	51.98		2,791.15	Major repairs/overhaul
Sub Total	£32,753.50	£10,632.98	£26,770.17	£16,616.31	

Restricted Funds

Curate's House (Now Unrestricted)	9,350.86		9350.86	0	Re 49, Aldrington Road upkeep
Parish Hall	2,337.75	281.20		2555.95	Improvement of the Parish Hall
Canon Nicholl Grave	446.41	6.80	281.64	171.57	Upkeep of graves
Parker Bequest	911.50		911.50	0	All funds now spent
St Leonard's Day Grant		3,000	2,661.58	338.42	
Parker Bequest Treasury Stock	2,408.82		470.36	1,938.46	To be given to relieve the poor, aged, or infirmed (Stock sold January 10)
Tower Fund Appeal		2,533.92		2,533.92	
Henry Smith Charity	3600.00	3150.00	6705.00	45	To be given to relieve the poor, aged, or infirmed for their advancement in life
Children's Society		354.77	652.39	-297.62	
Sub Total	£21,143.84	£5,936.69	£19,794.83	£7,285.70	

Endowment Funds

Dyce Memorial	825.98	1.24		829.29	Upkeep of Memorial
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Total Funds Available	£55,578.41	£16,629.54	£47,476.65	£24,731.30	
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PCC Secretary & Treasurer's Report for Financial Year Ended 31st December 2009

Income

Planned Giving, comprising standing orders, envelope giving and open plate collections, increased by 9.5% in 2009, although this was 9% short of the target set by the PCC in its budget.

Total Planned Giving was £105,663 in 2009, inclusive of £20,586.27 in tax refunds, reinforcing the benefit of gift aided planned giving. In addition, donations of £678 were received, plus Restricted donations of £2,534 for the Tower Appeal, giving a final total of £108,875.

Fees, rental and church hire exceeded budget by £876, however fundraising events and investments were £2,428 & £2,116 below budget respectively.

Letting fees from 49, Aldrington Road came in at £13,860, £1,260 below budget due to clearance of a carried forward prepayment previously held on the balance sheet. Conversely, the income from Vodafone of £12,981 is £2,481 over budget due to reversal of an accrual from the balance sheet dating back to 2006, whereby the first ever rental payment from Vodafone had been shown as a creditor at the year end.

The total income for the year is £159,447, which is £10,873 below the original budget.

Expenditure

The budget set for 2009 was a deficit budget, with a planned overspend of £37,383, to enable necessary work to be carried out to the church: repairs to the heating and tower, plus the provision of a handrail and case for a book of remembrance. The deficit was to be covered by using the church's reserve funds.

Expenses, after year end adjustments, amounted to £170,321, an increase of £5,309 on 2008. The highest expense was the Diocesan Quota of £91,748, representing just over 50% of total expenditure.

The expenditure figures for Altar and Music, and Running Expenses were respectively £979 & £2,384 less than anticipated.

The expenditure for Church Maintenance and Major Works was £43,364. The actual expenditure on Major Works was £41,308, however, after year end adjustments this has been reduced to £32,031.88.

The adjustment comprises writing off a balance of £1,276.25 re a 2006 Howard Eaton invoice, and clearing a 2006 accrual of £8,000 from the balance sheet. This accrual represented an intention to transfer £8,000 to the Fabric & Organ Fund in the following year - 2007. Surplus funds were never available, so this transfer never took place. The accrual has been sitting on the balance sheet ever since.

After a meeting on 7th March 2010 with Karl Cheng, it was agreed that the best way to move forward and clear this was to offset it against the 2009 major works expenditure. It must be stressed that the original transfer to the balance sheet of £8,000 was not a transfer of actual money, it was purely an accountancy entry which registered an intention to transfer money if funds became available. Likewise, although reversing this entry effectively reduces the deficit for last year, it does not mean that additional cash funds are available.

Fundraising costs and costs of letting Aldrington Rd were £3,705, £2,369 below budget.

The figure of £1,250 showing as Designated Funds relates to the monthly donation of £416.67 to the Spires Centre from 1st October.

Deficit

Following year end adjustments, the deficit for 2009 was £10,874.

Charitable Giving

Following regular appeals, members of the church donated the following sums in 2009:

Christian Aid £2,335

Lent Appeal £1,023

St Leonard's School £1,446

Children's Society £355

Total charitable donations £5,159

Restricted, Designated and Endowment Funds

The total value of reserve funds held by the church at the year end was £24,731.30.

The attached breakdown shows the opening balances, income and expenditure for the year, and the balances carried forward at the year end for each fund.

Current Account Balance

The reconciled bank balance as at 31st December was £18,123.78

Balance Sheet

A full balance sheet will be presented at the APCCM on 25th April, following vetting and approval of the annual accounts and year end adjustments by the auditor.

Sarah Parry

Andrew Hicks

Robert Owen

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Kelly'.

Secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Hicks'.

Treasurer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Robert Owen'.

Treasurer

Churchwardens' report

This has been the third year of Mandy's ministry and we continue to see growth and refreshment for St Leonard's. The other reports contain the detail of the developments over the year. It has been an exciting and rewarding time for us as Wardens. We would like to take the opportunity of this report to acknowledge Mandy's contribution in leading us, and to thank the clergy and the many people who have made an additional investment of time and energy to support her work.

Rectory:

Whilst we have not needed to carry out any work on the rectory we need to make sure that we are saving for future refurbishment.

Church Building:

We have continued to think about ways in which we could extend the use of the church by ourselves and the wider community. However until all the essential items of repair have been completed it has been decided not to proceed any further at the moment. The work of the fund raising committee allows us to think that this could be funded in part by grants from external bodies.

Heating:

The heating has been installed but we are experiencing difficulties with the controls. The engineers have tried a number of solutions and I hope that by the time of this meeting the correct solution will have been found.

Lighting:

The lighting has had a part overhaul, however the diocese did not approve the work and so we need to completely renew the lighting over the next five years. This will incur significant investment, but we should be able to use our lovely building for both worship and other events more effectively.

Bell Tower:

The money for the bell tower refurbishment is now in place thanks to the hard work of the fund raising committee. We expect this work to be completed in early summer and very much look forward to the bells being rung again. We are grateful for the patience of the Bell Ringers who have been denied access to their beloved bells.

Windows:

The DAC has decided that more damage would be caused by reinstallation of the Lexan window guards and so have given us permission to leave them as they are. However any work in future must have a faculty and be correctly installed in line with diocesan guidelines. You may have noticed some of the other coverings round the church have become weathered and do not allow sufficient light to pass through. We need to budget to replace them in the future

Disabled access:

The ramp is now in use and the handrail proposed last year will be completed with the work to the interior of the tower.

Roof:

The roof has had a complete overhaul and a maintenance contract established with a local firm. We are awaiting our annual routine maintenance.

Crèche, Kitchen and Toilets:

As reported last year these need updating if we are to use our building more fully, and make it more available for the wider community. This will need including in any plan we make to extend the building in the future.

State of churchyard:

There have been a number of incidents in the churchyard this year. Pieces of railing have been stolen and there have been issues with inappropriate use of the churchyard. A faculty has been obtained to erect a hedge, protected initially by a fence, to alleviate this nuisance. The safer streets team have been very supportive in helping to overcome this problem. We will need to keep an eye open for a possible resurgence in the future. New signage indicates that the churchyard is an alcohol free zone. We continue to work with the Spires to reduce problems in this area and the Glebe.

The clock:

As part of the fundraising for the tower Lambeth have granted enough money to install 2 auto winders for the clock and have the dial repainted. We are looking to complete this work alongside the tower restoration and look forward to the clock working again.

Faculties:

Faculties have been applied for

- Bell tower
- Auto winders for the clock
- Stand for the book of remembrance
- The hand rail

We will be applying for faculties covering

- Long-term lighting plan

Valuable items:

We have a photographic record of these items and this is checked once a year

Moyra Heggie
Bob Edmondson
March 2010

Lambeth South Deanery Synod

Members - Henry Fergusson, Alice Hicks, Ann Morisy, Donna Thompson, Nici Yarlett

The first Deanery Synod of the year was held at St Luke's, West Norwood on Tuesday 12 May 2009, attended by Nici Yarlett and Alice Hicks, with apologies received from Ann Morisy and Donna Thompson. This Synod took the form of an act of worship and the focus of the service was a reflection on the effects of the recession. The speaker was the Revd Chow Wai Ming, a non stipendiary minister on the staff of St James the Less, Pimlico and an employee of the bank JP Morgan.

The second was held at Christ Church Streatham on Wednesday 16 September 2009, attended by Henry Ferguson and Alice Hicks. The subject of the service was church schools, and the meeting was addressed by Cath Mitchenhall, the headteacher of St Luke's C of E Primary School, West Norwood. She gave a summary of the aims and ethos of church schools, and felt that they were at the centre of the church's mission to the nation.

The third was held at St Leonard's on Thursday 4 February 2010, attended by The Rector, Nici Yarlett, Ann Morisy and Alice Hicks. The main subject was safeguarding and the meeting was addressed by Jill Sandham, the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, who talked us through her work with the 2 new policies that have been produced, one for safeguarding children and one for vulnerable adults. Our Rector then gave a short talk explaining where the Church of England stood at present on Women Bishops.

Alice Hicks

Planned Giving

In the last year we have had less people giving via planned giving envelopes, however we have also had more people gift aiding via yellow envelopes. Of the money we have received via planned giving, yellow envelopes and standing orders 97.6% has been gift aided. There have been some yellow envelopes however that have not been signed which meant that we have not been able to collect the tax on those offerings. We need legible names, signatures and post codes to be able to claim the tax back from the government.

If anyone else would like to join the planned giving envelope scheme or would like to give regularly through their bank please ask either Tony Emerson or myself.

Margaret Parry

Younger Church Committee

"The role of the YCC is to represent and be an advocate for children and young people at St Leonard's. The YCC oversees the Groups which exist to enhance their sense of spiritual belonging and growth. The YCC exists to ensure that children, young people and their parents/carers are valued, included and protected in the life of the Church."

The Younger Church Committee comprises:

Amanda Austin (chair), Elizabeth Ridout (9-13s group), Fiona Turnbull (Toddler church), Gemma Fair (Sunday school), Mary Hawes (Children's Advisor), Moyra Heggie (Warden), Nici Yarlett

(Crèche), Oona Emerson (Protection Issues), Sarah Robinson, Virginia Appleton (9-13s), Vacant (Lenny's singers). We met every other month and held 6 meetings over the period of this report with varying degrees of attendance, but with great energy and commitment. Many thanks to all the team!

2) Budget / Petty Cash / Expenses

The Younger church committee has a budget of £500 which goes to cover the costs of the Sunday School materials, Crèche equipment, cover the cost of our subscription to 'Whole People of God' materials as well as any trips or outings (of which we have none nor any planned). Expenditure over £50 has to be approved prior to the event by the YCC before submission to the Treasurer. Last financial year there was no budget and expenses were just submitted to the Treasurer for approval of the Vicar so we have nothing to report that is not in the Treasurer's report.

3) Reports from Groups:

- **Crèche** has been wonderfully well attended this year. The new Rota has been a real success with several new volunteers. We do still need more helpers.
- **Sunday School** has grown in stature and confidence. We have a thriving Sunday school and the children really seem to enjoy it. Many are regular attendees and increasingly parents no longer feel the need to stay with their children and can escape for the service confident that their children are safe and happy. Our new materials 'Whole People of God' are working really well.
- **9-13s Group** has had good if slightly erratic attendance. The kids are engaged and engaging but it's now time for us to invest some time and money into activities to improve the group vibe and build team spirit.
- **14+ Group** - the YCC decided this year that this group is not necessary as there is not sufficient demand. Older children tend to prefer to join their parents and older siblings in the service and it was felt that this is probably about right. The YCC has been challenged to find ways to encourage older kids to organise their own social things, as we felt that this is not something we can really help with despite numerous attempts to do so.
- **Lenny's Singers** – we've had no feedback from this group this year.
- **Toddler Church** – has gone from strength to strength with all credit to Mandy and her small team of helpers. This has been a real success story for mission, resulting in several christenings and more children coming on to join the Sunday school as they get older.
- **All-Age worship** – continues to be very well attended. We continue to try various seating options to make the experience as pleasant as possible for all concerned. Parents and children seem to really love this service, and the balance of one service per month like this feels about right.
- **Other groups** – scouts, guides, brownies etc., are active at St Leonard's but not under the remit of the YCC.

4) Report on Safe-guarding Policy and Child Protection Issues

In line with Diocesan requirements we have adopted a Safe Guarding policy and actively take up CRB checks and references/interview all new volunteers to any activities involving children. The YCC ensures that Group Leaders endorse the applications of new volunteers and recommendations for new volunteers are reviewed at the YCC meetings once CRB checks are completed successfully. We now ask all volunteers to complete a form and under-go an interview in addition to the CRB checks. This is not too onerous and is working well. We have established and follow guidelines for adult: children ratios and ensured all our helpers are aware of the fire evacuation policy and procedures.

5) Projects

- **Parents' Handbook** was published and very well received across the board.
- **Review of Age Groups** in line with school Key Stages. We undertook a review of possibly changing the age groups of our children's' activities in line with school Key Stages, but on reflection and examination it was felt that the arrangements we have currently work best for us and should not be changed at this time.
- **Review of special prayers for Diocese** – ongoing, but so far we like them!
- **Christmas Scratch Nativity** was a resounding success. Parents and kids loved Mary's minimal fuss approach which resulted in a very touching and engaging service.
- **Crib Service** for children on Christmas Eve was amazingly well attended.
- **Good Friday** service was also extremely well attended and enjoyed.
- **Easter Garden** was done by the 9-13s last year. This year Sunday school did us proud.
- **Christingle** (currently not remit of YCC) but feedback was yuck to liquorish!
- **Nearly New Sale** of baby and children's' clothes raised money for Christian Aid week
- **Xmas Fair** raised circa £1,500 for St Leonard's school with many thanks to support from Caroline Leveaux and many others.
- **Fire evacuation** - posters are up in the Crèche and Sunday school leaders are aware of the procedures, but more training is required.
- **Picnics/Outings** – none have taken place this year and this is something to plan for next year.

To summarise, the Younger Church Committee is an active and committed bunch of people and we are proud of the successes we have had this year in building rapport and team-work. We have a growing and vibrant Young Church at St Leonard's and we believe we have had a good year in supporting our young people and many volunteers. Many, many thanks go to all of you for all your hard work.

We would like more male presence at our meetings to help represent the growing number of fathers in the Church, and we need more helpers for the Crèche and Sunday School. Our aims for the next year are to work on these two areas for development and to find a new Chair.

Otherwise, we aim to continue to do the best we can to support Mandy and the team with their excellent work in making St Leonard's a fabulous home for families and young people.

Amanda Austin

Music Report

This has been an exciting year on the music front at St Leonard's, culminating in a performance of St John's Passion by J.S. Bach as part of the evening liturgy on Passion Sunday. A number of people from the congregation joined the choir, as well as soloists from within the choir and professionals, to make this a wonderful event for participants and the congregation. The Passion was the highlight, but is surrounded by a number of musical events, each Sunday and around Easter.

All this work is thanks to Michael Emery, who became interim choir master in August, and has bought his experience as producer of the BBC singers to St Leonard's. We are very grateful to Michael for his tireless work with us, and for the fresh new challenges he has brought to our music. We don't know how long he will be able to stay, but we would like to use this opportunity to say how much we appreciate him, and hope he will stay for as long as he can!

Michael's arrival was of course preceded by Martin Wolf's departure as choir master in July – a sad event for us all. Fortunately, he still joins us to play the organ and sometimes to sing, so is still part of the family. We would like to thank Martin for his great contribution to St Leonard's music over the eight years he led our music, including the development of Lenny's singers. . Also, thanks to Pamela Hall, a member of the choir who sings with us on Sunday evenings, and who has filled in on rehearsals and keeping us going during the 'interregnum' of choir masters.

If you want to see what we are planning to sing – or find out what has been performed – you will find this on the website at <http://www.stleonard-streatham.org.uk/music2010.html>.

As ever, we would welcome new recruits to the choir – particularly male voices, but all are welcome. We know from the Passion that there are a lot of good voices and musical people out there. Have you sung in a choir before? Can you read music to a reasonable standard? Can you spare Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings and/or evenings? Obviously we strive to provide a high standard of choral music week by week and this means learning a lot of music in quite a short space of time, so you do need some sight-singing skills. But you don't need to be a professional singer. And don't let the commitment put you off – there can be some flexibility here. The choir is drawn from the congregation, for the congregation, and this tradition has to continue.

The Choir

Bell Ringers

This has been an unusual year for the ringers as for the last six months the tower has been closed for health and safety reasons. However we have kept the core of the band together, meeting every Tuesday to ring handbells in the servers' vestry, visit another local tower with a Tuesday practice (Croydon, Benhilton, Bermondsey, Bromley) - or, if all else fails, just go to the pub (there are some traditions that must be observed at all costs).

David has found a new role for himself, chiming the treble from the Narthex before services. On Easter morning Wilf, Cherie, George and David nobly turned out at 6 a.m. to add to the general cacophony at the cry of "He is risen indeed!" by ringing handbells from the gallery (Gill and I being otherwise occupied downstairs).

We are most grateful to the fund-raising team who have obtained the necessary money for the work on the tower in an astonishingly short space of time and we look forward to taking up our ropes in our newly-refurbished ringing chamber in the not-too-distant future. With the new window in place you will be able to see us (or at least our legs) from the narthex and, who knows, perhaps some of you may feel inspired to join us?

Tony Nunn
Tower Captain

The Servers

It always seems appropriate to be asked to produce this report shortly after Easter, the one time of the ecclesiastical year when the resources of the serving team to are really stretched to the limit, as it allows me to convey my thanks to them all for their good work and support throughout

the year. Of course, I include in my thanks the services of Janet, Kumi, Marilyn & Ethline who also provide important input into sanctuary life.

I recall reading a very old Altar Book for Servers not so long ago which seemed to imply that serving at the Altar “embodies an incomparable richness of spiritual meaning” and went on to say that, in doing so, it makes one more assiduous in one’s daily life! Can I tempt any more of you to join us in such a spiritual activity? Should you be interested, please let me know.

Gill Tomlinson

Flower Arrangers

The flower arranging team have completed another year of decorating the Church with our usual break for Advent and Lent. For a reasonable fee we are happy to make for members of the congregation an arrangement to celebrate any special occasion.

Pat Walton

Sunday Coffee

My thanks to all our faithful servers of coffee and tea who turn out each Sunday to provide refreshment after the 10am Eucharist. The generosity of those who contribute each Sunday has meant that we have been able to donate money to the Spires, the Lent Appeal, Christian Aid and to the Bells appeal.

It has been decided that, in future, a table should be put up at the back of the Church for the children to help themselves to squash and biscuits rather than adding to the scrum in the Narthex. This has worked well so far apart from having to provide endless packets of biscuits. Parents, have you never heard of porridge?

Helen Blakeney

Church Watch

Thanks to the commitment of some members of the congregation, each weekday is now covered for the Church to open for a few hours to provide visitors with the opportunity for private prayer, or just to see inside our Parish Church. The “Monday” team of Church watchers (alias the Streatham Society) seem to draw in more visitors than any other day – I wonder why?! Thanks to Fay and John for their continuing work in the Churchyard – ie when the winter weather has allowed them to go outside. We can always do with other volunteers for this very pleasant “duty” (call Helen, 020 8677 9584). NB The Visitors Book is well worth looking at.

Helen Blakeney

Children’s Society Report

There are now 16 members of the congregation who are long standing box holders and this has raised £252.19 since I have taken over as local secretary. Boxes are emptied in May and November each year, new box holders are welcome.

Sue Heeley

Streatham Churches Carbon Challenge Group

This group was set up after the Carbon Challenge Lent Group in 2008. Nine members took part in quarterly meetings that we held over the last two years.

Meetings usually started with a member leading us in prayer. The main focus of the group was work on continuing to reduce our carbon footprints. Members kept records of their household fuel emissions and their travel. We did quite a lot of insulation work (of roofs, doors and windows), as well as installing double and single glazing, and a wood stove in one house. We also discussed how best to manage fuel in our households – how best to set central heating systems, etc. Between the eleven of us in the households which kept accurate records we only took two return air-flights in a year (both within Britain & Ireland). While there was very little car travel – perhaps inspired by the example of Mandy our rector in giving up her car.

The net result was that our average carbon dioxide emission figure for fuel + transport was 2.25 tonnes per person per year – about one third of the national average. But stewardship of this earth requires us to get that figure down to about one tonne per person, the world over.

Members are now exploring the use of solar heating and signing up with Ecotricity and other 'green fuel' suppliers.

Other activities included:

- A discussion based on Herman Daley's article 'A steady state economy' in the New Scientist – an economy that operates within nature's limits, and strives for producing better quality rather than more. This led us to discuss a range of issues (over one meeting) – from global population to carbon rationing to the dangers of the credit card economy to more communal living; and to very specific practical questions like where can younger people find group activity holidays that don't involve flying.
- Daphne and Mary told us about their visit to the Spittelau power plant in Vienna. Situated at intervals around the city, it uses waste to provide 62,000 homes with electricity. No smoke is emitted from the chimneys and the main building is a spectacular work of art.
- Members have contributed to a variety of other local events – for example Veronique, Oona and Tony have ran carbon footprint measurement stalls for Sustainable Streatham and for Herne Hill Carbon Action Network; Daphne, Mary and Tony helped out with the recent Sustainable Streatham energy fair (held at St Leonard's). A number of us also went to the climate change lecture given by Archbishop Rowan Williams at Southwark Cathedral and to inter-faith climate change service at Westminster Central Hall last December.

In May of last year Tony was asked to take on the co-ordinator role for the Christian Ecology Link 'ecocell' programme - <http://www.christian-ecology.org.uk/ecocells.htm> - a *learning and action programme for local church groups* which covers a similar but wider area than our programme did (- it also includes food, general shopping, waste and water use.) If someone would volunteer to lead and co-ordinate it, this would provide another great opportunity to reach out to other local churches and faiths to take action in this vital area.

Tony Emerson

The Freedom Group

The Freedom Group for folk over retirement age was formed in 2008 and is now well established, with 40+ members on the mailing list and an average attendance of 25-30.

We meet six times a year, and in the past year our programme has included a talk from Fair Trade Chocolate Beans – with Divine Chocolate hand outs – a workshop from Ann Morisy on De-Cluttering, Tom Sutcliffe from General Synod on the debate over Women Bishops, a Christmas Party and Quiz and an outing to Canterbury Cathedral. An outing to St Albans Cathedral and an illustrated talk on Wisley Gardens are coming up. St Leonard's kindly provides us with funds to bring a few members by taxi. We always start with a Eucharist at 12.30, then a light lunch, followed by the activity. Guests of any age are always welcome.

For our extra Advent and Lent Bible studies this year we have been able to use the very warm and comfortable community room at John Kirk House. A good group of 15 or so of us met there. Many thanks for their kindness.

Lisa Wright

Interfaith Group

Although the St Leonard's Group have not been able to organise a meeting this year a few of us have been entertained to lunch and a talk on "The Work of a Magistrate" at the URC in June, and to the Liberal Synagogue in April to hear a speaker describing her travels from "Cordoba to Calcutta". Moira and I attended the induction of Rabbi Janet Darley by Julia Neuberger at Prentis Road Liberal Synagogue in November.

Helen Blakeney

St Leonard's church archivist

The historic highlight of the past year was St. Leonard's celebrations to mark the 300th anniversary of the birth of Dr Samuel Johnson, the famous 18th century author and compiler of the first definitive English dictionary. Between 1766 and 1782 Johnson would often spend the best part of the week in Streatham where he would stay at Streatham Park, the home of his friends Henry and Hester Thrale.

To mark this anniversary the Streatham Society organised a special Johnson Day at St. Leonard's on 12th September which included tours of the church, including visits to the Thrale tomb in the Crypt; A special exhibition on Dr. Johnson and Streatham and a local Johnson Heritage Walk. Over 200 people attended the day which formed part of a programme of national events to mark Johnson's Tricentenary.

Our Johnson celebrations climaxed with a special Johnson service on St. Leonard's Day, November 6th. The evening had an 18th century atmosphere in keeping with the time of Johnson's visits to Streatham, with the church lit by candles and the hymns and parts of the service taken from the Prayer Book which the Thrales and Johnson would have known so well when they worshipped at St. Leonard's in the late 1700s.

At this service we revived one of St. Leonard's ancient customs with the preaching of the Howland Sermon by Canon Jane Steen, Canon of Southwark Cathedral and a noted Johnson scholar, for which she received the traditional payment of 2 guineas (£2.10p).

During the year a tidy up of the Crypt took place by the friends of the Monday Church Watch and all unwanted clutter in the passageways were disposed of and the lights repaired.

A photographic survey of the interior of the bell tower was completed prior to restoration work being undertaken. This included recording numerous items of ancient graffiti carved into the stone work, including that of Edward Denman, who cut his name into one of the window sills in 1774. Aply he was the son of George Denman, the publican of the old Five bells pub which use to stand opposite Streatham Green and was named after the number of Bells which at one time were housed in the tower.

I take this opportunity of extending our thanks to Roy Vickery and members of the South London Botanical Institute for their continuing interest in the flora and fauna in the churchyard. During the past year they have continued their on-going survey of the evolution of the natural history of the graveyard.

In addition. I must acknowledge the hard work of Fay Whiting, of the Monday Church Watch Team, whose work in keeping the weeds at bay and encouraging the plants to bloom in the graveyard helps make it such a pleasant place to visit. During the past year all broken, unidentified gravestone and other debris were gathered together in a single location to enable the grass to be mown without causing damage to the mower and the open drainage ditch around the Chancel was cleared of earth and vegetation and the drains cleared.

For the third year running the portrait of the Madonna and Child, painted by William Dyce (1806-1864), was featured on the Royal Mail's Christmas Stamps. Dyce was churchwarden of St. Leonard's from 1862 until his death in 1864 and is buried in the churchyard.

JOHN W BROWN

Spires

It's a complex journey, the one from street to stability, but it does happen!

That's the message that needs to be consistently given and heard, despite all the difficulties there can be for people to move away from a street based lifestyle, with good support from a range of professional and caring agencies and individuals, it's possible to achieve a more settled lifestyle and leave the chaos of unsafe living and survival arrangements behind.

Homelessness is not a popular subject, let's face it, its never going to be, anyone who is connected in anyway to a charity or agency that helps rough sleepers knows this. Charities like Spires can struggle to achieve the resources necessary to carry on working collaboratively and appropriately with those who ask for help. But somehow the help is offered and lives do change dramatically for the better.

Government policy is important as are dynamic partnerships between the sectors which are charged with the mandate of tackling rough sleeping both locally and nationally.

Helping to rebuild a life that is punctuated with periods of homelessness, repeated contact with the criminal justice system, complex health and addiction problems, and a lack of family and social support, often needs patience, clear thinking and a willingness to try new ways of working. Spires's staff and volunteers rise to the challenge on a daily basis along with their colleagues and partners across London.

We are delighted that during 2009 163 rough sleepers found accommodation as a result of Spires' comprehensive support and referral work, 48 women involved in street based sex work found a safe place to live and 18 accessed drug and alcohol treatment services. 50 young people joined Spires b-inspired volunteer project particularly aimed at encouraging young people who are not in education or training (NEET) to learn from a period of supported volunteering. 10 former Spires clients engaged with our Access to Volunteering programmes of accredited training and have gone on to become volunteers at Spires or other agencies, have found employment or further adult learning opportunities to engage with. Spires's wider adult learning programmes saw 30 complete training courses in I.T, with many individuals finding the confidence and skills to seek employment or more formal college courses.

Spires's staff have offered some fantastic specialist support to hundreds of individuals during the last year. No matter who comes to Spires for advice and help, there is a warm welcome. Staff and volunteers guide individuals through the pathway of necessary supports with calm professionalism and a determination to see a positive outcome for each of their clients. We are more than fortunate to deliver consistent services at Spires that are helping people to live better, more settled lives in the community.

2009 was not Spires most stable financial year and some of our services have been reviewed and changed as a result, but the work continues and will continue well into 2010 and beyond.

It's a complex journey, the one from street to stability, but it does happen.

Amanda Addo
Director