



*St Stephen's Church*

*Annual Parochial Church Report for 2024*

## ***Vicar's Reports***

### *Our relationship with KETRA and the foodbank there*

We support the Kingswood Community through enabling their holiday schemes to use our hall, as well as our congregation making gifts to the foodbank distribution which in fact distributes much more than food.

### *Window front page writing*

The purpose of this piece of writing is to provide people with a 'thought for the week'. It is meant to be formative in the Christian faith (an alternative to or addition to the sermon). It could be something topical (responding to what the media are preoccupied with), it could be something to do with readings or liturgical themes of that particular week or it could be 'drawing our attention to a poem or a picture'. The front page can cope with a length of between 150 and 275 words! It is not a noticeboard for forthcoming events. We normally print about 200 copies and members of the congregation take them home and distribute them to the homebound and/or friends. It is available all week at the church (at the times when it is open for prayer etc) and on notice boards. It is also added into parish correspondence, when appropriate. The FP is also a weekly feature on our parish website under the 'thought for the week', and back copies are available there. In 2024 regular writers included: The Vicar, Heather Savini, Susan Patterson, James Fraser, Lauren George Wood, Tabitha Singh and Revd Stiiv Knowers, retired priest living in Tallinn and sometime Sunday Times preacher of the year. New writer volunteers, please contact the Vicar.

### *CCJ South East London*

St Stephen's is affiliated to the Council of Christians and Jews (CCJ) the oldest interfaith grouping in England that also has local branches. Our local branch is chaired by the Vicar. Branch meetings are held either at St Stephen's or at Bromley Synagogue, or sometimes also at Catford Synagogue. The purpose of CCJ is to model good interfaith relations through friendship and listening together and secondly to honour the memory of the Holocaust through education and calling out racism and prejudice. In 2024 we met to consider "What does the story of Samson in the Book of Judges tell us today?" our speaker was Jules Allin. Another topic was "Ideas about God in Christian and Jewish feminist theology" with our speakers Rev'd Dr Jenny Morgans and Melissa Raphael, Professor Emerita, Jewish Theology, Leo Baeck College. The author Harry Freedman spoke about Shylock's Venice, the fascinating and sometimes disturbing history of the Venice Ghetto, the first in the world, a session we held jointly with Village Books. And we had a visit and guided tour of Southwark Cathedral which houses a CCJ library.

### *German Service*

In 2024 we continued with our new mission initiative at St Stephen's: a service during which the only language used was German. Partly as a response to BREXIT, Germans who live in South London have become more conscious about retaining some of their German heritage for their children. In our part of London there are five German language biased nurseries and one state funded primary school that uses German as a medium language (Judith Kerr School). St Stephen's has started offering a German language church service which is Anglican in character, so that Protestants and Catholics from German speaking countries can feel welcome. The curate from St John's East Dulwich, Revd Gemma Birt (she is now the Vicar of St Clements with St Peters) is part of the ministry team of this initiative. During 2024 one of our services was a Holy Eucharist celebrated from the Anglican rite in German. We also had a German/English Holy baptism.

### *Chinese Dancing with a Mandarin Bible study*

This was a new mission initiative during 2024. Jingmei, a retired Doctor from China, joined our church during the year and she started a weekly Chinese dancing group with other Mandarin speakers which includes a Bible study session. The Vicar as well as Heather Savini have led the Bible study using translation Apps. Some of the members of this group are currently exploring Christianity and are not yet baptised. We now have ten mandarin Bibles at the back of the church!

### *Lent Charity*

The PCC decided to adopt the Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call as our 2024 Lent charity. Members of St Stephen's made contributions to support and raises funds for our sister Diocese of Jerusalem and the work of Palestinian Christians in Israel and Gaza.

### *Schools in our parish and beyond*

During the year we strengthened our ties with all our local schools. Dulwich Wood School came to church three times for a school service which was unusual for a secular state school with a multifaith population. We supported these services with church music and clergy input. In December, just before Christmas, Kingsdale School bring their year sevens and their choir for a carol service, the church is filled with 500 children and teachers! Other schools that have regular services at St Stephen's are Dulwich Prep Senior (four services), where our Vicar acts as chaplain, Dulwich College (seven services) and Sydenham High School (two services). We also host our own Montessori nursery from our church hall for their carol service.

### *Joan Greenwood Memorial Window*

In September 2024 these three windows in memory of our past churchwarden Dr Joan Greenwood were installed. The windows were designed and manufactured by Roland Mitton. They depict birth and midwifery themes from the Bible: the

nativity, the Annunciation and the Visitation, the three trefoils make reference to the Hebrew Midwives Shiphrah and Puah (from Exodus 1) who prevented genocide of Hebrew children by Pharo. In her working life Joan Greenwood was senior midwife and government midwifery advisor. The commissioning committee for this window consists of Christophe Bondy (chair), the Vicar, Madeleine Whitlock, Dulcie Few and Fiona Thomas. The committee was advised by Jenifer Scott, Director of the Dulwich Picture Gallery. The three windows were the last work of Glasgow glass artist Roland Mitton, who sadly died at the end of 2024. Luke Tatam, who handles the faculty application process for the Diocese of Southwark, commented that the process for installing these windows at St Stephen's was exemplary and for that thanks go to Christophe Bondy and Barney Hearndon.

*Bernhard Schunemann*

## ***Church Wardens' Report***

### *Introduction*

You can find elsewhere our fabric report for the past year, but as churchwardens we wanted also to include some more general reflections for the past year.

### *Thanks to the wider church team*

Once again we have been fortunate not only to have Bernhard as our leader and daily inspiration, but also to have many people volunteering to take responsibility for different aspects of church life, and so first and foremost we would like to thank them all for their various contributions. These include in no particular order:

- All the members of the standing committee and PCC, and especially Peter Frost as Treasurer and Michael Stoney as Donations and Gift Aid Officer – together they have kept everything running very smoothly from a financial perspective, culminating in a better financial outcome for the year than we had predicted originally.
- Oliver Lallemand, Caroline Lenton Ward and Tommy Hewitt Jones who have once again led our music activities, including the children's choir which continues to thrive, along with all those choir members and musicians who have participated and brought our services to life – we receive much praise from regular and one-off congregation members for the quality of our music. Thanks also to this core team, assisted by the organ committee, for bringing their enthusiasm to the new organ project – we look forward to the launch of the appeal on 18 May.
- Ruth Cousins (assisted by Peter Benton, Lauren George-Wood, Steven Hicks and James Fraser in particular) has continued to take charge of the church hangings and related matters, notwithstanding the sad passing of her husband Ray, whom we remember with great affection.

- Maria Branchini, Olivia Holmes, Temple Sambo and Anne Lunkuse – along with other helpers – who ensure that we have tea and coffee every week, along with some excellent one-off events such as the annual quiz night.
- All of our servers, readers, sacristans and sides people, who provide invaluable support to Bernhard and contribute so much to the spiritual life of our church.
- Our safeguarding team and Sunday school leaders who make church safe and stimulating for the children in our congregation and teach them the importance of God in our lives.
- Our team of employees and contractors – most notably Sarah in the office, our caretaker Madeleine, and our gardener Adam. Sadly our other caretaker Martin has left us but we are fortunate that Matthew is taking over Martin's duties.
- Felix who has cheerfully continued to do the streaming of services on YouTube.
- Our flower team of Maria, Eleanor, Lucy and Margaret who provide regular and beautiful arrangements.

### *Mission statistics*

Our latest mission statistics, as filed with the central church for the year to December, show that numbers remained roughly level over the past year, as compared with the previous year. It was great to see increased attendances at all our Christmas services, even if the school services were slightly down.

We also filed our annual “articles of enquiry” with the diocese, after which we met with the Archdeacon to review all aspects of church life and had a very constructive discussion. The diocese was apparently very happy with our handling of the faculty application for the stained-glass windows!

### *Use of the buildings*

We have continued to see high levels of usage of the church buildings and facilities over the past year, which contributes to our local community, and generates additional income for our mission. In addition to the nursery, the church hall has been used by the scouts, ballroom dance classes, the drama group Perform, children's holiday clubs, and the usual parties and similar ad hoc bookings. The church itself is also busy with recordings, concerts, Pilates and similar, alongside the role of the church and garden as a place for peaceful retreat and contemplation for anyone who is passing.

### *Church finances*

Our finances are discussed in more detail in the finance report, but overall we are pleased with the outcome for the past year. We incurred significant one-off expenditure on the repairs to the exterior stonework, but this should set us up for a long time to come.

## *Conclusion*

We have greatly enjoyed this past year and hope to continue to fulfil our role as churchwardens in the year to come.

***Barney Hearnden and Eleanor Bracken***  
***Church Wardens***

## ***Fabric report***

- The most exciting event during 2024 was the installation of our new stained glass windows in September. These exceeded expectations in their beauty and impact in their location near our Lady Chapel. The artist Roland Mitton was able to visit in November with his family to see the windows in situ, despite his illness. It was a very moving visit as he knew this would be his final work. We have had publicity in the Bridge, the Dulwich Society magazine and the Picture Gallery newsletter. We moved the Book of Remembrance to the next set of windows, which look directly out onto the war memorial and the area for interring ashes.
- Our quinquennial inspection in 2023 (followed up by further architect inspection during the resulting work on guttering) highlighted the need to repair stonework on the east and west walls, and in particular to provide better support for the stone cross at the apex of the east wall. We tendered the work to three building firms with the help of our architect, Ian Angus of Andy Burrell Architecture, who drafted the specification. We then selected Universal Stone who provided the lowest quote. They went on to do a thorough and professional job, which entailed scaffolding for several months at either end of the church but did not significantly affect the day to day operation of the church and hall. The total cost (including architects' fees but excluding the VAT, which was recoverable) was c.£100k. We met these costs out of our reserves. We can therefore be confident in the state of the building's stonework for the future. We were also able to get the builders to inspect the roof, which suggested that no further work on that is required for the time being, although weather may still cause damage. The builders repaired the driveway to the car park as part of their work.
- We received a grant from the diocese which enabled us to renew the cooker and hob in the hall kitchen and replace the counter and cupboard fronts, during the October half term, making the kitchen much smarter for the nursery and other hall users.
- We engaged a specialist tile repairer to fix some cracked and broken tiles in the church floor near the entrance to the vestry and also near the font.

- I was able to sand, fill and repaint most of the external woodwork around the hall windows during the summer, which was important as these were not in good condition.
- We undertook the usual routine maintenance items such as servicing of our boilers, alarms and fire extinguishers and cleaning out low level gutters.
- We have addressed a number of other miscellaneous matters during the year:
  - We resolved the issue arising from the paint spill from the nursery which damaged the wooden floor in the hall, by agreeing a financial contribution from the nursery towards the renovation of the floor.
  - We now receive quarterly payments to the church for surplus energy generated by our solar panels under the Smart Export Guarantee Scheme.
  - We are receiving a very small amount of additional income by renting out two spaces in the car park.
  - We have maintained the CCTV camera behind the east end of the church to deter anti-social behaviour.
- We maintained a logbook of all work undertaken during the year.
- Otherwise, we maintained revenues from use of the church and hall – in particular, through the nursery; the drama company Perform; Peter’s dance classes; and Sophie’s Pilates. We also derive some income from recording sessions, although this was adversely affected by the building repair.

***Barney Hearnden and Eleanor Bracken***  
***Church Wardens***

## ***Finance Report***

See separate documents

***Peter Frost***  
***Treasurer***

## ***Reader’s Reports***

In 2024, the joint Bible study group of St Stephen’s and St Clement with St Peter continued to meet throughout the year. During the Lent term, the group completed its study of Romans and began exploring the Book of Revelation, which continued through Easter up to the summer break. In the autumn, the group turned to the Gospel of Mark, using a study guide by Professor Amy-Jill Levine. A highlight of the year was her joining the group from the United States for a live Q&A session.

The Dulwich Deanery Synod met three times in 2024: on 17 April at St John’s, 24 July at St Stephen’s, and 27 November at St Clement’s. Revd Anne Clarke (Chair) and Joy Taylor (Lay Chair) presided over these meetings. Bishop Alastair attended the November meeting—his first visit to the deanery as Bishop of Woolwich—

sharing reflections on his personal and ministerial journey. In July, Ven. Carol Coslett, Assistant Director for Lay Ministry, gave a detailed presentation on diocesan support for lay vocations. She outlined various pathways to recognised and licensed lay ministry, and emphasised the importance of affirming informal ministries within local churches. Susan Patterson continues as the deanery lay ministry champion.

Elections to Diocesan Synod were held during the year. Joy Taylor and Susan Patterson remain the lay representatives, with Revd Anne Clarke elected as clergy representative. A motion on Living in Love and Faith, passed by Deanery Synod in May 2023, has yet to be scheduled for debate at Diocesan Synod. Bishop Alastair confirmed it is awaiting review by the presidents of the three synod houses.

Diocesan Synod met on 16 March, 17 July and 16 November. Summaries and full papers are available at

[southwark.anglican.org/about-us/who-we-are/governance-synods/diocesan-synod-papers](https://southwark.anglican.org/about-us/who-we-are/governance-synods/diocesan-synod-papers).

***Susan Patterson  
Reader***

## ***Safeguarding Report***

First, let me introduce, or remind you of our parish's Safeguarding Officers (PSOs). I am Penny Fuller and have been PSO for three years. Laura Thomas joined me in 2024.

We are often in Church on Sunday mornings and can be contacted - By email: [safeguarding@ststephensdulwich.org](mailto:safeguarding@ststephensdulwich.org) or phone me: 07511 734830

We are overseen by Safeguarding advisers at our diocese of Southwark who themselves can be contacted - by email; [safeguarding@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:safeguarding@southwark.anglican.org) or phone 020 7939 9441 between 9am and 4.30pm.

Safeguarding is protection of children, vulnerable adults, or indeed anyone, at risk of abuse, threat, financial or other exploitation, or coercion whether at or away from home.

During 2024 parishioners will have heard of failings by the Church of England in handling serious allegations of abuse by John Smyth QC, who had held positions of authority within the Church. Consequently, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, resigned. His replacement is not expected to be appointed until Autumn this year. Our Churchwarden Barney Hearnden, PCC member Caroline Lenton-Ward and our PSOs have considered the independent Makin report into the Church of England's failings, which makes strong recommendations for improvements in the knowledge, supervision and actions of clergy and officers in the wider Anglican community. Fortunately, no one within our parish has been involved in these failures, and the recommendation would not change safeguarding policies in our

parish, but we will be reporting periodically to parishioners on the steps we take to provide a safe environment and, with the help of parishioners, identify Safeguarding concerns.

Our employees and many of our volunteers know that:

- The diocese provides free online training courses on how to identify and deal with threats of abuse, and, for those with particular responsibility, more demanding personal training (you might note that others in society, such as schoolteachers and many medical staff, follow similar professional safeguarding training);
- The diocese enables us to make criminal records checks (known as dbs checks) when appointing or regularly (three yearly) reviewing our employees and volunteers;
- We follow Church of England guidance on supervision of our activities with children (note that at present we do not have specific activities for vulnerable adults). That's why you will see two senior, trained, and checked representatives of St Stephen's at children's activities, even if there is only one child! I can reassure you that as our minister, Revd Bernhard may give confidential pastoral care without involving any other representative of St Stephen's.

We PSOs urge those we've asked to train, to follow that course, and we ask all our parish community willingly to talk about Safeguarding concerns. We PSOs offer all members of our parish community freedom to talk to us, directly or introduced through others, about their concerns, or just to chat about Safeguarding today.

If anyone has problems with IT or booking a training course or dbs check, please let us know!

Finally, remember that if you suspect that you or anyone is at risk of immediate harm, phone 999.

***Penny Fuller***  
***Safeguarding Officer***

## ***Music Report***

### ***Church Music***

The adult choir stayed strong in 2024. Our soprano and alto choral scholars, who had continued for a second year, left for pastures new in July. A new tenor choral scholar joined us in September (supported by a top-up grant from the Ouseley Church Music Trust). It was wonderful several times to welcome Jill and Jernej to play viola and clarinet in services, adding colour to our musical offering, and we also had other instrumentalists for special occasions: strings for Easter Day; brass for Palm Sunday and the Carol Service. The piano is frequently used for accompanying

in services. The repertoire was regularly added to, including several new anthems and carols. We still look forward in hope to having a wonderful new organ in the future.

### *Concerts, recordings and rehearsals*

The church was again used for a plethora of external musical events in 2024: Charlotte Way, Myriad Choir, SongEasel, Concordia Chamber Choir, Concordium String Ensemble, Dulwich Choral Society, Dulwich Music Academy, and a few pupils' concerts delivered by local instrumental teachers, amongst others. St Stephen's is an important local community centre for activities musical and otherwise, and everyone comments on how well we look after them and the audiences who come to watch the performances. Several recording projects on the new piano took place, which is both a great help to the church finances and a compliment to the quality of our Kawai and the beauty of the church building. These strands of the church's mission are something we should continually strive to encourage by keeping our hire charges reasonable and our welcome warm.

***Oliver Lallement***  
***Director of Music***

### ***The Choristers (Children's Choir)***

The Choristers have continued to flourish in the past year. We now have nearly forty children attending our regular Tuesday evening rehearsal and between fifteen and twenty singing on Sunday mornings. They are singing an anthem of their own for every service as well as joining the adult choir for other items.

This year saw their second You Tube and Spotify hit as they recorded Homeward Light, which was written especially for them by Thomas Hewitt Jones. In May they sang a full Choral Evensong, which was a huge achievement for a young choir. One of our choristers was awarded a place as a chorister in the newly formed girls' choir at St Pauls Cathedral, and one appeared on stage with the Royal Opera at Covent Garden, and we are immensely proud of their achievements. The choristers are working on the RSCM Voices for Life awards, which provides both musical and liturgical education, leading to medals and ribbons for each level. We now have three light blue-ribbon wearers as well as two dark blue which is a higher level. We have two head choristers and two deputy head choristers.

Many families now regularly worship at St. Stephen's since their children joined the choir. The children (and parents) have become an extraordinarily dedicated team and work together in an absolutely wonderful way. The parents have their own Whatsapp group, and this year have organised parties for the choristers at the end of terms as well as a successful parish picnic in Dulwich Park. It is an absolute privilege and joy to be able to work with this group of young singers and I am very

optimistic for even more success in the coming year, as well as knowing we are encouraging the next generation of musicians and church goers.

*Caroline Lenton-Ward  
Chorister Tutor*

## ***Organ Committee***

The organ committee have continued to work extremely hard in the background for the past year. They have produced an initial brochure outlining the plans for the organ, as well as further publicity material, and have been approaching possible donors and sponsors and have secured pledges of just over £250,000 so far which is a great place to start from as they plan to open up the project to the wider community with an open afternoon in May 2025 which is now being planned and which will be launched by our Patron Sir Andrew Parmley CEO Royal College of Organists.

It is an extremely exciting once in a lifetime project and one that needs team effort to achieve. I am incredibly grateful to all those on the organ committee and music team for the huge amount of work that has gone on in the past year.

If anyone is interested in helping with fundraising, which is the next major step, please do talk to us and help make this a truly community project.

*Caroline Lenton-Ward  
Chair, Organ Committee*

## ***Young Musician of the Year***

The Young Musician of the Year was held in March 2024. We received a record number of entries for both Junior and Senior Categories. The competition is a chance for young players to perform in a very safe environment as well as the possibility of winning. The young people are always incredibly supportive of each other, and it is lovely to see the church full of young musicians and their families from the local community.

In 2024 the Senior winner was Etty Ashton - harpist who has played for us at church a number of times this year and is now a music scholar at Wells Cathedral school. The Junior winner was Bethan Sarkar- violinist, who has also played for us, and the audience prize was awarded to Seren Stott Thomas, who is one of our Head Choristers.

*Caroline Lenton-Ward  
Organiser Young Musician Competition.*

## ***Youth and Children's Work Report***

I hope the following presents some of the developments of my role as Youth and Children's Minister, as it relates to Sunday school and other initiatives, I am

involved in, aimed at enhancing our community engagement and spiritual development of the children and young people.

I am pleased to say that we have, what I would call, a thriving, lively Sunday school offering. Personally I have been expanding my skills too, through targeted training, actively participating in youth and children's development, and fostering leadership within our community.

The training has also strengthened my understanding of safeguarding policies and best practices, enabling me to contribute more effectively to creating a secure environment for our young members.

One of the key areas of my professional growth has been completing a number of safeguarding courses. In addition I have taken advantage of lay minister training offered by the diocese.

In addition, I have undergone Diocesan youth and children's development work training, which has enhanced my ability to design engaging and meaningful programs tailored to different age groups.

Whilst volunteers have been a bit reluctant, I really appreciate the efforts of safeguarding lead and volunteer Sunday school teacher; Penny.

Together we have developed an engaging environment/class with attention to detail and other vital skills to ensure the safety and well-being of all the children involved in our activities.

This has also allowed me to create a more inclusive and supportive space for young people, encouraging their spiritual growth and personal development.

Recognising the importance of providing a dedicated environment for teenagers, I am pleased to announce that they themselves, have established a unique class/space specifically for this age group.

Under the guidance of long-time volunteer Angela as well as church warden Barney, this initiative offers teens a safe and welcoming environment to explore their faith, discuss current issues, and build peer relationships.

Apart from a number of the older children occasionally wishing to get back involved in our regular sessions, The feedback for this split has been positive, and I believe this space is vital in supporting all our regular's ongoing faith journey.

I have encouraged some of our older kids to take on more active roles within our church. This has included mentoring younger members, assisting in youth activities, and participating in decision-making processes.

Such involvement not only empowers our older members but also strengthens the overall cohesion and vitality of our community.

Our regular classes have proved quite popular as we seek to encourage connection between Bible study, school and family and even current affairs, aiming to make our faith discussions more relevant and engaging.

The sharing of snacks and other edible treats has been stopped as a safeguarding risk

The football team I run on Saturday mornings is a valuable community outreach activity.

By being a Saturday provision the idea is to encourage Christian kids to enjoy competitive football on Saturdays thereby allowing them to commit their Sundays to church.

With the support of the minister I have applied to the diocese as well as other fundraising activities for help to take on the responsibility of hosting a new football league competition, which will lead to the growth of our church involvement in our local teams.

Focusing our provision on secondary school age children 11-16, this initiative promotes team spirit, physical activity, and community bonding, providing a positive outlet for members of all ages.

In summary, this past year has been marked by continuous learning, active community involvement, and the development of programs that promote safety, leadership, spiritual growth, and community cohesion.

I am committed to building on this progress and exploring new opportunities to serve our community and promote our faith.

***Richard Sontan***  
***Youth and Children's worker***

## ***Sidespeople***

We are very grateful to our sidespeople who cover both the 8am and the 10am services as well as occasional special services. Sidespeople work at the 'sharp end' of the life of St Stephen's. They are the first people that members of our congregation meet when they come to Stephen's for a service. It is very important that we make everyone feel welcome, especially those who are new to our congregation.

As well as giving out service sheets and books, the sidespeople deal with the collection and any special needs or questions that people entering the church may have. Increasingly sidespeople also have a safety and security function, keeping the congregation safe during worship.

We are always keen to add more individuals to our rota, so please contact one of us if you are interested in helping.

***Ovidiu Precup Head Sidesperson and Eleanor Bracken (8 o'clock)***

## ***Social Committee Report***

Members of the Committee: Olivia Holmes, Maria Branchini

Ex-officio members: Heather Savini, Temple Sambo, Sarah Bucknall

During the past year the Committee organised various social and fundraising events. We held a pancake supper on Shrove Tuesday, 13th February, which was fun although not so well attended as in the past. We provided refreshments for the Young Musicians Competition on 17th March, which is always a wonderful occasion. On 28th March we catered for the Maundy Thursday parish supper (which is part of the service) and were grateful to those who donated soup for this important evening.

On 31st July Maria organised a coffee morning in the hall which was enjoyed by the mostly older people who came, and we hope to repeat this another time. Following the Harvest Festival service on 6th October we held a Bring and Share lunch and members of the congregation brought all sorts of interesting and delicious dishes to share.

A barn dance was arranged in the hall on 25th October, with an excellent caller and an accordionist. Sadly turn out for this event was rather poor (with only one brave child!), perhaps because it was half term. We'll have to think about alternative timings but it depends on the musicians' availability.

The Quiz Night plus fish & chip supper on 16th November was the usual huge success, and competition was fierce! Steven Hicks returned as our Quizmaster and did a great job once again. We were pleased to make a profit of £351.40 for church funds. Our other main fundraiser was the Christmas Sale, held on Sunday 8th December after the 10o'clock service. Many people generously gave items for the sale and bargains were snapped up by the buyers. We raised a total of £539.49.

We are most grateful to everyone who has helped and supported the Committee throughout the year, especially Heather, Temple and Sarah, also Sandra Potter and Gina and Barney Hearnden. New members are always welcome! Speak to Olivia or Maria.

***Olivia Holmes & Maria Branchini***  
***Social Committee***

## ***Sacristan's Report***

The Vicar appointed me as sacristan in 2023. I was able to continue in that capacity until I went off to the Anglican church in Vienna in September 2024 on the ministry experience scheme (MES). In my role as sacristan, I learnt about and was responsible for preparing the church for services and keeping my eye on sanctuary supplies. Ruth Cousins taught me about the care of the altar linen and the use of liturgical colours.

***Lauren Green-Wood***

## ***Textile Report***

Ruth Cousins retired from being in charge of all our textiles during 2024. Some of her many tasks have been redistributed, but we are still looking for people to help especially with the liturgical colour changes and the laundering of the large altar linen. During the year Ruth Cousins stepped in to help us at crucial times during the year.

***Bernhard Schunemann***

## ***Millennium hall and Church Bookings Report***

Over the last year we continue to have an increased number of bookings in the hall and the church. Children's parties here are becoming more popular here again and we have three or four month, we have also had one or two baby showers and grown-up birthday lunches. Peter's Dance Club has a tea dance every other month.

Regular users of the hall continue to be Peter's Dance Club on 3 evenings, Cubs on Thursday and Perform classes Saturday mornings. The Dulwich Montessori Nursery School continues to use the hall during the day in term time.

We now have two fairly regular people booking the church for music recordings where they bring along several clients in a day for music audition videos – this is providing a fairly steady income stream.

We also have Sophie's Pilates holding 5 sessions a week at the back of the church.

***Sarah Bucknall***

***Parish Secretary and Hall Manager***

## ***Church Decoration***

Using fresh flowers is the main feature when decorating our church.

Over Easter and Christmas we arranged a huge floral display to spread over the baptismal font and two more arrangements with one next to the pulpit and the other in the church entrance.

For Mothering Sunday we decorated the church with daffodils and tulips and had enough for every mum and all the ladies who came to the service.

Apart from a floral arrangement for every ordinary Sunday, we also undertook to provide an arrangement for the six weddings last year. During Harvest Festival, in addition to the seasonal flowers we also included a display of local and homegrown produce.

On Remembrance Sunday we commemorated the solemnity of the service by using red silk poppies interspersed with green laurel leaves.

We are a small team maintaining the flower rota and would like to hear from anyone who is interested to join us.

***Team members: Maria Branchini, Eleanor Bracken, Madeleine Whitlock***

