

**The Benefice of St Mary with St Peter and St Jude
West Brompton**

Deanery of Chelsea

Diocese of London

**The Parish Church of
St. Mary The Boltons**

Annual Report

2006

(1 January - 31 December)

Prepared for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
on Thursday 19th April 2007
at 7.45pm in the Church

Parish Information & Statistics

Address

The Parish Office,
St. Mary's Church House,
The Boltons,
London SW10 9TB
020 7835 1440 Fax 020 7370 6562
www.stmarytheboltons.org.uk

Priest in Charge

The Revd Ginny Thomas

Parish Officers and Elected Representatives

Churchwardens

Mr Arthur Tait
Mr Mark Nichols

Members of the Parochial Church Council

The Revd Ginny Thomas (Chair), Mr Frederick Batt, Mrs June Brudenell, Mr Grahame Challen, Mrs Deborah Challinor, Mr William Gallagher (Assistant Treasurer), Miss Margarete Geier (Deanery Synod Representative), Miss Joanna Hackett (PCC Secretary), Mr Paul Hauff, Mr Mark Nichols, Mrs Carolyn O'Driscoll, Mrs Heather Richards, Mrs Maureen Stainton, Mrs Susie Stamford, Miss Carolyn Stubbs (PCC Treasurer, & Assistant Treasurer to the Redcliffe Gardens Trust), Mr Arthur Tait (Deanery Synod Representative).

Secretary to the Parochial Church Council

Miss Joanna Hackett

Stewardship Recorder

Mr John Barker

Children's Advocate

Ms Verena Tschudin

Professional Support

Bankers

Barclays Bank PLC, Kensington & Chelsea Group,
PO Box 469, London SW7 4SU

Independent Financial Examiner

& Reporting Accountant to the Redcliffe Gardens Trust
Mrs Vicky Grazebrook,

Inspecting Architect

Mr Michael Staff, Nye Saunders John Deal Practice,
3 Church Street, Godalming, Surrey GU17 1EQ

Insurers

Ecclesiastical Insurance Group,
Beaufort House, Brunswick Road, Gloucester GL1 1JZ

Legal Advisers

Lee Bolton & Lee, 1 The Sanctuary, London SW1P 3JT

Payroll Facilities

Vantis, The White Cottage, 19 West Street, Epsom, Surrey KT18 7BS

Property Management

Stanley Hicks Chartered Surveyors, 52 Bow Lane, London EC4M 9ET

Number on the Electoral Roll 246

Statistics

Communions 2006 (2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001)

Easter 134 (109,140,140, 142, 111, 146,)
Christmas Midnight 94 (95, 80,106, 106, 123, 97)
Christmas Morning 113 (162, 175, 108, 101, 100, 98)
Sunday Average 102 (84, 81, 81, 80, 75, 75,)

Average Sunday Morning Attendance Including Children
2006 128 (2005 116 2004 106)

Occasional Offices 2006 (2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001, 2000)

Baptisms 41 (46, 40, 29, 28, 24, 30)
Confirmations 7 (3, 3, 0, 5, 5, 1)
Weddings 15 (12, 6, 13, 7, 3, 6)
Blessing of Marriage after a Civil Ceremony 2 (2, 1, 1, 1, 0, 4)
Funerals in Church 8 (4, 15, 4, 4, 10, 5)
Memorial Services 0 (0, 3, 3, 2, 0, 3)
Teen Events 0 (2, 1)

Priest in Charge's Report on the Progress of the Parish and the Work of the Parochial Church Council and its Committees

The year proved to be another one of change for St. Mary's.

As indicated in my report last year, Carole Sharpe, St. Mary's vergier for eight years, left at the end of February to seek acceptance to join the Order of the Holy Paraclete in Whitby. With the PCC's agreement it was decided to split Carole's responsibilities into two separate categories; parish administrator and caretaker/building administrator thereby giving greater definition and clarity to the responsibilities and work involved.

In March we appointed a caretaker/building administrator. Sadly, this did not work out and the postholder left St. Mary's in the summer. We were not able to fill the position until the end of October when David Ireton joined us as

verger/caretaker. I'm pleased to report that this has been a good appointment and David settled in quickly to his duties.

In the intervening period many people helped with keeping the church in good order and I am especially grateful to the wardens – Mark Nichols and Arthur Tait – and to Trent Jardine and Spasko Mitreski, who undertook the cleaning and some caretaking duties, and Margarete Geier and Audrey Pine who helped in numerous ways.

Rose Wrigley joined us as Parish Administrator in the middle of February, a part time position. Previously Rose had worked in a similar position at St. Jude's Courtfield Gardens, and it has proved beneficial to have her knowledge of St. Jude's parish in the light of our merger with that parish.

The formal merger with St. Jude's parish took place on 1st July, and I was licensed by the Bishop of Kensington as priest-in-charge of St. Mary with St. Peter and St. Jude, West Brompton, the new official name of the parish. The parish is now almost double in size (although slowly it is returning to the size it was when the church was first built, before St. Peter's and St. Jude's were built and became separate parishes).

A financial campaign, the first for three years, was held in early spring. I am very grateful to the committee which worked hard to organise it and made it such a success: Arthur Tait, Ann Tait, John Barker, Deborah Challinor, Sheila Gibbs, Mark Nichols, and Louise Vincent. As part of the campaign two supper evenings were held in the church hall and members of the committee spoke at the main Sunday services.

For a number of years it has been a tradition at St. Mary's to go on a pilgrimage holiday every other year and 2006 was again a pilgrimage year. In May a group of parishioners and friends went on a pilgrimage to Durham and the north east. The pilgrimage had been expertly organised by Sheila Gibbs. We stayed at Ushaw College just outside Durham and made day trips to Durham, where on Sunday morning we attended services in the cathedral, Lindisfarne, Whitby abbey, Bede's world, and Lastingham and places *en route*. In spite of the weather – cold, wet and windy – we had a very enjoyable and rewarding time, learning about Celtic Christianity and spirituality.

For the first time in some time, St. Mary's hosted an Archdeacon's visitation for the induction of wardens in the Kensington Area. It was a pleasure to welcome

the new Archdeacon for Middlesex the Venerable Stephan Welch to St. Mary's and the many wardens and PCC members who attended. After the service a reception was held in the church hall and many thanks to all who helped prepare and serve the refreshments.

After attending confirmation classes, seven members of St. Mary's were confirmed at St. Paul's cathedral on 4th November: Mark Nichols, Matthew Brown, Kishara Hallock, Emma Nichols, Sophie Dodd, Isabella Colocci and Thomas Colocci.

During the year the parish choir continued to improve and now sings twice a month. I am very grateful to Graham Caldbeck for his continuing commitment to St. Mary's and for the excellent music which is such an important part of our worship. In October a group from St. Mary's attended Graham's 10th anniversary concert as Musical Director of the Nonsuch Singers in St. John's, Smith Square; it was a very enjoyable and memorable occasion.

Towards the end of the year the PCC began to explore ways in which members of St. Mary's might reach out into the community. Contacts were made with St. Cuthbert and St. Matthias School, Warwick Road which are to be developed in 2007. Under the leadership of Margarete Geier members of the parish cooked and served lunch on Boxing Day for approximately 120 guests at the Earl's Court Community Project in Courtfield Gardens. Sheila Peers and parish members also cooked a Christmas meal for the Community and its guests on 22nd December.

2006 was another busy year for St. Mary's with many weddings and baptisms in addition to our regular services. It was a pleasure to welcome new members to St. Mary's and sad to say goodbye to those who moved away.

I hope that in the coming year we will continue to be challenged in living out our faith in this part of London and that we will both enjoy the challenge and encourage others in it.

My thanks to everyone who has contributed to our life together this year. It's been another good year for St. Mary's and however small or great your contribution is, it is important: St. Mary's would not be the same without you.

Ginny Thomas

Worship and Occasional Offices

The Sunday service and Wednesday Eucharist pattern remained unchanged throughout the year.

Many people make the worship special and Ginny would like to thank the following in particular:

The Servers Sylvia Gregory, Rohan Khomat, Janet Mundy.

Chalice Assistants Richard Brudenell, Venice Cedras, Leo Fraser-Mackenzie, Sheila Gibbs, Sylvia Gregory, Audrey Pine, Arthur Tait and Verena Tschudin.

Readers and Sidespersons John Barker, Hugh Beach, Philip Bedford Smith, Fiona Brown, Richard Brudenell, Grahame Challen, Elizabeth Davson, Michael Farr, Leo Fraser-Mackenzie, Bill Gallagher, Anne Garten, Sheila Gibbs, Betty Greenland, Malcolm Gregory, Elizabeth Lake, Elizabeth Lowry-Corry, Martin Murphy, Mark and Susan Nichols, Dorothy Patrick, Sheila Peers, Audrey Pine, Boo Simpson, Anthea Smith, Samantha Smith, Anne Swift, Ann and Arthur Tait, Patrick Thomas, Verena Tschudin

Intercessors Linda Fleming, Leo Fraser-Mackenzie, Anne Garten, Audrey Pine, Anthea Smith, Ann Tait, Iona Thomas, Verena Tschudin

Rotas Betty Greenland, Dorothy Patrick, Malcolm Gregory.

Sunday Service Sheet Betty Greenland.

The Parochial Church Council

During the year the PCC met five times in regular meetings and the standing committee met as required. The PCC fully co-operated with the priest-in-charge in promoting within the parish the whole mission of the church: pastoral, evangelical, social and ecumenical as required under the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956.

At the APCM in April Anthea Smith (the deanery synod representative), Michael Farr, Charles Booth-Clibborn and Margaret de Mare stood down from the PCC. Margarete Geier, Carolyn O'Driscoll and Deborah Challinor were

voted to replace them. Later in the year Martyn Murphy handed in his resignation as PCC member due to pressure of work. Freddie Batt joined the PCC to take up a vacant place. Joanna Hackett became the PCC secretary.

At the APCM Linda Fleming stood down as church warden and Mark Nichols was voted to replace her. Arthur Tait was voted to serve a second year as warden.

Sunday School and Youth Group

Despite a few changes, we have managed to maintain the numbers at Sunday School at between 25 to 35 children, with the occasional sessions reaching 40. Unfortunately we have seen some of the older children move on, although most still keep the connection with the church by becoming acolytes. We are very conscious of not having enough to engage them; we encourage them to help with the little ones and we hope to re-commence the Youth Workshop evenings, which were very popular.

We had a successful stand at the Summer Fair this year that kept many of the children happy; the main attraction being the nail bar, which had, at times, up to ten children queuing. We will definitely be doing this again in 2007 and will be introducing a few more new fun ideas.

We changed the Nativity play format this year, which the children enjoyed immensely and the feedback from the congregation was very positive. There were a lot of songs in the new version, which was a challenge. However if we continue with the musical support we will be able to tackle something more adventurous and fun for the children next December.

We still have several very enthusiastic mothers who attend on a regular basis and who understand how Sunday School runs so they are a great help, particularly when the numbers are high. They offer invaluable support and make the running of Sunday School easier. Deborah Challinor and Jane Dass are gradually taking classes with the help of Linda and me. We are hoping that Deborah and Jane will gradually take over the running of Sunday School next year, and we hope a third person will be enlisted to take the role of Sunday School Co-ordinator. We are still looking for someone to fill this role.

Our only concerns, as Sara has moved on and Linda and I are moving in the early part of 2007, are that the numbers may dwindle. We are endeavouring to

keep Sunday School as fun and interesting as possible and hopefully we are still getting 'the message' across. We are very lucky to have a growing contingent of willing 'Mums' and 'Dads' and also to have such delightful well-behaved children who make our task that much easier.

Susie Stamford

Music

2006 has seen both a strengthening and diversification of music at St Mary's. A more regular contribution from the Parish Choir has been made since Easter, and it has performed on some sixteen occasions in all (seven more than in 2005), rehearsing either on the preceding Friday evening and for 25 minutes before the service on the day, or just for 45 minutes before the service. A number of new regular (and occasional) singers have joined the ranks and, in particular, Leo and Patrick deserve thanks for their enthusiastic, coffee-fuelled promotion of the choir to newcomers and longstanding members of the congregation alike, following the Parish Eucharist. This has already yielded a number of new members. The schedule of rehearsals and services for the whole year was published well in advance and a wide variety of music has been performed, ranging from plainsong to recently composed music. Choir members have continued to work hard, with increasingly successful results. Running the choir is, of course, not without its difficulties, in terms of achieving regular attendance (a relatively small choir is very vulnerable to illness, unavoidable absence etc) and repertoire (with no tenors, the suitable repertoire is somewhat restricted). However, some very pleasing performances have been given and the *esprit de corps* is buoyant.

I am grateful to a number of people for their assistance: to Ginny for her thoughtful attention to music within the liturgy; to the Cantors in the psalms – Audrey Pine, Leo Fraser-Mackenzie, Malcolm Gregory and Samantha Smith, for their singing week-by-week; to Rose Wrigley, for all her help in a wide range of matters, including arranging organ and piano tuning, producing service sheets and material for the choir, to David Ireton for his support and help, to the Sunday School for their contributions to All-Age Worship and to the members of the Parish Choir for their performances.

A wider range of newer hymns and religious songs has been introduced during the year, particularly at the opening and closing of services when the children are present. Plans are afoot for a careful sifting of a short list of newer music by

a small group, prior to introducing some of these to into our services. The recent involvement of Jade-Sophia Young to help to strengthen and develop musical activity within the Sunday School is encouraging, and we look forward to the children's continuing contribution to our worship in the future.

The church has continued to invite professional singers and instrumentalists to perform for major Festivals, Holy Week, special services, and so on. In addition, I regularly book professional musicians to perform at weddings, funerals and memorial services. This is an important side of the musical activity of the church, although perhaps one that is somewhat hidden to many members of the congregation. Such services bring many people into the church, some of whom subsequently retain an association here – not only the congregations, but also the visiting musicians. During 2006 professional musicians from outside the church have contributed to nine services, beyond those professional choirs arranged to perform at weddings, funerals and memorial services – around twenty in number this year. A wide variety of music has been performed by a number of highly gifted performers and it is perhaps worth taking the opportunity again this year of providing some detail.

Music featured strongly during Holy Week. On Palm Sunday Owen Willetts *countertenor* sang *He was despised* from Handel's *Messiah* and the *Agnus Dei* from Bach's *Mass in B Minor*. Owen is an outstanding student from the Royal Academy of Music who has sung in the London Handel Festival and with Sir John Eliot Gardiner's Monteverdi Choir. On Maundy Thursday, Richard Fallas *bass*, who sings regularly with the BBC Singers, sang *Gladly would I take upon me* from Bach's *St Matthew Passion* and *Love bade me welcome* from Vaughan Williams' *Five Mystical Songs*. On Good Friday four short organ works by Bach were used as the musical meditations within the service (at short notice when the CD player refused to function – Ginny had been intending to play extracts from James MacMillan's *Seven Last Words from the Cross*). On Easter Saturday the *Exultet* was movingly sung by Malcolm Banham *tenor*, a regular performer at St Mary's. Bach's music was also included in our Easter Day celebrations when *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen* (from Cantata BWV 51) was performed by the soprano Ana-Maria Rincon, with trumpeter Steven Keogh. Elsewhere in the service Mozart's *Alleluia* from *Exsultate, jubilate* K165 was performed, and the service concluded with Handel's rousing *Overture and Hornpipe* from the *Water Music Suite in D*. Both Ana Maria and Steven have been regular performers at St Mary's for many years and it has been good to continue this close association.

On Remembrance Sunday, the highly gifted young Scottish oboist, Michael O'Donnell, performed the *Largo* from Bach's *Concerto in G Minor BWV 1056*,

Marcello's *Sonata no. 6*, Hamilton Harty's *Chansonette* and *Yanada* by the contemporary Australian composer, Ross Edwards.

At the Carol Service on 17 December, the musical focus was on UK composers of the 20th and 21st centuries, and popular carols by Richard Rodney Bennett, John Joubert, John Rutter, John Tavener and David Willcocks were included. The service was introduced by Judith Weir's moving setting of the Advent Prose, *Drop down, ye heavens, from above*. The excellent professional octet sang very well indeed and, as for the last two years, Richard Pearce was the talented organist, performing works by Bach and Elgar at the end of the service. Richard is a former Organ Scholar at Trinity College, Cambridge and plays regularly for the BBC Singers and at St. Margaret's, Westminster, as well as being a professor at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama. Carols by Terry, Warlock and John Rutter were sung by a professional choir at the Midnight Mass and Steven Keogh trumpet performed Albinoni's *Adagio* before the service and some celebratory Handel afterwards. Our celebrations on Christmas Day proper were heralded in by Ana-Maria Rincon singing Handel's *Rejoice Greatly* from *Messiah* and Caccini's *Ave Maria*.

Members of the congregation are generally very interested and supportive of the music at St Mary's, taking a keen interest in the organ voluntaries and the solo and choral performances. I am very grateful to the six talented organists who have deputised for me when I have been away at various times during the year – Ben Bayle, Ian Curror, Simon Gibson, David Patrick, Richard Pearce and Richard Shepperson.

On 11 November a party of members of the congregation came to hear Nonsuch Singers, the London chamber choir that I conduct, and London Primavera performing Stravinsky's *Mass*, Britten's *Cantata Misericordium* and Mozart's *Mass in C Minor* at St. John's, Smith Square. Members of the congregation have also regularly attended other concerts given by the choir elsewhere in London during the year, including a concert in St Luke's, Chelsea in March. I am grateful to Ginny for allowing me to hold auditions for the choir in church, from time to time. A number of singers and instrumentalists who work with me in outside concerts have also now performed in the church and this interconnection is a useful one.

So, all in all, 2006 was a good year for music at the church – there is a solid foundation on which to build for the future.

Graham Caldbeck - Director of Music

The Flower Guild

Once again I seem to be writing a rather similar report to many previous years. I hope it doesn't become all too boring!

We had seventeen weddings last year, and many baptisms when we decorated the font, and we also did flowers for funerals.

Together with the festivals this created quite a lot of work. I am most grateful for all the support I receive from the "flower ladies". Anita Dowbiggin does sterling work organising all the helpers for the various events. This includes people who sweep up as well as arrangers. She, of course, is also a principal arranger. My thanks go out to Venice Cedras, Josephine Crickmay, Elizabeth Lake, Davina Ratanava, Mandy Renton, Doreen Santana and Pauline Stephens for all their hard work and enthusiasm. Margarete Geier has also been a great help on occasions by going to Covent Garden to collect the flowers.

As you know the money we raise from weddings, funerals, baptisms etc. goes to pay for the Church flowers throughout the year. The PCC does give us £100, but that does not go very far. In 2006 we spent the following:

Church garden	341.67
Christmas trees	246.00
Church flowers	134.00
Mothering Sunday	65.00
Easter	113.25
<i>(over and above the collection)</i>	
Harvest Festival	31.00
<i>(the same)</i>	
Christmas	<u>117.13</u>
Total	<u>£1,048.05</u>

Money also has to be spent on oasis and new bowls, pew posy holders etc.

We started the year with £5,280.00 in the account, and after spending the above ended with £6,483.00. After consultation with Anita, we would like to pass on £2,000.00 to the PCC to buy something special.

There is one more person to thank – David our verger. He has been most helpful and encouraging since joining us and I am most grateful.

Boo Simpson

Prayer Network

I have been coordinating the Prayer Network since Carole left. Requests come from many different sources. There are still about 20 people, all parishioners, who form the Network and receive updates, news and information on a regular basis. The list usually has about 80 people on it.

The distribution of news and information is either by e-mail to those with that facility, or by letter, usually handed out on Sundays, to all the others. A monthly Bulletin is also distributed to everyone, which has all the updates in it. The people on the list are also prayed for in Church at Morning and Evening Prayers, and a rota of about 8-10 people are included in the Sunday intercessions.

One new person has joined the Prayer Network recently, aware that as he is getting older, he has more time to pray. While intercession is by no means only a task for older people, it is something that older people often like to do as a specific service to the Church community when other practical tasks become more difficult.

Anyone can refer anyone to the Prayer Network; what is helpful is that changes are also notified.

Verena Tschudin

Groups

Mothers and Toddlers Group on Monday Mornings in Term Time

The Mothers and Toddlers Group continues to thrive. We have made a few changes over the year:

- Shared leadership of Monday morning tasks. Three other mothers / carers are regularly volunteering to take sessions
- We have actively recommended a £1 per child donation, which has enabled the group to regularly collect between £8 - £13 per week

We plan to purchase some new toys that will be more suitable to the upper age range of children, such as fancy dresses and Aquadraw mats – both of which will be very compact as to fit into limited cupboard space.

As discussed with Ginny, I will be completing my participation with the Mothers and Toddlers Group at the end of the spring term in 2007, as my daughter will be at full-time school. I am now working to create a team of 4 or 5 mothers to continue the playgroup.

The group continues to be very popular and well-regarded within the community. It is a pleasure to be part of it!

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Ann Magalhaes

Bible Study Group

The Bible Study Group has been meeting fortnightly throughout the year during 'term time' and we have a regular number of eight, and maximum of ten people. Next year we hope to start studying "Luke for Everyone" by Tom Wright.

We would be delighted to welcome new members: please contact Grahame Challen on 020 8222 8394.

Grahame Challen

Lent and Advent Groups

The Lent programme this year was entitled 'World Religions: living in a multi-faith society'. There was a speaker for each of four major world religions and we were delighted to welcome Mr. Jay Lakhani to speak on Hinduism, Iman Sadeq Hansali to speak on Islam, Mrs. Selma Shrank to speak on Judaism and the Venerable Bandula to speak on Buddhism. For the final week a talk was given on world religions from an Anglican perspective by the Revd. Anthony Ball, assistant secretary for International, Ecumenical and Anglican Communion

Affairs. The series proved to be interesting and informative and was well attended.

For Lent the Bible study group studied the account of the Passion found in St. Mark's Gospel and during the week 'A Time for Prayer' was offered in St. Luke's chapel.

The title of the Advent series was 'The Blessed Virgin Mary in Theology, Art and Music'. The first talk entitled 'Why Mary?' was given by the Revd. Nicola Stanley, vicar of All Hallows, Twickenham, and explored the role of Mary in the Bible, in theology and the traditions of the church.

Katherine Martin, who has been a curator and educator at Apsley House (part of the Victoria and Albert Museum) gave an illustrated talk the following week on The Virgin Mary in 14th and 15th century art. The short series finished with a presentation by Graham Caldbeck, St. Mary's Director of Music, entitled 'Ave Maria: music honouring the Blessed Virgin Mary throughout the Ages'. The series was well attended and very enjoyable.

Ginny Thomas

Monthly Simple Lunches

Attendance has again increased over the year, with an average of 20 people each time. We have enjoyed a wide range of talented speakers, all of whom have been parishioners. They chose a diverse range of topics.

The purchase of a quick cycle dishwasher has, with David's constant help, greatly facilitated the clearing up process. Though we have made little money, we have managed to break even financially.

We are grateful to all the speakers, those who have helped us, and those who support us by attending. Special thanks to Margarete Geier who has, at times, stood in for us.

June Brudenell , Ann Tait and Arthur Tait

Traidcraft Stall

The Traidcraft Stall continues to be well supported by the congregation of St. Mary's. This year, £1.027.22 worth of goods from producers in developing countries has been sold on the stall.

New ranges of coffee, both fresh and instant, are being tried; Redbush, Jasmine and Masala Chai tea are proving popular, as are the new 'healthy food' initiatives - organically produced dried produce in 'healthy snacks' - like spicy plantain chips, tropical fruit mix, etc.; although it has to be said, chocolate is still the key seller – made in Belgium, sourced from Ghana. Traidcraft honey, from Apicoop women's Co-op in Valdivia, Chile, is popular; and recently, there has been added an African honey, which connoisseurs may note, has a slightly smoky taste, from Zambia.

The opportunity to taste Traidcraft wine did not happen this year, but is scheduled for 2007. Some of you will be discovering it already on supermarket shelves; principally Waitrose. As fairtrade goods acquire an acceptability and kudos not apparent when Traidcraft was first set up (in 1979), it's good to know that we are still 'doing our bit' at Traidcraft by guaranteeing that we can actually trace our fairly-traded goods all the way from producers known to us, to the consumers (you!), which is not always the case with other sourcing of this type of goods.

Our thanks are due to other volunteers: Grahame Challen, Bill Gallagher, Elizabeth Graham, Liz Lake and Oriel Robinson, who have helped Dorothy Patrick and myself with selling, counting cash and packing up.

Unfortunately, Dorothy, while remaining active in setting up and administration of the stall, no longer feels able to continue selling produce, so volunteers to do that (calculator available!) will be welcome. Several folk, able to commit to perhaps one month per year each, would be ideal. Without support with selling, the stall will have to take place bi-monthly.

We are grateful to Ginny for her support of this 'outreach' by St. Mary's, and to our verger Dave Ireton, for taking in parcels, helping set up, and for his good-humoured, practical suggestions.

Mary-Gabrielle Blanchet

Communications

The Clarion and the Sunday service sheet continue to provide information. Many thanks to Elizabeth Graham and Betty Greenland who turn up faithfully each week to fold and stuff!

The Clarion

The Clarion is available in Church on every last Sunday before the next month (e.g. the March issue is available on 25 February) and is also sent to many people in the UK and far away who want to keep in touch with what is happening at St Mary's.

Rose, our Parish Administrator, collects the material and does the lay-out, which can be a big task. I liaise with Rose over the content and usually proof read the text. The purpose of The Clarion is to inform, educate, stimulate, and occasionally amuse readers and a good mix of all these is my aim. It also contains all the official details from the parish register, readings at services, and notices of planned events. Usually there is enough copy available for each issue, but this depends on parishioners supplying material also, and I would welcome more contributions. The best way to contribute is by sending items by e-mail to the Parish Office, or to my e-mail address.

Verena Tschudin

Social Report

Parish Lunches were held regularly throughout the year usually on the last Sunday of the month.

There are some people (who must always remain incognito to protect them from embarrassment) who are always to the forefront when there is any work to be done. We all know who they are. Thanks to these good-hearted individuals, everything that needs to be done is done, year after year. Our grateful thanks yet again to you all for your help in setting up tables, furnishing them and serving food to the multitude and also to those truly noble individuals – usually the same people – who appear without fail at the conclusion of the lunch to help with the washing up and the dismantling and conveyance of the tables. We couldn't manage without you!

Thankfully the installation of our new dishwasher is going to make things much easier in future.

And let us not forget those indispensable public-spirited people who are actually willing to go to the trouble of cooking for thirty, whether the food is prepared at home beforehand or from scratch in the Church Hall kitchen. Without you there would be no lunches. Rest assured that your chefmanship is really valued.

Our traditional pancake party took place this year at Ginny's instead of the north transept of the church. Unfortunately I was unable to attend on this occasion, being on a visit to America for the baptism of my nephew, but I understand that everyone had a delightful evening thanks to Ginny and all those kind people who helped to make the pancakes.

David Ireton, our new verger/caretaker, has already demonstrated his sterling worth by his impressive presence in church, but his assistance behind the scenes in the Church Hall and kitchen have been outstanding. Thank you David; we really do appreciate your help.

Sylvia Gregory, Social Secretary

The Summer Fair

The 2006 summer Fair took place on a bright hot summer afternoon in June, Saturday June 24th – slightly earlier than in previous years to avoid any clash with sporting events and before the school holidays and the general summer exodus had started. The event was also slightly smaller than in previous years, but that it took place in only the North Garden of the Bolton Gardens (and around the church gardens as usual) in no way diminished the sense of occasion. There was a deliberate effort to find some activities and entertainments such as the face painting, treasure hunt etc as well as the usual sideshows and stalls. The barbecue sold out, the bouncy castle made a profit with many eager young customers queuing up throughout the afternoon. In recognition of the exhortations by the water authorities to save water wherever possible Hook-a-Duck (plastic ducks floating in a paddling pool to be fished out with a simple cane and string fishing rod) was withdrawn in 2006 despite the fact that it had been a favourite with the younger generation in

previous years. But the surprise success, in terms of popularity and income generation for effort expended was the introduction of a Coconut Shy and Coits. Another last minute success was a two-man band which played light Jazz at intervals throughout the afternoon entertaining both visitors and workers. But the biggest contributors to the funds raised during the afternoon were, as usual, the Bric a Brac Stall, the Raffle and the Pimms Tent. A new larger gazebo was acquired with Pimms in mind, but in the event time ran out and a trial assembly on the north lawn of the church gardens became its established location - much to the relief of those working on the Plant Stall who benefited from the shelter it provided.

In 2006 two charities benefited from the summer fair covering a range of needs - one overseas in Kenya benefiting the young, and one local and for the older members of our local community. The **Kipungani Schools Trust** helps Africans help themselves by rebuilding their local schools and enabling them to get a better education. A year's salary for a single teacher costs the charity £500, while a whole classroom could be rebuilt for £1600. Closer to home **East Chelsea Community Contact ECCCO** supports and encourages self-help and neighbourliness among the older residents of East Chelsea and aims to lessen the effects of isolation felt by frail and housebound people. By doing this the project helps prevent deterioration in health caused by loneliness and inactivity.

Some £3,100 was raised with each charity receiving a cheque for £1,500.

Leo Fraser-Mackenzie / Bill Gallagher

Church Garden

Our garden continues to be valued and well-used by many who live and work locally, and we are glad to have it to share with so many people who might otherwise have nowhere to sit out of doors.

2006 was a relatively uneventful year in the garden. The gardeners planted, weeded, edged the lawns, mowed the lawns until they became too parched for mowing, and from late June onwards concentrated on keeping the garden sufficiently watered to survive the excessive heat and drought that lasted throughout the rest of the summer.

Because of the hosepipe ban, the watering had to be done with watering cans, which was very hard work evening after evening, but the gardeners rose to the occasion magnificently, and we lost very little. Autumn brought the usual round of leaf-raking, which went on until Christmas as the mild weather held up the leaf-fall, but it all got done, and so did the autumn pruning. By and large, the garden was put to bed in good order, and we should feel the benefit in the spring.

The grass, as everyone will have seen, has recovered from the drought very well, although much of its bright greenery is made up, as ever, of weeds and moss, both of which will be hard to get rid of, but we shall do our best. The heavy rainfall of recent weeks has magnified the moss problem, but may, on the other hand, help to avoid another hose-pipe ban next summer. We live in hope!

The gardeners' group has had much pleasure in welcoming Philip Swift and Mary Meeson to its ranks, and we all look forward to working together in the coming months.

Audrey Pine, Gardening Co-ordinator

Verger's Report

Following Carole Sharpe's departure on 1st March, the year proved to be a difficult one regarding the verging and caretaking duties in the church.

As outlined elsewhere in the Annual Report, the person who took over from Carole was at St. Mary's until July.

In the period between his departure and David Ireton's arrival at the beginning of November, caretaking duties were undertaken by the priest-in-charge, the wardens and Trent Jardine. In addition extra cleaning duties undertaken by Spasko Mitreski and he and Trent were also able to undertake verging duties for weddings and funerals.

Once David arrived, things settled down into a regular pattern of verging and caretaking and daily life was once more on an even keel.

It was fortunate that we experienced no major difficulties with the building – church and church hall – during the year and the church and halls remain in good condition.

Ginny Thomas, Priest-in-Charge

The Sacristy

Following Carole Sharpe's departure these duties were shared by four members of the congregation: Linda Fleming undertook to look after the altar linens, and Margarete, Elizabeth Davson and Elizabeth Graham looked after other sacristan duties such as the preparations for setting up the altar for services. In addition Sylvia Gregory helped with sacristy duties on Sundays. Elizabeth Graham also looked after the clergy vestments and supplies for communion.

Following the merger with St. Jude's Church we received the following items of plate for our treasury:

- silver offertory plate inscribed 'Church of St. Jude' (in mem Spicer)
- small communion chalice, patten and flagon
- home communion set consisting of chalice, glass flagon and pyx.

The offertory plate is used regularly at our Sunday morning service of Sung Parish Eucharist and serves as a visual reminder of our new, extended parish.

Redcliffe Gardens Trust

In 2006, The Redcliffe Gardens Trust received income from two sources – ground rent from the property at no. 11 Redcliffe Gardens, and interest on surplus funds deposited at the CBF (Central Board of Finance) Church of England Deposit Fund. This fund is a specialist money market fund managed by CCLA Investment Management Ltd and is intended for funds which are to be available at short notice and with minimal risk of capital loss. It offers flexibility of daily withdrawals / deposits and security in that the funds are pooled and are placed at short notice with a carefully selected list of banks and building societies. At the time of writing this report the size of the fund was just over £860m.

In accordance with established policy the income from ground rents was given away to charitable concerns. In 2006 seven local organisations received donations. The largest was £1,000 for West London Churches Homelessness Concern. St Cuthbert with St Matthias School Fund also received £1,000, half for its capitation charge and half for its general fund.

Leo Fraser-Mackenzie, Hon Treasurer

Gift-Aid Scheme

The vast majority of those who contribute regularly to St Mary's by means of a standing order or the weekly envelope scheme also 'gift-aid' their donations. The result is a substantial refund from the Inland Revenue, as may be seen recorded in the accounts for 2006 elsewhere in these pages. What may also be seen is the sum of money which has been contributed in the form of loose collections, on which no tax refund whatsoever is claimable. Were it all gift-aided an additional refund of £280 per £1000 would be available.

In practice not all of it would qualify since not everyone pays enough UK tax, but most of it probably would. We would like all those who currently pay UK tax and put cash in an offertory bag to put it first into a gift-aid envelope, asking for a boxed and numbered set of such envelopes if they attend church at all regularly, or using one of the loose envelopes available at the back of the church if their visits are only very occasional. The advantage of using a boxed set is that one does not have to enter one's name & address on each envelope used.

This would all be giving the Gift-Aid Secretary extra work it is true, but that is what he is for. What a wonderful thing it is to be able to make someone feel really wanted!

John Barker

Fabric of the Building and Ornaments

The fabric of the church continues to benefit greatly from the refurbishment of a few years ago, and the fine ornaments in the Treasury and elsewhere add much to the quality of our experience in church. We also owe much to the

hard and skilful work of the 'Thursday morning group', Ann Garten, Malcolm Goddard and Julia Pringle, whose devotion to duty with ironing, mending and cleaning of the treasures is an example to us all. Good care for the church has been maintained by Trent Jardine who helped in various ways during the interval between vergers as well as carrying out a wide range of cleaning work. In the latter part of the year our new verger, David Ireton, demonstrated much enthusiasm for his new church which we very much welcome.

There are no major practical developments during 2006 to report, just the inevitable raft of day-to-day repairs and incidents to be managed. However one significant development for which a Faculty has been granted - after long, undue delay - is the building of an office at the north-west end of the church to match exactly the existing office in the south-west corner. This will be constructed in the first quarter of 2007 and will enable Rose, the Parish Administrator, to be located there instead of in the vestry. In addition to providing her with a vastly improved working area this will enable us to implement more effectively our Open Door policy through her presence near the west entrance.

Arthur Tait

Meetings of the Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod met twice in 2006. The first meeting was held at Holy Trinity, Sloane Square, on 18 May when no representative was available from St Mary's as we were on the Pilgrimage to the North East. The main speaker was Roy Hislop, retired architect, who spoke about the practicalities and pitfalls of church redevelopment and renovation, based on his recent experience at St Luke's, Redcliffe Square. From his perspective the most difficult aspect of the work was obtaining the necessary decisions from the church authorities! Notes about his talk and about the work at St Luke's are in the Deanery Synod file in St Mary's vestry.

The second meeting was held on 14 September at St Simon Zelotes when the main speaker was the Bishop of Kensington and Chelsea. He outlined the scheme for Deanery Licensed Ministers which was being introduced in the Kensington Area. The essence of the scheme is to enable any who want to be ordained, but to continue to live and work in their own geographical area, to do so. Their expected time commitment would be for at least 10 – 15 hours

each week, and they would be non-stipendiary. A copy of the Bishop's talk is held in the Deanery Synod file in the vestry.

At each meeting there was the usual business of Reports from the General Synod, the Diocesan Synod, the Area Council and the London Diocesan Board for Schools. The latter Report was particularly encouraging about the finances of the Diocesan Board, whose annual income over the last ten years has risen from 8 million to 24 million pounds, and the Reserves from 6 million to 18 million pounds, enabling them to provide more help to the 150 schools in their area. Inevitably still more money is needed.

Arthur Tait.

Children's Advocate

This has been another year with very little work to do in this capacity, but this is a good sign. I am in the background, but this is an official PCC appointment for the purpose of ensuring that all children on our premises are not only protected in law, but are not harmed in any way.

The Child Protection Policy is reviewed once a year and revised when necessary and is displayed in several places around the Church and Hall and all groups using the premises are asked to comply with it.

Verena Tschudin