

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

Diocese of London

Deanery of Chelsea

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

Annual Report

2008

(1 January - 31 December)



Prepared for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
on Thursday 30 April 2009
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 Rev. Ginny Thomas

Associate Vicar

The Rev. Ruth Lampard

Parish Officers and Elected Representatives

Churchwardens

Mr Mark Nichols
Mr Arthur Tait

Members of the Parochial Church Council

The Rev. Ginny Thomas (Chair), Mrs Jane Bonser, Miss Fiona Brown Mr Grahame Challen, Mrs Deborah Challinor, Mr Jack Dunn, Mr Leo Fraser-Mackenzie, Mrs Shelia Gibbs, Miss Margarete Geier (Deanery Synod Representative), Miss Joanna Hackett (PCC Secretary), Mr Brian Hallock, Mr Mark Nichols, Mrs Puline Stephens; Miss Carolyn Stubbs (PCC Treasurer, & Assistant Treasurer to the Redcliffe Gardens Trust), Mr Arthur Tait (Deanery Synod Representative) Lady Helen Trafford.

PCC Treasurer & Assistant Treasurer to the Redcliffe Gardens Trust

Carolyn Stubbs,

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,
Farm Cottage, Colinswood Road, Farnham Common, Slough SL2 3LJ

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 Monier-Williams, 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 197

Statistics

Communions 2008 (2007,2006, 2005, 2004)

Easter 143 (152,134,109,140)

Christmas Midnight 102 (98 ,94, 95, 80)

Christmas Morning 108 (125 ,113,162,175)

Sunday Average 88 (90 ,83, 84, 81)

Average Sunday Morning Attendance Including Children
2008 130 (2007 128 , 2006 116, 2005 116)

Occasional Offices 2008 (2007, 2006, 2005, 2004)

Baptisms 49 (34, 41, 46, 40)

Confirmations 2(3,7, 3, 3,)

Weddings 6 (11,15, 12, 6)

Blessing of Marriage after a Civil Ceremony 0 (4, 2, 1, 1)

Funerals in Church 7 (8, 8, 4, 15)

Memorial Services 1 (4,0, 0, 3)

Teen Events 0 (0,0, 2, 1)

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

Report by the Priest-in-Charge

The individual reports in this Annual Report show that it has been another full year of worship and activity at St. Mary's and I'm very grateful to everyone who has contributed in so many different ways to our life together.

Worship is at the centre of our life and many people, not just the clergy, make our Sunday and weekly worship possible; the sidespeople, readers and intercessors, those who work in the vestry keeping the church linen clean and ironed, the silver and brass shining, and the altar prepared, and those who ensure the flowers add to the beauty of the church, especially at Christmas, Easter and the Harvest Festival. Many thanks to all who play their part.

Our Sunday worship is enhanced each week through music; the hymns we sing, the music sung by the parish choir and the professional musicians who join us for special services. Graham Caldbeck, our Director of Music, has given us another year of excellent music and the church choir continues to add depth to our worship.

During the year we had three guest preachers at the Sunday services: the Rev. Gerald Beauchamp, my predecessor, who was warmly welcomed on his first visit back to the parish since he left in October 2004; Ramani Leathard, the Christian Aid Manager for Burma, who preached on Christian Aid Sunday before going straight to Heathrow to catch a plane *en route* to Burma to visit areas badly affected by the cyclone, and the Rev. Rosalind Brown, Canon at Durham Cathedral who preached at our patronal festival in September. During my Sundays away, I was grateful to the Rev. Christopher Kevill-Davies, the Rev. Ryder Whalley, the Rev. Sue Groom and the Rev. Alison Craven for officiating at services.

The most important and notable development this year has been the appointment of the Rev. Ruth Lampard as Associate Vicar. For some time the PCC and Wardens have supported the idea of having another clergy person on the staff, as it would allow our parish life to develop and expand, and also lighten my work load, which has been considerable. I was therefore delighted when Ruth joined us at the end of October.

In the few months Ruth has been with us she has contributed a great deal to St. Mary's; sharing the worship and liturgical duties, tightening office procedures, supporting Jane Dass, our Sunday School teacher, and developing ideas for Sunday School and the young people of the parish, as well as developing links with organisations and people in the former St. Jude's parish.

Ruth works five days a week (a full clergy working week is 6 days) and we at St. Mary's are responsible for paying her stipend. This provides us with a financial challenge, especially in the present very difficult financial climate. I am confident

that we can raise the money needed not just for Ruth's stipend, but also to cover the parish running costs, which, as you will see from the Treasurer's Review (the pink sheet in this report) are considerable. The success of the financial campaign in 2009 will depend on each of us playing our part in supporting the church.

An important part of our church life is our spiritual growth, which was encouraged during the year through our Lent and Advent programmes and a 3-week series in the autumn entitled 'Images of God'. In Lent we followed a course entitled 'Life Balance' when three groups met each week to examine our patterns of rest, work and play. I am very grateful to Ann Tait and Clare Ziegler for co-leading the 'Images' discussion groups and, to Leo Fraser-MacKenzie who led one of the Lent groups. In three meetings in Advent we looked at Jesus 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' through images and biblical texts. These discussions were led by the clergy.

In the autumn I prepared Isabella Reed and Steven Redshaw for confirmation and they were confirmed at St. Paul's Cathedral by the Dean, the former Bishop of Sodor and Mann, in November. With a large number of baptisms (49) during the year, baptism evenings were introduced when parents of children to be baptised came to St. Mary's for discussion, reflection on the service and to meet each other.

As a church community, we continue to seek ways to care for one another and those who live in the parish and further afield. I am delighted that our regular monthly Sunday and Thursday lunches were well supported and that we continue to reach out to members in the community through helping with reading at St. Cuthbert and St. Matthias Church of England primary school on Warwick Avenue. This year we once again provided a Boxing Day lunch for the Earl's Court Community Project and the West London Church Homeless Concern. An important development during the year was the formation of a charity committee to look at our charitable giving, while the Sunday School agreed to support a child in Uganda through the organisation 'Compassion'.

A highlight of the year was the parish pilgrimage to Spain – Toledo and Salamanca – which Sheila Gibbs organised together with Longwood Holidays. In spite of unexpectedly chilly weather and the illness of a member of the group, the pilgrimage was a great success and was enjoyed by everyone.

St. Mary's would function a good deal less efficiently without the parish administrator, John McVeigh, and verger, David Ireton. Both have contributed a great deal to the smooth running of the church office and our buildings, and have been prepared to do extra work when times have been busy and demanding. I am very grateful for their unfailing good humour and assistance and being prepared to find a solution to every problem.

In closing I would like to thank the PCC and Wardens for taking the bold decision to appoint an associate vicar, and for all their work and support during the year. With the 'Away Day' and 'Kensington Area Study Day' they have given up a good deal of precious time to serve the parish and so have made 2008 another active and rewarding year for St. Mary's. I am very grateful for their support and enthusiasm.

As our life together at St. Mary's continues to unfold, may we be grateful for the year that now lies behind us and continue, in the words of Psalm 135, to 'Praise the name of the Lord; give praise O servants of the Lord, you that stand in the house of Lord, in the courts of the house of our God'.

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, Janet Mundy, Charlotte O'Driscoll, Olivia O'Driscoll, Ula Al-Mochtar, Masara Al-Mochtar, Salam Al-Mochtar

Chalice Assistants Venice Cedras, Margarete Geier, Sheila Gibbs, Sylvia Gregory, Leo Fraser-Mackenzie, Audrey Pine, Philip Bedford-Smith, Arthur Tait, Verena Tschudin.

Readers and Sidespersons Robin Arbuthnot, John Barker, Hugh Beach, Philip Bedford-Smith, Fiona Brown, Grahame Challen, Elizabeth Davson, Michael Farr, Leo Fraser-Mackenzie, Bill Gallagher, Anne Garten, Sheila Gibbs, Betty Greenland, 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 Leo Fraser-Mackenzie, Anne Garten, Audrey Pine, Anthea Smith, Ann Tait, Iona Thomas, Verena Tschudin

Rotas Betty Greenland, Dorothy Patrick, Malcolm Gregory, Mary Meeson.

Sunday Service Sheet Fabric group and David Ireton.

The Parochial Church Council

During the year of 2008 the St Mary's PCC met a total of five times, usually in the north transept of the church on a Thursday evening. Assisted by Ginny's excellent paperwork including a strict agenda, background information and perhaps letters from senior church people, the PCC discussed during the year a wide variety of important issues, including the appointment of our new associate vicar, the growth of St Marys and the formation of the many sub groups.

The meetings always prove very worthwhile and successful and with the assistance of tea and chocolate biscuits, Ginny is usually able to keep the PCC more or less to the agenda.

An extra meeting is held in March in order to sign off the accounts produced by Carolyn Stubbs in time for the APCM.

The early autumn was a busy time for St Mary's PCC, featuring two extra activities. The Kensington Area Conference Day on 27 September was a chance for representatives of PCCs within the deanery to get together and discuss the idea of a PCC serving a Mission Shaped Church. John Truscott, who led the day, instilled into PCC members the three important concepts that ought to shape a PCC: to Think Big and Aim High, to Banish Trivia and always Report Back to our churches.

On 4 October St Mary's held its first PCC Away Day for several years, which provided a chance for most of the PCC members to meet in an environment outside of the church and discuss Ideas for growth. It was decided at the Away

Day that the PCC's main focus for the coming months would be three areas, Youth, Adult Formation/Education, and St Jude's.

In the spring, Margarete kindly hosted a supper party for all PCC members to welcome new ones and thank retiring ones.

St Mary's PCC goes from strength to strength and continues to have the growth and fellowship of St Mary the Boltons at its centre. We are always pleased to hear from any church members so if you have any comments, questions or suggestions for the PCC, please do get in contact.

Sunday School

This year we studied bible stories including Moses and Pharaoh and the plagues of Egypt, feeding the five thousand and seasonal religious festivals. At Harvest Festival we wrote and performed a song (with help of the parish Choir) and at Christmas we performed the nativity story. Thank you to all who helped and all the children who performed,

We began the year with the sponsorship of Alex who is a Ugandan child, who we sponsor through Compassion. We used the summer fete last year to raise money on the Sunday school stall specifically to cover the cost of his sponsorship for the year, and kind parishioners also raised money separately for Alex.

We have been able to use the New Children's Clarionette (Sunday school version to the parish magazine The Clarion) to bring our sponsorship of Alex to wider attention through printing his letters to us and our letters back to him. And we hope everyone has enjoyed reading it.

A big welcome to Ruth Lampard, who has and will be guiding Sunday school, and to Mary Lewis who will be our Mentor.

There have been changes to Sunday school and its organisation. Ruth has worked with us on how to improve Sunday school and how to organise it more effectively. This has resulted in a very clear and helpful booklet setting out the aims of Sunday school including what the parents can do to support it and everyone's responsibilities. This has been given to all parents, and already with clear parameters and things have improved.

Deborah Challiner, who has been closely involved with Sunday school, has had to take time off. Jane Bonsor has agreed to take on her role in the meantime, and will also be leading a Sunday school class once a term. Thank you to both Deborah and Jane for their commitment and help! Ruth and Ginny will also be coming into Sunday school once a term to lead a class.

Ruth Sullivan has very kindly stood in for me in the past and is taking some time off. Paulette ran a “tots” singing off-shoot to Sunday school proved very popular. Thank you to both of them for their help.

Some parents have also started to come in to help tidy up after classes, though none feel they can commit to the formal schedule. Our aim however is to eventually have parents to help lead classes.

Jane Dass

Music

Music has continued to play a significant role in worship at St Mary's during 2008. The regular contribution from the Parish Choir has been sustained – the choir singing on around twenty occasions in all, rehearsing on the preceding Friday evening and before the service on the day, or alternatively, just for 45 minutes before the service. I am delighted that we have welcomed a number of new singers into the choir and that, from time to time, others have come along to a practice to investigate what we do. We have made history recently by having to use three rows of choir stalls instead of two for some services, because of the increase in numbers.

The schedule of rehearsals and services for the whole year was published well in advance. A reasonably wide variety of music has been performed; a new set of anthem books has been purchased this year and this has helped to expand the choir's repertoire. In 2009, at the suggestion of several members of the choir, we shall experiment by abandoning the once a month Friday evening choir practice and instead rehearse twice a month from 9.30am on a Sunday. Attendance at Friday practices was just too unpredictable to be helpful. If we had seven choir members there on a Friday, and then, say, an additional six on the Sunday, this was not very satisfactory in terms of striving for musical cohesion. With the new system one at least will know how many singers are available to perform (assuming they arrive in good time!), although it is rather '0-60', in terms of practicing what we shall be performing shortly afterwards.

Choir members have continued to work hard and some very pleasing performances have been given. The feedback from the congregation is generally positive, and the choir *esprit de corps* is strong. Ginny and Patrick again generously hosted a most enjoyable choir party at the Vicarage, this year in April.

As always, I am grateful to a number of individuals for their assistance: to Ginny for her great care and interest in music within the liturgy; to the Cantors in the psalms; to John McVeigh for all his help in a wide range of matters, including arranging organ and piano tuning, producing service sheets and liaison over special services; to Dave Ireton for his support and assistance, particularly with welcoming visiting musicians; to the Sunday School for their contribution to

All-Age Worship, and to the members of the Parish Choir for their performances and also their encouragement and interest in music generally at the church.

This year has seen some significant changes in the cantoring team and the choir membership. Malcolm Gregory's sad death has removed an important member of the choir, an enthusiastic supporter of music at the church and a regular and much-valued member of the cantoring team from within our midst. Malcolm was always so positive and good humoured – he enlivened many a Sunday morning for me! We shall miss him greatly. Audrey Pine has now moved to Henley; she has been a loyal and very able member of the choir for many years, and she has left a big gap. Samantha Smith and Leo Fraser-Mackenzie have continued to sing the psalms week by week very successfully, and we now have two excellent new cantors, Pauline Stephens and Patrick Thomas, with other choir members also interested to help in this area.

Some less familiar hymns have been introduced during the year. With hymn singing in schools generally in decline (and in many cases having ceased altogether), children attending Sunday School within our Parish Eucharist will only learn our traditional (and also, new) hymns when given the opportunity so to do (i.e. by joining in the first and last hymns each week, and in All Age Worship services. We must hand on this musical legacy to them, as well as being open to new musical developments of quality. The Sunday School has several times included music in its presentations, which 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, as well as for weddings, funerals and memorial services. This is an important side of the musical activity of the church, although perhaps one that is perhaps less well known to many members of the congregation. Such services bring many people into the church, some of whom subsequently retain an association here. During 2008 professional musicians from outside the church have contributed to eight services, beyond those professional choirs arranged to perform at weddings, funerals and memorial services. A wide range of music has been performed by a number of highly gifted performers and it is worth taking the opportunity again this year to provide some detail.

Music featured strongly during Holy Week. On Palm Sunday, Ana-Maria Rincon (soprano) sang the *Benedictus* from Haydn's *Kleine Orgelmesse* and *Qui tollis peccata mundi* from Handel's recently discovered *Gloria*. Ana-Maria lives locally and is an established soloist who regularly gives recitals within the London Handel Festival, as well as appearing throughout the UK as a soloist. On Maundy Thursday, Richard Fallas (bass), who sings regularly with the BBC Singers and top choirs abroad, sang *The Call (Five Mystical Songs)* by Vaughan Williams and Stanford's *A Song of Hope; Six Bible Songs*. On Good Friday organ works by Redford, Walther, Merulo, Bach, Vivaldi and Brahms were used as the musical meditations within the service. On Easter Saturday the *Exultet* was movingly sung by Malcolm Banham (tenor), a regular performer at St Mary's.

In our Easter Day celebrations, Ann de Rennais (soprano) performed *Alleluia* from Mozart's *Exsultate*, *Jubilate K165* and *I know that my redeemer liveth* from Handel's *Messiah*. Ann is a professional soloist who performs throughout Europe and the Far East, as well as singing in ROH chorus from time to time.

On Sunday 28 September, Ann and Arthur Tait celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary by generously paying for a full sung Eucharist with a professional quintet. English solo vocal and organ music by Purcell and Vaughan Williams was complemented by a wonderful selection of choral music, including Mozart's *Ave verum corpus K618* and *Missa Brevis in D K194*, Walton's *Set me as a seal*, Parry's *My soul, there is a country* and Walford Davies' *God be in my head*. This made for a memorable occasion.

On Remembrance Sunday, the highly gifted RCM- and RAM-trained violinist, Cerys Jones, performed a number of Baroque works, including Handel's *Sonata in F Op. 1 no. 12*, J. S. Bach's *Sarabande* from *Partita no. 2* and Telemann's *Fantasia no. 9*. This continued the series of solo instrumentalists featured in recent years for this special service: violin (2004), cello (2005), oboe (2006) and flute (2007).

At the Carol Service on 14 December, the eclectic choice of music ranged from a Christmas plainsong *Verbum caro factum est* and a 13th century Carol, *Verbum patris umanatur* (complete with tabor accompaniment!), through carols by a succession of famous choral composers: Pearsall, Boris Ord, Pettman, Ivor Atkins, Elizabeth Poston, Sir David Willcocks, John Rutter, and Sir John Tavener, culminating in a deliciously light-hearted arrangement of *Ding! Dong! Merrily on high* by the most famous American contemporary composer of Christmas music, Mack Wilberg. We were very fortunate indeed to have

Stephen Disley, Assistant Organist at Southwark Cathedral, playing. Stephen began his musical training as a chorister at Liverpool Cathedral, and during his student time at the RCM, was Organ Scholar at The Temple Church. He appears regularly as a soloist at the Royal Albert Hall. Carols by Pettman, Peter Warlock and John Rutter were sung by a professional choir at the Midnight Mass. Steven Keogh (trumpet) performed Warlock's *Andante tranquillo* before the service and some celebratory movements from Handel's *Samson* afterwards.

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 two talented organists who have deputised for me when I have been away at various times during the year, David Patrick and Richard Shepperson.

During the year, members of the congregation came to hear Nonsuch Singers, the London chamber choir that I conduct, in concerts at Southwark Cathedral, St. John's, Smith Square, St. Martin-in-the-Fields, St. George's, Bloomsbury and St. Augustine's Queensgate.

I am grateful to Ginny for allowing me to hold auditions for the choir in church from time to time, as well the occasional rehearsal. 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. 2008 was another eventful year for music at the church and a solid foundation on which to build for the future.

Graham Caldbeck

The Flower Guild

In 2008 we had five weddings, rather less than usual, which was sad. However, members of the flower guild have quite a lot of work with the funerals and Sunday arrangements. We are lucky that people appreciate the flowers so much.

I would first of all like to thank Anita Dowbiggin, who does all the telephoning to organise people for the big occasions and who also does a lot of the flower arranging herself and gives assistance to those who are not so experienced. My thanks go also to Mandy Dearan, Doreen Santana and Venice Cedras, Josephine Crickmay and Pauline Stephens whose help is invaluable. David is also of great assistance in putting out all the buckets for the flowers when I bring them in from the market. He is also extremely good at clearing up.

I should also thank members of the congregation for their generous donations towards the flowers for Christmas and Easter.

Last but not least, thanks to Margarete Geier who came to market with me when my husband was out of action with his two knee replacements, and says she will willingly help in the future.

We also make a small profit from the weddings, part of which goes towards the church flowers. Our bank balance is quite good at the moment, so if anyone can think of something the church needs that we could help with we would be very happy to do so. One of the things we do help with is supplying the flowers for the church garden each year.

We are now looking forward to hopefully lots of wedding this year.

Boo Simpson

The Prayer Network

The Prayer Network is an important part of our corporate life. Twenty-three present and former parishioners constitute the Network. The list of people prayed for contains about 70-80 names at any one time.

The distribution of updates, new requests and deletions is done by e-mail to those with that facility, and by letter, usually handed out on Sundays, to all the others. A monthly Bulletin, with all the updates incorporated, is distributed to everyone. 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.

Most requests and updates come from the people of the Network itself, but by no means exclusively. Indeed, it would be good if anyone with a concern would let either Ginny, John McVeigh, or me know as we can quickly disseminate any

requests. It is important that changes or progress are also noted and passed on, as this keeps the prayers and intercessions relevant, and the intercessors interested. The intercessors use the list entirely as suits them, not according to any particular instruction or pattern.

Verena Tschudin

Groups

Mother and Toddlers Group on Monday Mornings in Term Time

The Mother and Toddlers Group, which has been taking place at St Mary The Boltons Church for nearly a decade, has gone from strength to strength every year. The number of mums seeking a friendly and safe local environment for their toddlers to play in has increased sharply in the last two years. The group hosts on average 25 mums and 30 children every Monday morning from 9.30am to 11.00am.

It is with great thanks to the staff at St Mary The Boltons that we attribute much of the group's success. The continued support and friendliness of the church staff radiates through in every aspect of the group's organisation. A particular thanks to everyone at St Mary The Boltons who put on a fantastic Christmas Nativity play, sticker collection and sing-a-long this year. The mums were thrilled with the event and both Almuedena and myself were very proud to have such a wonderful group of people show an interest in the throng of mums who crowd their church every Monday morning. I am very grateful to the staff at St Mary the Boltons who help make this playgroup such a success, while at the same time promoting the kindness and generosity so often attributed with this wonderful church.

Peggy Newton

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. We studied *Luke for Everyone* by Tom Wright up to July 2008. From September we discussed a variety of subjects from a Christian point of view. Some of the

subjects discussed included The consumer society: 7-day trading, The Lordship of Christ, and Psalm 23 'The Lord is my shepherd'.

Dorothy Patrick

We would be delighted to welcome new members; please contact the parish office on 020 7835 1440.

Monthly Thursday Lunches

For the third successive year the popularity of these lunches increased, with attendance usually in excess of 30 people and sometimes as high as the low 40s. They provide pleasant spiritual, social and informative occasions that owe much to the interesting speakers who kindly come to 'sing for their supper'.

The menu typically comprises soup, bread, cheese and pâté, fruit, and coffee. People with a wide range of ages and interests attend, some of whom have difficulty in attending church on Sundays. For them in particular the decision by Ginny and Ruth to provide a Eucharist service at 11.45 am before the 12.30 pm lunch is an added benefit.

Those who wish to do so contribute to the cost of the lunches. During the year this income slightly exceeded the costs, thus providing a small extra source of funds for the church.

We are very grateful indeed to the speakers for their 20-30 minute talks, with their splendid topics and entertaining presentations. Many thanks to all those who help with the preparations and clearing up for the lunches, including the irrepressible David Ireton, who uniquely understands the dish washing machine!

June Brudenell, Ann and Arthur Tait.

Charities Committee Report

In recent years the community at St Mary's has regularly been able to give away sums of money that are meaningful in relation to its income. These funds have come principally, but not exclusively, from the annual summer fair and the ground rent at 11 Redcliffe Gardens, and the cash (not envelopes) in the plate collections at the services on 24 and 25 December.

During 2008 a Charities Committee was formed at the request of the PCC to bring greater focus on how the funds are given away and also to bring together

the sources of these funds. After much discussion (and some delay) the Committee presented a proposal to the PCC in November and that proposal in turn was discussed and amended. We now have a Framework for Charitable Giving that gathers into a single charitable pot all funds raised during the year that are to be given away.

Two thirds of this charitable pot are then divided equally between two 'adopted' charities. These are referred to as the 'adopted' charities as they are the two that receive the greater part of our giving and which we will support for two years. We have done this in order to show a greater commitment, and in order, hopefully, to learn more from the cause we support. To this end each of the adopted charities has a champion in the Parish who will report back on a regular basis.

The last third of the charitable pot is distributed in roughly equal proportions to charitable causes within the Kensington area and overseas.

This framework will be fully operable from 2009 as it was approved only in November 2008, but in 2008 we also introduced a process that we hope to use again in future years. For the first time we invited members of the parish to nominate charities to receive donations from our charitable giving, as well as reviewing some of the many appeals for money that come into the Parish Office. In all, 17 different projects were put forward, several by more than one person and in making their recommendation to the PCC the Committee looked for proposals where our funds could make a difference, were in unfashionable and unattractive areas, and were supporting people on the margins of society and where there would be an opportunity for learning.

The two adopted charities for 2009 and 2010 are the Earl's Court Community Project and the Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza and they also received the funds from the Christmas services in 2008.

Other donations. In future years, one third of the charitable pot will be reserved for one-off and emergency donations, but for 2008 the amount distributed was limited to the £5,000 in the charitable budget, which represents the ground rent at 11 Redcliffe Gardens. This was distributed as follows:

Local projects received a total of £2,250.

Earl's Courts Community Trust: £500

The Earl's Court Community Festival is a community celebration that aims to bring together the diverse populations of the Earl's Court area. It promotes a shared sense of belonging in the community through the planning and delivery of arts and social events in the local area. The Earls Court Community Trust was established as an independent charity in Sept 2008.

The Pathfinder Fellowship: £1,000

A small Anglican society established to help young people (in many cases far from home) to live together in a Christian environment in a place where they can deepen their faith through practical community living. This donation will help to reduce debt taken on to install a fire alarm system and other improvements to meet Health and Safety requirements. The community is based at Bickersteth House, London W8.

UpperRoom: £500

A church-based organisation in W12 with various strands of activity, including 'feeding the community in need', serving 30,000 meals a year to homeless and disadvantaged people, and distributing food. UpperRoom4Kids, is a breakfast club for children on the White City Estate, UR4Jobs is a job club for migrant workers and UR4Art offers free art classes as a way of building self respect and direction. They are also starting to work on prison visits and community integration.

St Cuthberts with St Matthias School: £250

This is the primary school on Warwick Road where a group of people from St Mary's regularly assist with reading. According to the June 2008 Ofsted report, 90% of pupils learn English as an additional language and 15% of them are from refugee families. Despite these challenges and the fact that the school experiences a high level of pupil turnover, it was graded 2: Good. This donation should be for allocation at the discretion of the school head.

International projects received a total of £2,750

Mojakwoja: £1,000

A new UK charity aiming to work widely in Tanzania and southern Africa. Current support will be restricted to Shining Star School and Tia Ni Nog Orphanage in Moshi, Tanzania. Funds will go towards their immediate needs: school rent, school fees and food and a medication room. Lucy Wilson who

founded this small charity will talk more about its work at the Thursday lunch on 12 February 2009.

Zane: £500

A UK charity working in Zimbabwe. Registered aims are to provide food and medicine for WW2 veterans and widows, clients of the Prison Fellowship, those involved in Operation Clean Up and Aids sufferers and orphans in Zimbabwe. It has support among Zimbabweans living in the UK.

Compassion UK: up to £250

This is the organisation through which the Sunday School supports their sponsored child Alex and his family and relevant projects and was included to ensure that St Mary's promises could be met.

Franciscan Aid: £500

The charitable trust of the Third Order of the Society of St Francis, whose aim is to relieve poverty and advance education of deprived people from the Third world whose needs may not be covered by other agencies and those with whom the Franciscans are in contact and whose needs are known. In recent years support has been given to projects in Africa, Middle East, and South East Asia. The Society also has a base in Papua New Guinea but the funds will go to wherever there is the greatest need.

Prisoners Abroad: £500

Cares for Britons held overseas by alleviating isolation and deprivation, regardless of guilt or innocence. Assists families and friends in the UK and assists individuals to build a crime-free life on return to the UK.

In 2008 the other members of the Charities Committee were Vanessa Arkell, Katrin Turner, and Anthony Williams. To them, and also to John McVeigh who came to all meetings, I am very grateful for much support in introducing this new framework for our charitable giving. The framework may need further amendment, but I hope that it will assist us to raise funds for our two adopted charities and to replenish our charitable pot so that it is well filled by the time we come to make distributions at the end of the year.

Leo Fraser-Mackenzie

Annual Report on Reading at St Cuthberts and St Matthias School

We have a group of 11 volunteers who help with reading at the St Cuthbert and St Matthias School, Earl's Court.

We had a break in the summer and early autumn of 2008, awaiting the appointment of a new head teacher to give him or her the opportunity to decide if the way we were previously helping should be restructured. Building work on a new extension was also taking place.

A new headmaster has now been appointed and before Christmas we had a good meeting with him and restarted our visits to the school to help encouraging the children with their reading.

Volunteers go in once or twice a week at a time convenient for them and for the school. We have each been allocated specific children – normally two – and spend time listening to them reading on an individual basis. We then discuss the book with the child to help with comprehension and also to explain any words they may not have understood. Many of the children come from homes where English is not the first language.

We find it a rewarding experience. They are generally very enthusiastic about wanting to read to someone on a one-to-one basis. Indeed some who are not among our allocated children will sometimes ask if they can stay in at playtime to read to us.

We all hope that that our visits to the school will not only help the children with their vocabulary and comprehension but also give them a life-long love of reading.

Sheila Gibbs

Traidcraft

At the PCC meeting on 18 September 2008 it was decided that we would stop selling Fair Trade products in the church on a monthly basis.

Ginny commented at the meeting 'on what a good job Mary-Gabrielle Blanchet had done with Fair Trade over the years'.

Thank to Mary and all the sealing team and all the parishioners who supported the stall.

Our church is now serving only fairly-traded tea and coffee.

Communications

The Clarion, our web site and the Sunday service sheet continue to provide information. Many thanks to the fabric group who turn up faithfully each week to fold and stuff!

The Clarion

The Clarion is available in Church usually on the last Sunday before the next month and is also sent to some people in the UK and far away who want to keep in touch with what is happening at St Mary's.

The purpose of The Clarion is to inform, educate, stimulate, and occasionally amuse readers and a good mix of all these is the aim. It also contains all the official details from the parish register, readings at services, notices of planned events, the names of people whose Year's Mind occurs during the month, and the Parish Directory.

John McVeigh, the Parish Administrator, coordinates the collection of material for the monthly issue, and sees to the pagination, depending on how much material is available. The hope is that before long the Clarion can be sent either by e-mail or via the website to most people presently receiving a hard copy or opting for this facility.

The Clarion is the parish 'voice' *par excellence*, and to make as many people's voice heard as possible, everyone is encouraged to send in material, of whatever kind, but ideally by e-mail, either to the Parish Office, or to my e-mail address.

Verena Tschudin

Social Events

Parish Lunch

First of all a special thank you goes to Sylvia Gregory, who for so many years has undertaken the organising of the Parish Lunches.

Since taking over from Sylvia in the autumn there have been six Parish Lunches and two special outreach meals, one for the Earl's Court Community Project and a dinner for the West London Homeless Concerns. We have been very busy!

Many thanks go to all who stalwartly helped to prepare and assist in the preparation for all our meals.

I would like to say a big thank you to David for all his help so willingly given on all these occasions.

Margarete Geier

Summer Fair 2008

The Summer Fair was once again a great success for St Mary's, raising just under £6000, which was split between the two nominated charities of the Universal Beneficent Society (UBS) and International Health Partners (IHP). Both charities undertake vital work here in the UK and overseas. UBS provides help and support to the older generation who for whatever reason find themselves vulnerable and often isolated. IHP provides medical supplies and support for use in conflict and poorer areas of the world.

As well as the usual books, bric-à-brac, plants and cake stalls, there was a very well stocked raffle and some very impressive lots for the Silent Auction. This did particularly well, given the lots from James Parfitt, Quentin Blake and Ken Howard, RA, the latter's lot provoking something of a 'bidding war'! We also had a Krispy Kreme stall for the first time, which proved very popular, particularly serving as an energy boost for those having spent a full day at the fair!

The Sunday School also had a stall at the fair, the proceeds of which went towards their sponsorship of Alex, their adopted child in Uganda.

A big thank you to everyone who helped at the 2008 fair.

Fiona Brown

Church Garden

The gardens remains popular with local workmen, residents and visitors alike, and is very well used and appreciated, despite the continuous din from local building works.

A big thank you must go out to Audrey Pine of all of her work in the gardens over the years; she will be sadly missed. Also to Boo Simpson, Elizabeth Davson, Julia Pringle, Paul Hauf, Mary Meeson and all who continue to maintain the gardens.

Verger's Report 2008

The last year has seen the completion of several major maintenance tasks, including completion of the redecoration and relighting of the church hall, which has created a brighter and better lit facility, as well as reducing a heavy weekly expenditure on light bulbs. Spring 2008 saw us having to replace both the kitchen and vestry hot water and heating boilers as both of the old units expired around the same time due to age. Unfortunately one of the main church boilers also required major work during 2008. However all of this work should put us in good stead for the future.

The church hall continues to be a well used facility with a regular weekly daytime hiring by Paintpots Creative Classes as well as regular evening bookings from local community groups. On Saturday and Sunday, church activities permitting, the hall is hired out on a sessional basis, particularly for children's birthday parties. On Saturdays the upper room of the church hall complex is used by Soundsteps keyboard classes. Thanks are due to Trent Jardine, our regular early morning cleaner, for his commitment in keeping the hall complex clean, as well as being willing to assist with tasks where two pairs of hands are better than one.

It continues to be a great pleasure to be a part of the many-faceted team that is St Mary The Boltons. One of the huge strengths of the church is the many

members of the congregation who give their time in many varied ways, all of which make the task of vergers here so much more fulfilling. A huge thank you to Ginny, Ruth and John for their continued encouragement and advice as I have settled in to the routines and requirements of my role here.

The Sacristy

Elizabeth Graham looked after other sacristan duties, such as the preparations for setting up the altar for services, as well as looking after the clergy vestments and supplies for communion. In addition, Sylvia Gregory helped with sacristy duties on Sundays. Margarete washed church linens and Anne Garten ironed them. A very big thank you to all.

Dave Ireton

Trusts

In January 2008 the London Diocesan Fund promulgated new procedures to streamline the process whereby parishes can claim funds from the many trusts where the Diocese acts as custodian trustee. In most cases PCCs are themselves the managing trustees as well as beneficiaries and this process also helps to make sure that the purposes of the original trust are being maintained. St Mary's PCC is the managing trustee of three separate trusts.

Louisa Wilson Bequest

This trust is the legacy of Miss Wilson who died in 1949 and according to the London Diocesan Fund, the trust instrument is the Will of Miss Wilson, dated 8 February 1949. The purpose of the trust is restricted to either purchasing a house that is suitable for use as a vicarage or the funds are to remain invested and the income applied as an augmentation to the existing endowment of the church of St Mary the Boltons. The funds are currently invested in shares of the CBF Investment Fund and the market value at the end of 2008 of the 3302 shares held in the trust was £30,645.

Income is paid directly by the custodian to Diocesan Stipends Fund as 'reimbursement for part of the stipend of the clergy in the parish'. In recent years this has been about £1200 per annum.

St Peter's Trust

This trust was originally established in 1926 for the benefit of St Peter's Church, Cranley Gardens, with which St Mary's was united in 1972. The deeds were most recently amended in the early 1990s and the trust has a variety of purposes including: payment of expenses of office of the clergy of the parish, the repair and maintenance of the church, its furniture and ornaments and upkeep of services (including music and organ). Income can also be used to pay for contributions to the London Diocesan Fund. Income from the fund has not been claimed in recent years, but in November the PCC passed the appropriate resolutions to claim funds amounting to £2,838 from the custodian trustee. The assets of the fund currently consist of a deposit in the CBF Deposit fund of £10,281 and 1051 shares in the CBF investment fund, which had a value at the end of 2008 of £9,754. At same time as claiming the accumulated income, the PCC also resolved to switch £5,000 of the permanent endowment capital at present held in the CBF Deposit Fund into shares of the CBF Investment fund. The investment switch had not been effected by the year end and the claim for income was also in preparation.

Redcliffe Gardens Trust

The principal asset of this trust is the property known as 11 Redcliffe Gardens. This was sold on a 99-year lease in 1999 and the Trust receives a ground rent payable in December each year. The ground rent is currently £5,000 and will double every 25 years. The ground rent was paid late in 2007 and once again the amount due in December 2008 had not been received at the time of writing this report in February 2009. Although the original tenant was a charity, the Chemical Dependency Centre, as a result of a sale and leaseback transaction in 2007 the tenant became Beauly Properties Ltd and the charity moved out, following a merger with Action on Addiction, another charity working in the same field. The property is currently unoccupied. The Trust's property adviser has been asked to inspect and provide a report.

In 2008 income was received from this Trust's other funds, which are under the direct control of the PCC that continue to be held in the CBF (Central Board of Finance) Church of England Deposit Fund and from the sum treated as endowment and held by the London Diocesan Fund as custodian trustee. In November the PCC passed the appropriate resolutions to claim the income funds from the custodian trustee and the claim was being prepared at the year end. The endowment capital held by the custodian trustee also invested in the

CBF deposit fund. Towards the end of the year the PCC, as managing trustee of the trust, decided to switch half of the endowment capital from the CBF deposit fund into the CBF Investment Fund, although this switch has not yet been carried through.

In keeping with established policy of giving away the ground rent, PCC resolved to disburse this sum that currently amounts to £5,000 per annum. Full details of the beneficiaries are set out in the Redcliffe Gardens Trust accounts and it should be recognised that in 2008 the grant to the PCC of St Mary's towards the maintenance of the church was made to strengthen the PCC's budget and thereby enable the PCC to release its own funds in support of its overseas giving programme

The CBF Funds

The CBF Deposit Fund is a specialist money market fund managed by CCLA Investment Management Ltd and is only available to charitable organisations with objects closely connected to the Church of England. It is intended for funds that 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 with a carefully selected list of banks and building societies. In view of the ongoing turmoil in the financial and money markets it is worth noting that this is a money market fund managed by CCLA, therefore the Trust's risk exposure is to the fund rather than to the underlying business of CCLA. The fund's managers place money in the London inter-bank market; in effect a deposit in this fund provides exposure to many banks rather than a single institution. At the end of December 2008 the managers reported that the fund carried a triple AAA/VI rating by Fitch Ratings (the highest rating available) and the size of the fund was £1,058m. The average interest rate payable on this fund in the first 11 months of 2008 was 5.5% and in their annual report on the fund the manager commented that 'the present high demand for credit has meant that money market interest rates sit at a premium to official rates, to the benefit of the Fund. We expect a premium to continue in the near term although not at the high levels seen in the recent past'. In February 2009 the rate being paid on the fund had fallen to just over 2%.

The CBF Investment Fund is also managed by CCLA and is promoted as being a suitable 'all-in-one' long-term fund for most church organizations. It has a highly diversified and well-balanced spread of investments, and the focus is on

delivering attractive, growing income while also meeting capital growth requirements. It is aligned with the Church of England's Ethical Policy.

More information about each of these funds in which the trusts' assets are invested and the ethical investment policy can be found on the CCLA website www.ccla.co.uk

Leo Fraser-Mackenzie, Hon Treasurer

Gift-Aid Scheme

In 2008 a total refund of £15,070 was received from HM Revenue & Customs (which includes the Inland Revenue, as was) in respect of donations made in the 2007/08 tax year to St Mary's and its associated charities. This represents the tangible benefit obtained from the use made of the Gift Aid scheme by people who have been kind enough to register for it.

With effect from the start of the 2008/09 tax year, the basic rate of income tax dropped from 22% to 20% and the rate at which registered charities could claim a tax refund in respect of a basic rate taxpayer dropped from 22/78ths or 28.205% to 20/80ths or 25% of the net amount received by the charity from the donor. However, in recognition of the negative impact of this change on recipient charities, the powers-that-be agreed that a transitional arrangement would apply, which would make up the amount otherwise lost by charities up to the end of the 2010/11 tax year.

Beyond that date the Gift Aid enhancement factor will drop to 25%, i.e. the charity will receive an extra quarter of the amount originally handed over. For higher-rate tax-payers, who receive an additional personal refund following a Gift Aid donation, on top of the refund claimable by the charity, the enhancement factor will amount to an impressive 66.6%.

If you do not already participate in this scheme and would like to know more about the process, please contact me. I am available night and day (well, within reason).

John Barker

Fabric of the Building and Ornaments

St Mary's continues to provide an ambience for the people who enter the gardens and church that attracts admiration, pleasure and, for many, spiritual resonance. The fabric of the building remains overall in excellent condition after the refurbishment some years ago. The various ornaments, including (as just two examples) the Pieta and the Treasury cabinet, help to create a reflective and uplifting scene for visitors.

Huge thanks to the many who help to keep the church in such good condition, including the skilful, meticulous work of the 'Thursday morning group', whose core members are Ann Garten, Malcolm Goddard and Julia Pringle. Many thanks, too, to Trent Jardine who has maintained high standards in his cleaning work, while vergers have come and gone around him. We are now very pleased to have David Ireton in place and the even more recently arrived John McVeigh, whose work as Parish Administrator also contributes well to the condition of the building and the hall.

Arthur Tait

Meetings of the Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod held two meetings during 2008. The first was at St Luke's, Redcliffe Gardens, on 31 January. The 'public' part of the meeting focussed on climate change, environmental issues and the role of the church. This was led by the Reverend Ruth Lampard, then Chaplain to the Bishop of Kensington, with support from Dr Cheryl Freeman, Director of Social Transformation for Alpha International.

Ruth spoke about environmental issues including the contrasting impact of rising sea levels on places as varied as London and Bangladesh, with the associated question of faith -- who is my neighbour? She described the Church of England's measures to reduce its carbon footprint, including the encouragement for each parish to appoint an individual Champion to progress matters.

Dr Freeman described actions taken by Holy Trinity, Brompton including an environmental audit which threw up many relatively simple improvement ideas for action.

The second meeting was held at Holy Trinity, Brompton, the first of the new Synod at the start of its three year term of office. The main discussion continued to focus on serious concerns raised at the January meeting about the damaging effects on parishes of long interregnums, the current example being that at Holy Trinity, Sloane Square. The Archdeacon had advised against a resolution on this, such as that proposed at the January meeting, for the Diocesan Synod as unlikely to achieve any progress. He proposed instead that he should discuss the matter with representatives from the Deanery Synod to consider ways to reduce the length of interregnums. This course of action was agreed by the meeting, and a small group was formed to plan with the Archdeacon how the matter should be brought to its next meeting in February 2009.

Both meetings covered the usual range of Reports from the General and Diocesan Synods, the London Diocesan Board for Schools, the Area Council, School Governorships, and other relevant appointments and elections.
Arthur Tait.

Children's Advocate

The Child Protection Policy is reviewed every year in September 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. No changes were made in 2008.

Rev Ruth Lampard has 'taken on' the Sunday School as part of her brief and is ensuring that all the relevant people have the correct Criminal Records Bureau checks in place. An important part of the responsibility of the parish is to ensure that all children on our premises are not only protected in law, but are

not harmed in any way. Close liaison therefore between Ruth and myself as a PCC appointee makes this responsibility easier.

Verena Tschudin