



ST MARY'S  
BARNES

*In the heart of our community*



## Annual Review of 2023



[www.stmarybarnes.org](http://www.stmarybarnes.org)



St Marys  
Church Barnes



@stmarybarnes

# Rector's Report

## Summary

I will start my report with a summary of the key parts of church life in 2023:

The parish's civic role was paramount in celebrating the coronation of King Charles III with a special service of thanksgiving and tea party for the local community. We celebrated the 60th anniversary of FiSH and its excellent work locally. More sadly we marked the first anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine with a special evening service. Similarly we encouraged people needing a 'warm space' during the cost of living crisis to use the church during the week and in hosting a weekly tea & chat.

The core of the church's life in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ has been encouraged by the large number of baptisms, weddings, and confirmations. We had an enjoyable START course on Christian basics. We have seen a gradual recovery in congregational numbers generally, getting back near to pre-pandemic, and a consistent number worshipping online through regular streaming. The wider involvement of local people in St Mary's continued to flourish through the events organised by the Friends of St Mary's and the use of Kitson Hall.

Being outward looking from the parish is also central to our mission. We have continued to do this through the payments made to the Parish Support Fund helping churches across south London in the Diocese of Southwark. Through fundraising of the Church and Friends, more than £32,000 was donated to local and other charities, the majority of which are longer term relationships, also with volunteering and prayer support.

The church building and grounds continue to be well used by individuals and local organisations. The church facilities have been enhanced by the installation of a new audio-visual system. The historic link with the Hoare family was celebrated through the dedication of a new memorial in the Langton Chapel.

I was fortunate to have a sabbatical from the parish in the summer, and used this to recharge my batteries mentally and spiritually and enjoy more time with Alice and other family and friends. I am grateful to the churchwardens for leading the parish while I was away, our administrator Cheryl Cole for, as ever, doing so much to keep the show on the road, and to Rev'd James Marston our Associate Priest for providing additional priestly ministry. We share James 50:50 with St Michael's, but the parish had the greater part of his time during the sabbatical.

It has been a pleasure to see James Marston developing his ministry with us during 2023, and successfully adjusting to the different styles and needs of the two parishes! James put up with, and occasionally also flourished in living on a houseboat by Kew Bridge, but its delights were starting to wane, and I am glad he was able to move back on land to a flat in January 2024.

Each year there are comings and goings in those who lead ministry and key aspects of church life. Early in the year the diocese confirmed that Rev'd Heinz Schultheiss, who is a retired German Lutheran pastor, could be licensed to preach and lead any service other than communion, and I am grateful for the gifts and experience he brings. At the APCM we thanked Steve Cox for his service as churchwarden, in particular for the new ideas and energy he brought to the role, and welcomed back Paul Teverson as churchwarden alongside Fouki Heller. We also thanked Judy Gowing for many years service as PCC Secretary, and Helen Gibbs for stepping into her shoes.

In late summer we were sad to lose Julie Smith, our youth worker, due to her move to Australia with her husband's work. We have not lost her entirely as she keeps in touch online and recorded a video message to play at our new year's service! Meanwhile Jackie Davis has done a terrific job supporting our children and families, with the continued strength of the Tuesday baby & toddler service, weekly Sunday club, and monthly all age All-Together Eucharist.

## Rector's Report

Music continues to be at the heart of our worship and an important way in which many are involved in the life of the church. Toby Ward moved on as Director of Music in the autumn, and in the interim while we recruited, Julia Daniels did a great job working with the choir in preparing for the Christmas season. It is great news that Ben Markovic became our new Director of Music in January 2024.

In the autumn, Geoffrey Barnett made the transition to become a Lay Reader *Emeritus*, like Christabel Gairdner the year before. Similarly, Fiona Barnett became a Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary *Emeritus*. It was very good to have the opportunity to thank Fiona and Geoffrey for all that they have given to St Mary's, and all they continue to give.

Of course there are always challenges in parish life - we are commissioned by Christ to 'make disciples of all nations' and to share the good news of God's love for all - and so can never rest on our laurels. We live in an area of peace and prosperity for some, but not for others. The habit of churchgoing has been lost by many during the pandemic, and gradually over many years before. The church is not seen in a positive way by many people.

## Conclusion

However overall, St Mary's is a very special place in which to have the privilege of leading the ministry and mission as incumbent.

This comes with huge thanks to so many of you, for the support, love and friendship given to Alice and me in 2023.

[revdjames@stmarybarnes.org](mailto:revdjames@stmarybarnes.org)



## Churchwardens Report

We are delighted to report that 2023 saw a gradual return to pre-pandemic levels of in person attendance at services and for church-based activities. The streaming of services has enabled a regular number to attend remotely.

In May we celebrated the Coronation of King Charles with church services and a tea party that was attended by 250 people from the community. Our Rector James went on a 3 months sabbatical and returned refreshed both physically and spiritually in August. We are grateful to Rev'd James Marston and Bishop Richard Harries for presiding and preaching at services throughout that period and for all their support during the Rector's sabbatical. We are delighted that James M is now anchored on dry land, and living amongst us in Barnes, after an extended flotation on the houseboat. We are grateful for all that he has contributed to life at St Mary's and for the outreach role he plays in the community. We welcome Heinz Schultheiss to the clergy team. We wish to give our especial thanks to our Rector James for his unassuming leadership, his spiritual guidance, his dedicated ministry and for all his new initiatives reaching out into the community. A number of small changes, judiciously made, can be as effective as wider reforms. We welcome the arrival of our new Director of Music Ben Markovic, and wish to thank Julia Daniels for preparing our choir for the Carol Service as well for her continuing work with the junior choir.

With the departure of Julie Smith our youth worker, Jackie Davis has been kept very busy successfully leading the children's services, the growing baby and toddler service on Tuesday mornings, and making St Mary's a church that welcomes and caters for children and their families.

But none of the events and successes of this year would have happened without the support of so many dedicated volunteers. The Annual Review shows the wealth of activities reported on by the many different groups. We wish to express our gratitude to each and every volunteer and for all they do to keep St Mary's at the heart of the community, making it a warm and welcoming place for all to enjoy. We would especially like to thank our parish safeguarding officer, Lis Munden and her outgoing colleague, Natasha Mold, in helping to keep St Mary's a safe environment for all.

Once again, we are indebted to Peter Boyling for chairing the Fabric Committee and whose report we gratefully adopt. The office of a churchwarden is a venerable one going back to the time of Archbishop Langton. It carries with it legal responsibilities and duties that will be off-putting to some. We can only say that it has been a privilege for us to serve in this role and we sincerely hope that in the years ahead many others not already in leadership roles will come forward so that St Mary's has the benefit of new energies and ideas. We wish to thank you all for the support you have given to both of us in our role as wardens throughout the year.

*Fouki Heller and Paul Teverson*





## Barnes Charity Bicycle Sale 2023

[www.barnescharitybikesale.co.uk](http://www.barnescharitybikesale.co.uk)

After weeks of preparation, we were blessed with lovely weather and a long queue outside the churchyard for the bike sale in September. This year, we received 195 bikes and all but 10 were sold on to new owners. The remainder were past repair and used for spare parts. The team recycles as much as possible.

The sale raised an amazing £18,500 (including Gift Aid) - a 10% increase on 2022. This is one of the most lucrative fund-raising events for St Mary's and brings a new group of people into St Mary's every year. In the light of the challenging budget, the team decided to keep the lion's share of the proceeds with St Mary's, but our charities (Castelnau Centre, AgeUK Richmond, FiSH, UTS and Glass Door) all received over £1,000 from the sale.

The cumulative total raised since we started (more years ago than anyone can remember) is **£140,000** for St Mary's and our partner charities. The sale is run by the 'Inner Tube': Trisha Hawkins James Kyrle-Pope, Sanchi Murison, Richard Nickels, Matthew Purser and me.

Huge thanks to all the volunteers: mechanics who grease, tighten brakes, replace tyres, and clean the bikes and admin angels who register the bikes, making sure there is accountability to the donor and sell the bikes.

We're always looking for new volunteers. If you would like to join a friendly team working on a fun event, we would love to hear from you.

**SATURDAY, 14th SEPTEMBER 2024**

**9.30am - 12noon**

Judy Gowing

[judygowing@gmail.com](mailto:judygowing@gmail.com)

07703 312913

## Barnes Team Ministry

The three Church of England churches in Barnes are legally joined as a Team Ministry. While we keep our own PCCs, finances and distinct ethos, the team structure gives us all, clergy and laity, extra strength for our mission and ministry from receiving and giving mutual support. The membership of the Team Council includes the Team clergy, Readers and Churchwardens with two elected lay members from each church.

The three churches bring different but complementary styles of churchmanship and each church can learn from each other's gifts. The Team Council seeks to develop the relationships between the churches, with opportunities to share in worship, and joint activities.

During the year the clergy continued to meet regularly to exchange views, plan for joint events, including services, and offer one another support where useful. The churches continued to support key projects in Barnes, including FiSH Neighbourhood Care, The Castelnau Centre and the Barnes Foodbank. Churches were supporting each other with advice, eg on recruitment of young people's workers, on financial management and on management of our halls. As members of Churches Together in Barnes we join in activities through that route.

Michael Murison and Geoffrey Barnett have been loyal St Mary's members of the Team Council, and have stood down during the year. We thank them for their valued service.

*Peter Boyling, Secretary to the Team Council*



## Bellringers Report 2023

2023 was a vibrant and busy year at Barnes with the first few months very much dominated by teaching 'Ring for the King' recruits in readiness for the Coronation. We also found ourselves becoming media stars when, fuelled by the interest in the RFTK initiative, TV crews from both London and abroad filmed our training sessions. Coronation day saw us ringing first thing in the morning then returning in the afternoon for a wonderful tea party attended by around 50 people. 35 people in total rang for the King that afternoon!

Our tower opening as part of the Barnes Fair on 8<sup>th</sup> July raised £197.70 for the church. July saw the annual Barnes summer tour taking us to Hartington in the Derbyshire Dales. Despite rather a lot of rain, it was a most successful trip and we look forward to returning to Derbyshire in Summer 2024.

December saw us once again ringing handbells in our local community; Viera Grey and Walsingham Lodge care homes, the Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability, and the carols in the churchyard. Our ringing as part of the Barnes Christmas Festival saw us raising over £130 for the homeless charity, Glass Door, in just one hour!

Our Saturday learners' practices have continued to flourish, as have our Friday evening Quarter Peal attempts and more advanced practices. Sunday service ringing has been very well attended throughout the year. We also had a good attendance on both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day this year.

Wendy Archibald, Tower Captain

[towercaptain@stmarybarnes.org](mailto:towercaptain@stmarybarnes.org)



## Children, Family and Youth Work

Children and family work at St Mary's Barnes continues to thrive, with many families attending and engaging in services and events, a number of whom are core members of our congregation who attend regularly.

Our work continues with the aim of highlighting Christian responsibilities and thoughts on social, political, and environmental issues. We work to engage children and young people in taking action, and in understanding service and stewardship at an age-appropriate level.

In September 2023, Julie Smith, our youth worker left her post due to relocation. This was a loss to St Mary's, however Julie worked with the team to ensure that there was a good handover and so as minimal impact as possible on the work we do.

The Tuesday Toddler remains popular and is well attended. There continues to be a steady flow of new families attending as children move on to nursery and so numbers are consistent. The feedback has been positive, asserting that both children and carers enjoy the group and appreciate that it is welcoming to all.

Sunday Club attendance is steady with an average of ten to twelve children attending each session and thirty-eight children registered. Given that St Mary's does not have a linked school that would provide a flow of children, the numbers in this organically grown group are very positive. A range of methods, such as discussion, questioning, storytelling, and games are utilized alongside crafting, reflection, and prayer in order to provide access to faith that is fun, varied and meets the differing needs of all who attend.

The committed team of volunteers continue to support the children in their exploration of Christianity in an age-appropriate manner and in safe environment. All-Together Services are attended by both families and the wider congregation, with feedback continuing to be encouraging. This is now an established way of worship at St Mary's and important in allowing different generations to come together to share their faith in a manner that is meaningful to all. The addition of the children's choir singing at these services, along with the adult choir is a great step forward in acknowledging that all ages should be able to participate in these services.

After a year off, we will again be running an Entry to Communion course in April 24, with a Service during our Pentecost Service on 19th May. We are delighted to be able to guide and support our children in the next step in their faith journey. Numerous other child and family activities have also taken place alongside our core work.

Annual events such as the Christingle service, the Nativity were well attended and provided opportunity for those who do not attend church regularly to be involved alongside those who do. We have also been involved in events such as the Christmas Fair, the July Open Day, and the King's Coronation. Our second 'Lent Litter Pick' took place on Saturday 23rd March with twelve eager participants stepping up to do their part to contributing to the local community.

Our established relationship with the Scouts is ongoing and they will be attending our St George's Service on 21st April to renew their promises. As in previous years, they will also be invited to various evening sessions to help them earn their faith badge, whilst also strengthening their links with the church.

In the next 12 months, we will continue to nurture and grow, with a particular focus in forming stronger working relationships with local schools.

*Jackie Davis*

[children@stmarybarnes.org](mailto:children@stmarybarnes.org)





## Christmas Cards 2023

We had a (surprisingly!) successful year selling St Mary's cards again. We printed one new card and sold over 4100 cards in total. Most were sold in church at the Christmas Fair, on Saturday mornings and on Sundays after the 10am service leading up to Christmas, but also quite a number from the church 'web shop'. After expenses we raised £1623.71 for the church and our charities, making it our best year since 2020!

We are looking for a new team to take on this 'seasonal' job. The systems are all well in place and both of us are willing to help and support. It is a very satisfying job and brings so many of our local community into the church. The parts could be broken down, for example one person could source and arrange printing of a new card (we have regular designers and printers to put it together), another could be looking after online orders and yet another making sure the cards can be sold at the back of church on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Please consider and ....get in touch!



Trisha Hawkins & Claire Boyling

[Trisha.hawkins@confmed.co.uk](mailto:Trisha.hawkins@confmed.co.uk)

[Claire.boyling@gmail.com](mailto:Claire.boyling@gmail.com)

## Coffee Shop Report

The Coffee Shop in the Melvill Room is open every Saturday morning serving fairly traded coffee, tea and homemade cakes at very competitive prices. Each week a different charity hosts the event and as a result, in 2023, we raised the remarkable amount of £11,000 in donations to local, national and international charities and organisations. This is an impressive result and entirely due to our fantastic team of volunteer baristas and to the generosity of our customers. The coffee shop also provides an opportunity to introduce St Mary's and its beautiful building to guests and to casual visitors. A win-win situation!

We would love to welcome additional 'baristas' so if you have a favourite charity and would like to join the roster please contact me. Fresh coffee and tea provided – just bring some scrumptious cakes and a couple of willing volunteers. And we would especially like to see more of our congregation attending so please bear it in mind when you're out and about on a Saturday morning.

Claire Boyling, Co-ordinator, [claire.boyling@gmail.com](mailto:claire.boyling@gmail.com)



**ST MARY'S  
BARNES**  
*In the heart of our community*

### Saturday Morning Charity Coffee Shop

2023 has proved to be our most successful year yet thanks to lots of support from our baristas, bakers and customers

THE TOTAL AMOUNT RAISED FOR  
GOOD CAUSES IS OVER £11,000

All of the charities below have benefitted from the profits

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Age UK Richmond</li> <li>Alpha Course</li> <li>Athlone Trust</li> <li>Barnes Football (Juniors)</li> <li>Bishop's Lent Appeal</li> <li>Born Free Foundation</li> <li>Castelnau Community Centre</li> <li>Christian Aid</li> <li>Combat Stress</li> <li>Cornwall Air Ambulance</li> <li>Crisis at Christmas</li> <li>Diabetes UK</li> <li>Guide Dogs for the Blind</li> <li>Kicks Count</li> <li>Liveability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meadow House Hospice</li> <li>Meniere's Society</li> <li>Myeloma UK</li> <li>Off the Record</li> <li>Pancreatic Cancer Research</li> <li>Prosperity for Ukraine</li> <li>Queen Elizabeth's Foundation</li> <li>Richmond Area Scouts</li> <li>River Thames Boat Project</li> <li>RNLI</li> <li>Royal Hospital for Neurodisability</li> <li>Save the Children</li> <li>Shadow Road Productions</li> <li>St Mary's Barnes Bellingrings and Music Fund</li> <li>Under Tree Schools (South Sudan)</li> </ul>
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Should anyone living locally wish to raise funds for their charity or local organisation do let us know. We have all the coffee making equipment. We ask you to bring cakes, milk, flowers for the table and encourage all your friends to come. It's a fun way to raise money for your cause. Just drop a note in to our Church Office or email [office@stmarybarnes.org](mailto:office@stmarybarnes.org)



www.stmarybarnes.org







@stmarybarnes

## Churchyard Garden



It is wonderful to see our Barnes neighbours using our churchyard for relaxing in the sun. They, like us, greatly appreciate the results of the hard work of our gardening team, our lawn mowers and our path sweepers who tend it so carefully week by week through the year.

## Communications Group

The Communications Group continues to promote events and the church message via the weekly pew sheet, internal and external noticeboards, our website and social media. Our social media presence on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook is growing, particularly Instagram where we now have over 800 followers. We publicise the upcoming Saturday morning coffee shops and associated charities in the pew sheet and on social media, and have recently put together a poster showing the charities we have supported and total amount raised.

We continue to work closely with AJ, our Kitson Hall administrator, and also with Jackie, our Children and Families' worker. In our January 2024 meeting, we were joined by the diocesan lead on digital giving and the digital giving officer who provided us with very helpful feedback and advice about updating and simplifying our donations system. As a result, our ongoing projects are now focussed on this, along with reconfiguring the Payaz machine, looking at how we best promote and collect Gift Aid, and redesigning the donations page on our website. Separately, we are continuing to promote our Sponsor a Chair appeal and reassessing our presence on social media and whether we would benefit from using other growing platforms such as TikTok.

PLEASE DONATE

[www.stmarybarnes.org](http://www.stmarybarnes.org)



ONE OFF DONATION

use your mobile phone camera to scan this code and click the link shown



CONTACTLESS DEVICES

we have two in church



REGULAR GIVING

please speak to a churchwarden or steward or pick up a form in church or email [office@stmarybarnes.org](mailto:office@stmarybarnes.org)

'God loves a cheerful giver' (2 Corinthians 9:7)

At St Mary's, we depend on the generous giving of individuals. We do not have a cash collection during the service, but there are easy alternative ways to give. Thank you for your support enabling us to continue serving our community.



In the heart of our community




@stmarybarnes



St Mary's Church Barnes



Charity Commission  
No: 1134840

## Environment Group

We have a responsibility to seek to protect God's natural world, particularly from the threat of climate change. The Church of England aims to attain net carbon zero by 2030.

We continue to celebrate the natural world in our worship, through events such as Creation Sunday, and through holding some services outdoors.

In managing our churchyard our gardeners make a careful choice of the plants we grow. They added a bug hotel this year to the existing bird boxes, and we have replaced the old compost bins with new ones to be used environmentally. A large bough of the old yew tree came down in a storm; we will ensure that the wood is properly reused.



We await better technology to enable us to replace the gas boilers we use in the church and the Kitson Hall. Meanwhile we are concentrating on ways to use the heat in the hall wisely, and we are drawing up plans to improve its insulation. And until we reduce our carbon use the PCC is offsetting it by payments to approved green projects overseas.

On the environment page of the church website we encourage good practice, individually and jointly, including recycling and walking and cycling wherever we can. Another litter pick walk with the children in our congregation is about to take place.

So far St Mary's has achieved a bronze level Eco-Church award for our results, and we are now working on the silver award.

We thank the members of our planning group for their work. Do join us, and bring your enthusiasms to strengthen our efforts. We do need an environment champion, to encourage us to greater efforts. Is this you please?

*Peter Boyling, Member of the Environment Group*



## Fabric Committee

The Fabric Committee supports the PCC in maintaining our grade II\* listed building in good condition and improve our facilities.

We are pleased that the diocese approved our proposal for a better audio system and a drop down screen to show pictures at church and external hire events. After a very long wait for the parts to arrive, they were installed before Christmas and are proving very successful.

Before the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the rehallowing of the church we were able to install a new wall plaque to commemorate the life of Canon Juergen Simonson, who as our Rector did so much to revitalise the church after the 1978 fire.

We are still working on proposals to add to the number of toilets in the church. Initial proposals were far too expensive; current proposals are creating practical issues that we are seeking to resolve.

We continually seek to reduce our use of fuel at St Mary's, but double glazing the top windows in the lantern over the altar proved much more expensive than we could justify funding. We are focussing our efforts at the moment on the Kitson Hall, where we expect to get more cost effective results.

We are carrying out periodic checks of our new fire alarm system, in between the professional checks every six months. Apologies to those hirers of the Melvill Room who were subject to alarm bells due to my inexperience in doing the checks!

We are as ever grateful to the members of the Fabric Committee who give their time and expertise to make these things (and many others) happen.

*Peter Boyling, Chair, Fabric Committee*



## Faith in Action Group

One of St Mary's priorities is Outreach. In response to the many blessings we receive we should be generous in serving the needs of people locally, nationally and internationally. So we promote the work of a small number of charities in each category. Their work should challenge the way we see the world and our part in it.

Month by month we give information about each organisation, and we encourage prayer, financial support and practical help for them. One or other of our charities is always among the special prayers for the week. You can find information about our charities at the back of the church. It is good that some of our congregation volunteer for local charities: do join us if you have some spare time!

We donate to our charities proceeds from our Friends of St Mary's events, the Charity Bike Sale, Christmas Fair and the sale of Christmas cards. In 2023 we donated to:

Castelnau Community Centre	£1819
Under Tree Schools in South Sudan	£4916
Age UK Richmond	£1814
Glass Door (support for the homeless)	£3109
FiSH (neighbourhood care for older people)	£4509
Welcare (support for families with younger children)	£1814
Bishops Lent Appeal 2023	£597

Some St Mary's events donate funds to other causes, contributing to a total from St Mary's in the year of £32,570. Of that we have donated £2876 to the Princess Basma Centre in Jerusalem, a project that JulieAnn Sewell is close to, recognising the special concerns we have for Israel and Palestine at present.

In addition Christian Aid raises funds in Barnes each May. And on top of all that our Saturday coffee shops raise funds weekly for a wide range of charities. In 2023 these coffee shops donated a total of £11,096.

Many thanks to my fellow members of the Faith in Action group who have championed specific charities: Helen Arianpour, Phil Bladen, Anthony Figgis, Judy Gowing, Veronica Schroter, and Annie Sullivan. *Peter Boyling, For the Faith in Action group, supporting the PCC*



Christmas Cards stall



General View of the Christmas Fair



Second hand books stall



Raffle Stall



Tombola Stall



Bric a Brac stall

## Friends of St Mary's Barnes

The Friends of St Mary's Barnes raise funds for the church and other charities with the aim of enhancing our community role. This year has again been busy with a programme of successful high profile events.

In April 2023 we hosted the launch of **Richard Harries autobiography** *The Shaping of a Soul – a life taken by surprise* with Richard in conversation with Rabbi Baroness Julia Neuberger. In September we hosted the third **Barnes BookFest** with a wide range of speakers including Matt Frei, Lawrence Dallaglio, Robert Peston, Sir Tom Courtenay, Anne Glenconner and Sir Anthony Seldon. This was followed in October with **Lord Michael Heseltine** speaking about the transformation of his country estate *Thenford*.

In July, we hosted the **Barnes Common Artshow** with the theme *Living with Trees*. The **Barnes Charity Fashion Show** returned in October with two sell-out performances. Our **Annual Choral Evensong** in October featured Rt Rev Dr Martin Gainsborough, Bishop of Kingston.

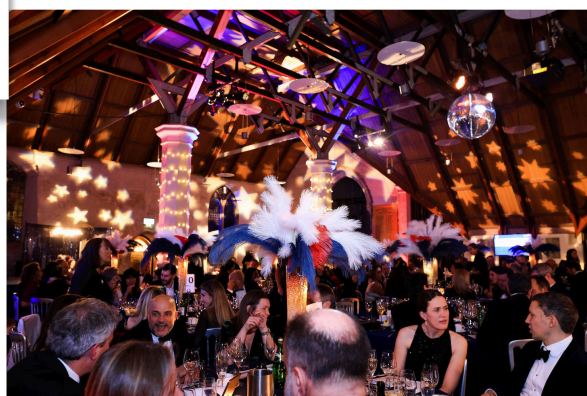
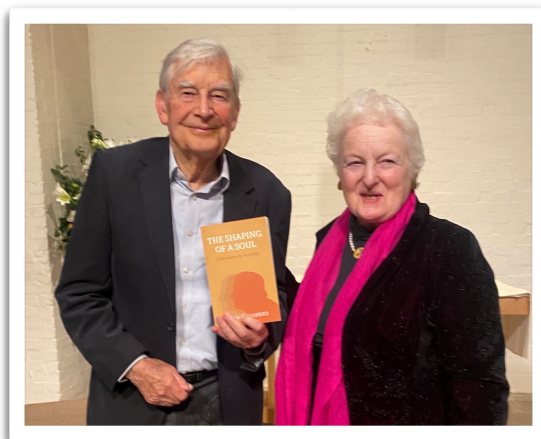
In December we held another **Christmas Cracker** celebrity event. The **Barnes Charity Ball** returned in February with the theme *Midnight in Paris*.

In February we were pleased to contribute to the **40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** celebrations with a display of photographs from Richmond Council and the installation of a plaque in memory of Rev'd Canon Juergen Simonson.

The **Barnes Music Festival 2024** returned in March with the theme *Legends* and a full programme of 35 events over two weeks involving 750 performers including the Kanneh-Mason Trio, Dame Imogen Cooper and Pavel Kolesnikov.

All these events not only bring many new people into the church but generate considerable funds for the church and nominated charities which amounted to £48,000 in 2023. These funds are used to pay for all the church's maintenance and utility costs as well as projects such as the new audio-visual installation.

Contact: Andrew Summers at [friends@stmarybarnes.org](mailto:friends@stmarybarnes.org)



## Flower Team

The flower team was formed in November 2022 and is made of the following helpers: Fiona Barnett, Patty Darke, Rosie Findlater, Judy Gowing, Fouki Heller, Sue Lefroy, Sue Mackworth-Praed, Jay Jay McCarra, Sue Squire and Jo Teverson under the leadership of Judith Blacklock.

We have a weekly rota ensuring two members of the team arrange flowers for the sanctuary and the Langton Chapel, except for Lent and Advent when no flowers are required.

May 2023 marked the Coronation of King Charles and, with the help of Judith, we created flower arrangements in red, white and blue to celebrate that special occasion.

In December the team, along with some members of the congregation, made beautiful wreaths to decorate the church at a special Christmas workshop led by Judith. Our special thanks go to Judith for her guidance and support in leading us and a big thank you to all the flower arrangers who ensure the congregation has beautiful flowers at all our services.

*Fouki Heller*

## Garden of Remembrance

The Garden of Remembrance is a quadrant of lawn directly outside the Church Office where ashes are interred and this is surrounded by paths laid with York Stone flagstones where inscriptions of names of loved ones may be engraved after their death. In 2023, we had three interments of ashes and 16 stone inscriptions. Cheryl Cole, Parish Administrator, [office@stmarybarnes.org](mailto:office@stmarybarnes.org)

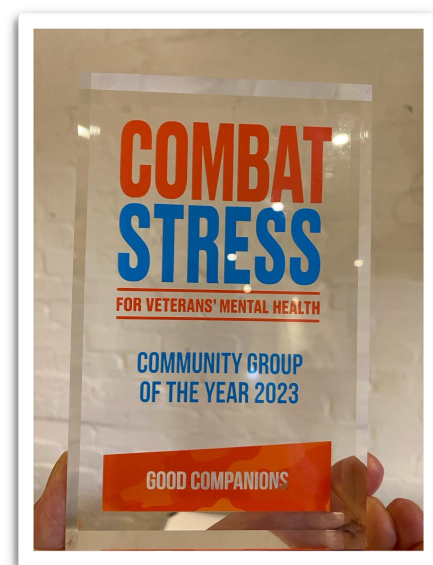
## The Good Companions (2023)

The Good Companions came into existence in the year 2000. It is a socially active group for men with a membership which is mainly of retirement age. On a voluntary basis one or two members organise and run a Lunch once a month. This can be in the member's own home or if that is not possible, then in the Melvill Room, at St Mary's Church, using the Church kitchen and facilities. Occasionally we have our monthly lunch at the Red Lion Pub, Barnes or at the White Swan Twickenham. We had our Christmas Lunch in the Cote Restaurant, Barnes. Wives are always invited to the Christmas Lunch and any other activities outside the monthly lunches.

We encourage members, who have expertise in any activity, to organise and run outings. In the past we have walked over 700 miles on paths such as the Thames Path, and The Ridgeway, We have had boat trips on the Thames, visited The Mansion House, The Law Courts, and The Cavalry Museum, Whitehall. We encourage members to organise trips out and we always include wives in any outings. We actively support one charity – Combat Stress.

In February this year we were awarded 'Community Group of the Year 2023'.

We are always looking for new members. If you are interested in joining The Good Companions, please get in touch with us, via The St Mary's Church Office. *Brian Turk*





## Home Groups

We meet at 2 Mill Hill Road during term time on Wednesday mornings at 10.30am. We read passages in the bible on different themes. During advent we read a book on "The Grace of Waiting" by a doctor who had become a hospital chaplain. And now in Lent we are reading about John the beloved disciple. This is a relaxed and informal group, varying in size between five and eight. You would be very welcome to join us if you'd like to.

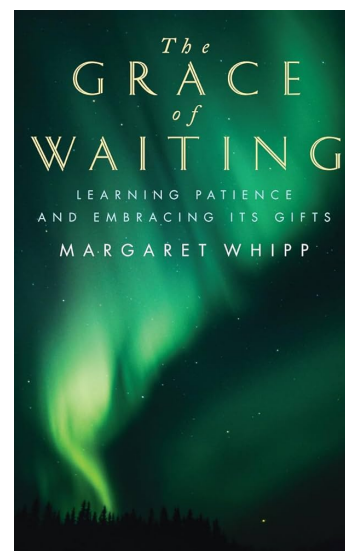
*Fiona Barnett 0208 878 6975*

A home group continues to meet at 20 Berkeley Road. Chris and Lucy Hine have taken on the administration of the group allowing Christabel Gairdner to relinquish this role after 11 years.

She continues with us as a committed member of the group.

We meet on Tuesday evenings from 7-9.30pm for three blocks of 6 weeks over the year. In the past year, we have studied and discussed The Acts of the Apostles, Paul's letters to the Corinthians 1&2 and the books of Ruth and Esther. New members are always welcome.

Contact: Chris and Lucy Hine 0208 748 4852 [lucyhine10@gmail.com](mailto:lucyhine10@gmail.com)



## Hospitality Report

Hospitality events in 2023 were very well received. The best attended was the Cream Tea in early May to mark the Coronation of King Charles. The weather was not encouraging (windy and showery if memory serves me right) but our visitors tucked into over 250 plates of scones and strawberries. Next came All-Day refreshments in Church for Barnes Fair Day which raised over £1,000 for good causes and lots of positive comments from happy customers (especially for our salad lunches).

We organised a Bring and Share Harvest lunch in Kitson Hall in the early autumn and at the end of the year mulled wine and mince pies for our churchyard Carol Service. We continue to offer the ever-popular post-service Sunday coffee and our weekly Saturday morning Coffee Shop (see separate report) and occasional events such as the Easter Dawn Breakfast.

A big thank you to my fellow hospitality committee members and to Wiz and the Sunday coffee team. The St Mary's congregation and the Friends of St Mary's always come up trumps and we are never short of support, generosity, skill and time. Having said that we are growing a bit older so would very much welcome some 'younger' members on the committee please!!

*Claire Boyling & Wiz Dundas*



## Kitson Hall

### Hall Manager

Our hall manager, AJ (Anita Janus), whom we recruited in April 2022, has been running the hall very efficiently.

### Hirings and community use:

It has been an excellent year for the community at Kitson Hall. At the weekends the space was transformed into a party venue for various occasions, whilst during the week it served as an activity space for all ages. Classes included a group offering cycle tuition for toddlers and children, various exercise, yoga, dance, ballet, theatre and fitness classes for children and adults.

Alice Wells, T/A Barnes Petite Performers (BPP), who runs various parent and toddler groups and children's parties, hired the small hall throughout 2023 under license but has decided not to renew when it comes up for renewal in September. It is currently being marketed locally.

The BCA Jumble Sale took place over the October half term in 2023. Barnes Community Players (BCP) hired the hall for their Summer show but did not hold a pre Christmas show in 2023.

### Hallmaster and new remote lock system

Our online booking system, Hallmaster, introduced in 2022, has been working well.

In 2023 we introduced a new remote lock system using keycodes. Hirers are issued number codes instead of keys. This gives us far greater control as the codes, in the case of short term hirers for parties etc, are only valid for actual duration of hire, and reduces the considerable expense of replacing lost keys.

### Hall income and expenditure

Gross income was £100,986, a record by a considerable margin (Gross income in 2022 was £74,200, itself a record), and the net surplus was £45,548, also a record by a considerable margin. AJ is congratulated for all her efforts in achieving such an excellent result.

### Maintenance repairs and improvements

The stage was totally decluttered of all the BCP paraphernalia just before Christmas, making it much more attractive for hiring for staged productions.

*William Heller, Chair of Kitson Hall Committee*



kitsonhall\_barnes

[kitsonhall@gmail.com](mailto:kitsonhall@gmail.com)

<https://www.stmarybarnes.org/kitson-hall/>



## Marriage Preparation at St Mary's

The Marriage Preparation Team helps couples having a wedding in Barnes prepare for their future marriage. Once a couple has met with the clergy, the administrator puts them in touch with one of the five trained team couples. The engaged couple then fills out an online questionnaire via Prepare Enrich and then has two or three evening sessions with a team couple, where they talk confidentially about issues relating to married life. The team meets twice a year over supper to discuss how to enhance the service offered to those marrying at St Mary's and to share best practice.

Jo Carr, Marriage Preparation Team [weddings@stmarybarnes.org](mailto:weddings@stmarybarnes.org)

## Music Report

It has been a year of change in the Music Department. In September, Toby Ward left us as Director of Music and Julia Daniels took over as Interim Director of Music.

Julia writes:

*The choir at St Mary's Barnes consists entirely of people up for a challenge. From the end of October to the middle of January, I set them almost completely new repertoire and they met the challenges every week. The carol service was a triumph for everyone. I can truly say that in all my time directing choirs of whatever standards, I have never heard a choir sing so consistently well throughout a carol service. We welcomed back a few former members, but it was the core Sunday singers who carried the day.* [choristers@stmarybarnes.org](mailto:choristers@stmarybarnes.org)

In January, Ben Markovic joined us as Director of Music and Julia took on the role of re-establishing the children's choir, now called the St Mary's Choristers.

Ben writes:

*My first two months have been very busy with the 40th anniversary of the Rehallowing of the church and the Barnes Festival Evensong. I'm heartened by the can-do approach of the choir, the consistently excellent high quality of the anthems, and the reforming of the children's choir with Julia as their director. If we can appoint a full complement of scholars and recruit more lower voices, joint services with other local choirs and visiting choir days at local cathedrals are distinct possibilities - very exciting! As ever, any singers (especially tenors or basses) would be most welcome!*

*Huge thanks to Judy and Peter for their continued support and to Julia and Barney Silverstone, our organ scholar, for their invaluable contribution in the interim.*

[music@stmarybarnes.org](mailto:music@stmarybarnes.org)



## Sacristans Report

With Sally Copland's aid, four of us take it in turns to prepare the Langton Chapel and Main Altar for the Sunday services and also for the Thursday communion service in the chapel, as well as other occasional services during the week throughout the year. This involves cleaning/sweeping the sanctuary and similarly the chapel; laying up the altar. Making sure the correct service sheets are in the priest's folder; finding the epistle and gospel in the relevant books; replenishing the wine/water; soaking the votive candles which have been used during the week, cleaning and refilling them. Then clearing away after the service and taking home the used linen to wash. Sally has repaired vestments where needed and also had them cleaned

*Lucy Hine, Wiz Dundas, Judica Palmarozza, Fiona Barnett*

## Safeguarding Report

We are committed to safeguarding the young and vulnerable in our church and community. The Safeguarding policy can be found in the Church entrance and on the Church website along with photos of the PSOs. We have continued to ensure that adults working with children and vulnerable adults have an up-to-date DBS and have completed a Confidentiality Declaration (in line with the Diocese recruitment process).

During the year we have continued to adhere to diocesan recommendations by:

Ensuring and advising re Risk Assessments for all activities within the church buildings are undertaken, updated, and safely stored within the church office.

Ensuring all PCC members, Sidesmen and Sunday Club leaders have up to-date Safeguarding Training. Due to the pandemic, some training had been delayed but this is now up and running again and many of the required courses are not only available face to face but can now also be completed online.

Ensuring all people working with vulnerable adults or children have completed a Confidential Declaration document.

Ensured that all newly recruited posts (specifically our new Director of Music and our Associate Priest) were recruited following Diocese Safer Recruitment procedures.

Continuing to raise the profile of Safeguarding within the Congregation. The PSOs contact details are on the pew sheet every week as well as a section identifying St. Mary's commitment to Safeguarding.

The Safeguarding aspects of the Church website are frequently updated in line with national guidance.

Safeguarding remains a mandatory item at every PCC meeting. This is both to allow members to raise any concerns and to ensure that any PCC matters discussed are also viewed with Safeguarding in mind.

Sunday Club and Pastoral care guidelines are written with Safeguarding kept as a priority and ensuring that all leaders and helpers are aware of them.

To improve the safety and well-being of our congregation and church community several volunteers, members of PCC and sidesman undertook a First aid awareness course which was very informative and much appreciated.

This coming year we will continue to maintain the actions as listed above. We will continue to work with the Diocesan Safeguarding team to ensure that St Mary's keeps its whole community, especially our young and any vulnerable adults, welcomed, safe and appropriately cared for at all times.

*Elisabeth Munden and Nicola King, Parish Safeguarding Officers*

## Pastoral Group

We meet monthly with Rev'd James Hutchings and Rev'd James Marston sharing whatever any of us might feel needs sharing, where we have visited members of our congregation or a situation where support is needed. We do hold intercessory prayers on the first Monday of each month, when we include all the prayer requests that appear on the prayer board. Please let any of us know if you would like special prayer either for yourself or anyone about whom you are concerned.

*Christabel Gairdner, Fouki Heller, Lucy Hine, Rosie Findlater, Rose Robertson, Elisabeth Munden and Fiona Barnett.*

## SMB Scout Group Report

All sections of the Scout Group, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts followed a full programme of activities throughout the year. All of our meetings were held in the Scout Hut on Queen Elizabeth Walk. A mixture of games, working towards badges and awards and learning traditional Scouting skills make up the content of our meetings. The Scouts were working especially on their nine Challenge Badges in order to achieve the Chief Scout's Gold Award. As often as we can, we like to be outdoors on the playing fields opposite the Scout Hut, Barnes Common, along by the river and other local areas.

During the year we held several camps. The Cubs had a camp at Walton Firs, near Cobham at the beginning of July. The Scouts had a hike and overnight camp also at Walton Firs in October and attended the Thames Young Mariners weekend in June. The Beavers went to Brooklands Museum for a District Air Activities Badge Day in May and attended the District New Year Party in January. Both Cub Packs attended St Mary's Barnes to hear about the day to day running of the church.

The Scouts and Yellow Pack Cubs had very successful Pancake nights cooking the pancakes outside. At Barnes Fair, the Scouts, leaders and parents served bacon rolls and other refreshments at our kitchen tents on Barnes Green by Station Road. The Cubs again ran a very popular coconut shy.

At Christmas the Group provided and decorated the Christmas Tree for the church.

The Beavers, Cubs and Scouts attended St Mary's Barnes for St George's Day and Remembrance Sunday services. At present, we have one Beaver Colony, two Cub Packs and one Scout Troop.  
*Roger Stanley on behalf of SMB Scout Group*

## Vergers

What is a verger? It means to be at the edge, to be in attendance. In other words: to hover, observe, anticipate, and deal with any hiccups before they become obvious to anyone else. In the last twelve months, the verging team have provided their services at 5 weddings and 6 funerals. We have a number of weddings coming up in 2024 and are delighted to be welcoming Sue Glasgow to the team.

*Sian Walford, Sarah Cox, Deborah Stewartby & Sue Glasgow*

