

Top of the pops

Nine Elms Arts
Ministry releases a
“Song for Hope”

See page 4



A new arrival

Four-page special
on doing Advent
differently

See pages 6-9



Crown jewel

Women’s Adviser
appointed Queen’s
Chaplain

See page 12



Sutton pupils learn the power of art with recycled Remembrance display



The staff and students at All Saints, Benhilton CofE Primary School put their old plastic bottles to an unusual use when they recycled them to make a striking Remembrance Day display early last month.

“Poppies” were cut from the bottles, which the students had collected well in advance. Staff then used cable ties to secure them to the school fence.

The school’s Art Lead and the teacher in charge of the project, Victoria Harrington, said: “I put out the call early to get as many bottles as we possibly could, e-mailing parents, and saying to the children, ‘let’s collect hundreds, at least one bottle per child’.”

The idea built on All Saints’ previous year’s Remembrance display but took it one stage further. Victoria wanted to add another dimension by encouraging the pupils to think about the environmental aspects.

“I had a big stack of plastic bottles in my classroom, and I said to the children, ‘look how much plastic is just being thrown away just from our class’. So we were also thinking about the environment and how we’ve now turned the bottles into something else,” she said.

The project has been well received, despite there being no grand unveiling owing to Coronavirus restrictions. Parents and community members have

shared their appreciation with Victoria, and the children were able to admire it as they waited in their bubbles outside school each morning.

“The children all line up outside the school in the morning to be let in by teachers, so we asked them if they could see how many poppies there were, and to look at them and appreciate them,” Victoria said, adding: “Obviously, all the poppies look the same and I’ve heard them say, ‘I can’t find my poppy!’.”

For Victoria herself, this has been rewarding. The idea of using art to boost pupils’ sense of attainment, and to help them shine, is very close to her heart. The subject matter, too, is important to her:

“When it came round to Poppy Day, because a family member is in the armed forces, it’s something that’s very personal to me,” she said.

And there is more to come. Victoria is already planning her next project: a whole-school assessment following a National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) scheme of work on “what does Heaven look like to you”.

“It’s had a very good reception,” Victoria said. “I’m looking forward to getting that up and running.”

For more Remembrance stories, see page 5

A view from The BRIDGE



For very good reasons, much of this year has been spent locked down. We have needed to save the lives of others by restricting our own activity.

One of the major challenges we shall face in 2021 is to emerge from lockdown with a renewed sense of purpose, vigour, and commitment to change for good.

There was a tremendous sense during the first lockdown that things ought not go back to “normal”, that it was, in fact, our unhealthy, unbalanced “normal” that had got us into this mess in the first place.

The second lockdown has not quite retained that sense of purpose. The nights are longer, the temperature is colder, people are more tired than they were at the beginning, and the adrenaline that carried many through the first months of 2020 has well and truly gone as we find ourselves in for the “long haul”.

The Christian faith is always there for the “long haul”. What we receive at Christmas is the gift of God’s own life, “of the Father’s heart begotten”. In Emmanuel the Child of Bethlehem, the whole of God is united to humankind.

God has not withheld part of the Divine life, waiting for us to be good enough, or clever enough, or holy enough for the next instalment. God gives us himself unreservedly. He has gathered us to his heart, through the Incarnation of the Word that is begotten of the Father’s heart. We can take confidence from this for our journey. Christ really is with us until the end of the age, firing our imagination, building our vision, comforting our hearts.

Our Christmas celebrations this year may not be quite as we usually like them. Festal gatherings will be restricted in churches. Families and friends may not be able to travel as freely as in other years. It will be especially important, then, to hold our loved ones in our hearts.

But not only our loved ones, for the Gospel calls us to broaden our hearts. “Open wide your hearts also,” writes St Paul (2 Corinthians 6.13). We must make space, then, in our hearts for our neighbours, for those who mourn, for those for whom this year has brought devastation.

As we therefore prepare to journey through Advent and Christmastide, these wonderful seasons of the Church’s year once again, may we let the fullness of God that fills our hearts spill out into our lives so that, as we work in the new year to further the reach of God’s kingdom, we may be confident to invite all people in to the life of the Church. For in the Church is found salvation and joy, strength for the journey, and treasures old and new, as we proclaim “Lo! he comes the promised Saviour”.

I wish you and those you love a very happy Christmas and every good thing in the coming year.

Bishop Christopher



NEWS IN BRIEF

Independent Faith Engagement Review – get involved

The Church of England is encouraging people to fill in an online survey from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The Independent Faith Engagement Review aims to discover how those of all faiths, or none, perceive the Government’s engagement with faith organisations, and it offers an opportunity to strengthen how the Government engages with faith communities during the pandemic and going forward.

Find the survey here: <https://bit.ly/3nDU92K>

Do you have a story to share?

We are always on the look-out for stories for *The Bridge*. If you have an idea for an article, please e-mail bridge@southwark.anglican.org, and include an image (you will need to make sure that these have been approved for publication, and please ensure that people in group photographs are socially distanced).

Deadlines for copy for 2021 are: 22 January (February edition); 19 February (March edition); 22 March (April edition); 21 April (May edition); 22 May (June edition); 21 June (July/August edition); 22 August (September edition); 21 September (October edition); 22 October (November edition); 21 November (December/January edition).

For the time being, because of Coronavirus, the paper is being published online on the 1st of each month (or nearest working day) and can be downloaded from southwark.anglican.org/thebridge

Southwark Cathedral awarded £93,850 heritage grant

Southwark Cathedral is one of 445 organisations receiving a share of £103 million from the Culture Recovery Fund for heritage, part of the Government’s £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund. The Cathedral will use the £93,850 grant money for essential repairs to the heating system, the north transept floor, and conservation of medieval masonry in the nave.

The Very Revd Andrew Nunn, the Dean, said: “It is clear we couldn’t have done this work at this time without this funding. To receive a grant is therefore a huge relief, and enables us to bring in skilled professionals to conserve and repair the Cathedral.”

Call-out for information on WR Corbould

Freelance writer Nicky Charlsh is researching the life and work of the Revd W R Corbould (WRC), Rector of Carshalton from 1919-1957 and a pioneer worker for Church of England, Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox unity.

He wishes to appeal to *Bridge* readers for information, memories or anecdotes about the Revd Corbould’s life or work. If anyone has information to share, please e-mail communications@southwark.anglican.org and it will be passed on.

FAITH ENGAGEMENT REVIEW – CALL FOR EVIDENCE

On 10 October 2019 the Government announced that Colin Bloom had been appointed as the Faith Engagement Adviser at the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). As Faith Engagement Adviser, Colin is leading a review into how best the Government should engage with faith groups in England. He will make recommendations to the Communities Secretary about how the government can best celebrate and support the contribution of faith groups, break down barriers and promote acceptance between faiths, and promote shared values while tackling cultures and practices that are harmful.

This Call for Evidence aims to collect views from the public and from experts in the subject: these views will help underpin the review’s recommendations.

The last few months have been very challenging for places of worship and people of faith. The significant restrictions that have been put in place to control the spread of the virus have limited people’s ability to worship, practice and celebrate their faith as they normally would. This review began before the Covid-19 pandemic, but it is timely as the recommendations may well come to strengthen how government engages with faith groups during the Covid-19 recovery phase and beyond.



The Bridge is produced & published by:

Communications Department, The Diocese of Southwark, Trinity House,
4 Chapel Court, Borough High Street, London SE1 1HW

Tel: 020 7939 9400 E-mail: bridge@southwark.anglican.org

The Editorial Team from Communications:

Commissioning Editor:

Sophia Jones

Editor: Abigail Sanderson

Advertising and Distribution:

Susana Rojas

Editorial Group:

Ruth Martin

Jane Steen

Editorial Adviser (vacant)

Sophia Jones

Next Issue: Submission deadline and guidance

The FEBRUARY edition is due to be published online on 1 February 2021. Material for that edition must be with the Diocesan Communications Department by e-mail by **FRIDAY 22 JANUARY**.

Space limitations mean that we cannot guarantee to publish everything we receive and material may be edited. All photographs submitted for publication are assumed to have the necessary permission for printing. So, please ensure that people are happy for their photographs to be submitted before you do so.

Forms for permission for the use of photographs of children and adults who may be vulnerable can be found at southwark.anglican.org/safeguarding/diocesan-policies-procedures

Diocesan adviser joins board of Churches Conservation Trust

Diocesan Disability Adviser the Revd Canon Tim Goode was appointed to the Churches Conservation Trust's Board of Trustees on 1 November.

Tim (pictured right) is currently Rector of St Margaret, Lee and was appointed Honorary Canon of Southwark Cathedral in October. He is also a member of the National Disability Task Group, which advises the Archbishops on disability issues.

Tim said of his appointment: "It is a real privilege to be invited to serve as a Trustee of the Churches Conservation Trust (CCT) by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York.

"My experience as a member of the DAC, my previous experience as a teacher and my present role as disability adviser and member of the National Disability Task Group will definitely prove invaluable as I seek to support the extraordinary work of the CCT as they continue to be custodians of so many of our greatest historical assets, our local parish churches."

The CCT's primary purpose is to protect historic churches at risk in England. It works with the Church Commissioners and local communities to rescue church buildings that are in need of repair and conservation.

The CCT presently cares for 354 English churches of architectural, cultural and historic significance. To date, 94% of the churches saved from closure are Grade I- or Grade II-listed. Many are open to



visitors as heritage sites on a daily basis and nearly two million people visit the Trust's churches each year.

The majority of the churches remain consecrated although they are not all used for regular worship.

The CCT works to prevent any deterioration in the condition of the buildings in its care and to ensure they are used as community assets. Local communities are encouraged to use them for activities and events, and the buildings provide an educational resource, allowing children and young people to study history, architecture and other subjects.

Peter Ainsworth, Chair of the CCT, said: "I am delighted to welcome Tim Goode onto the CCT Board of Trustees. Tim brings a wealth of experience to the Board and we are grateful to have his insight to help shape the future of CCT."

Making a nation grateful – one conversation at a time



Bishop Christopher speaks about the Gratitude Initiative outside the House of Lords.

Four years of work came together on the evening of 28 November with a two-hour event marking the national launch of the Gratitude Initiative.

The initiative is the brainchild of the Revd Dr Girma Bishaw, an ordained minister at the Ethiopian Christian Fellowship Church. He began by holding "gratitude evenings" in Islington, to which he invited local organisations such as the London Ambulance Service and the homeless charity the Manna Society to thank them for their contribution to the community.

Now, with this national launch, Girma hopes to encourage similar events all over the country. He is also campaigning for an annual Gratitude Sunday in churches so that people

active in the community can be recognised. It is, he believes, a chance to change the culture of the UK, one conversation at a time, and to recognise how the mutual respect built by gratitude is vital to building strong communities.

Bishop Christopher introduced the event, saying: "Gratitude in times of plenty and in times of hardship is the crucible in which Christian character and discipleship is formed."

He added: "I am truly humbled by the clarity and radical nature of the Gratitude Initiative for us to live out a life of gratitude in the service of others as the way to understand the overpowering grace of God."

Find out more about the initiative at <https://gratitudeinitiative.org.uk/>

"We must work together to combat this terrible challenge": Synergy Network launches website aimed at tackling youth violence

A new website aimed at tackling serious youth violence (SYV) was launched on 1 December with the help of Bishop Christopher, who spoke at the webinar launch event.

The website has been set up by the Synergy Network, a coalition of churches, para-church groups and Christian agencies. It will enable people to find information, resources and practical advice to help in the fight against SYV.

The Diocese of Southwark is one of the founding members of the Synergy Network. It has played a prominent role in events such as the rally in Trafalgar Square in April 2019 protesting the rise in street violence.

Speaking at the launch, Bishop Christopher said: "Every death is a tragedy. Hearts are broken. The tomorrows and life chances of so many young people are needlessly thrown away and society is scarred deeply."



The Standing Together rally in Trafalgar Square in April 2019.

Referencing the murder of Damilola Taylor 20 years ago, he added: "Since Damilola's death, youth violence has not abated, and quite appallingly in 2020, knife crime in England and Wales

has risen to its highest level since comparable statistics began to be gathered nine years ago, with London reporting a 28% annual rise in knife killings over the past year."

The website lists more than 100 organisations tackling SYV, enabling people to search for help in their area. Richard Reddie, Director of Justice and Inclusion at Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, who led on website development, said that they expected this number to grow after launch as the website was contacted by other people wanting to be listed.

The Venerable Dr Rosemarie Mallett, Archdeacon of Croydon, said that the website would be a vital piece of the puzzle in tackling SYV.

She said: "There is very good work being done to try to find ways to stop unnecessary deaths of young people, offer support to families and educate as many as possible so there is concerted work to bring change. It is vital that we connect those who are doing excellent work with those who need support."

Find the new website at <https://wearesynergy.org.uk/>



IN FOCUS...

News from our parishes

Nine Elms Arts Ministry launches song of hope



A still from the *Hope is to Heal* music video.

The Nine Elms Arts Ministry released a pop song on 18 November called *Hope is to Heal*, building on the work of the first lockdown in spreading a message of hope among the residents of Battersea.

The song's launch was the culmination of a six-month project that began in May with "Hope Squares". This invited residents, schoolchildren and artists from the Nine Elms area of Battersea to create images expressing their own hopes, or a message of hope for the community, and share them online.

"It is my hope that as we release this song and film it will lift hearts and inspire others to explore their own creativity"

In the summer, artists from Nine Elms Arts Ministry joined forces with the Battersea Power Station Community Choir and songwriter and producer Dan Swana to write and record an anthem of hope.

The writing workshops and rehearsals were conducted via Zoom, with the 40 participants recording their parts on their smartphones. Dan also rehearsed and recorded children from St George's CofE Primary School in Battersea singing the chorus and worked with professional musicians to create the backing track.

Battersea-based company Chocolate Films created an animated music video

to accompany the song, which also showcases many of the Hope Squares.

The Revd Betsy Blatchley, Pioneer Minister in the Arts and the organiser of the project, said: "It has been so inspiring to read all the messages of hope that have come from all ages and all sectors of the community, and to see the amazing creativity we have in this area."

She added: "It is my hope that as we release this song and film it will lift hearts and inspire others to explore their own creativity and celebrate hope."

Dan Swana said: "In a time of such difficulty for many of us, it's been a real pleasure writing and remotely producing *Hope is to Heal*. Hope is very much alive in organisations like Nine Elms Arts Ministry and Battersea Power Station Community Choir, and I am honoured to have been invited to be involved."

Alex Rinsler, the Nine Elms Strategic Lead for Culture was also delighted with the video: "I wanted to say how fantastic the *Hope* video is, especially seeing such a cross-section of different communities from across Nine Elms participating together. Huge well done!"

Meanwhile, the Rt Revd Rob Gillion, the new Bishop for the Arts in Southwark, described the team behind the song as "joy-makers", saying: "Inspirational uplifting Song of Hope, thanks to Nine Elms Arts Ministry, the Battersea Community Choir and all involved."

Listen to the song at: https://youtu.be/tu_b3O9ykoE

St Leonard, Streatham choir closes local arts festival



Streatham has a long history of community arts activity and there have been earlier celebrations of creativity branded as the Streatham Festival, but the current Festival was founded in 2002.

The first event was hosted by St Leonard's Church and Hillside Gardens Park. With the active support of the Town Centre Manager and the Rector of St Leonard's, it showcased local talent.

Since then, the festival has also sought to promote Streatham as a place for the arts all year round, and St Leonard's Church has been at the centre of it throughout.

Amongst many other things, when not in lockdown the church hosts

the 120-strong Streatham Choral on a Monday evening, and many of these singers are regular Evensong attendees throughout the year.

Starting in 2019, St Leonard's Church has hosted one Choral Evensong each year that has been a part of the Streatham Festival. This has been a hugely successful partnership and has encouraged new people to come and listen to the choir at the service, which this year took place on Sunday 18 October.

In these uncertain times, it was wonderful to see the church full, albeit in a socially distanced fashion, to conclude this year's festival.

Calum Fraser,
Director of Music

Crane does the heavy lifting for St Barnabas, Eltham



Richmond's Riverbank Trust was recognised for its community work at the Fourth London Faith & Belief Community Awards on 30 November, hosted by the Faith & Belief Forum.

The charity, which seeks to support and befriend single mothers in the Richmond area, was one of 40 projects being awarded a £500 grant to further its work supporting women and children.

Michelle Rutter, the charity's chief executive, said: "Receiving this award is such a joy and a pleasure. It is

a clear endorsement of the work that we do to be the hands and feet of Jesus in order to equip, build community and be relational."

Michelle worships at Holy Trinity and Christ Church, Richmond. Before becoming the CEO she was a Community Outreach Worker for Riverbank Trust, and before that taught in Richmond and Croydon.

She said: "The money will be used for the families at Christmas to bless them with and goodies. In the week beforehand, staff will be hand-delivering bags to all our families – socially distanced of course!"

Marking Remembrance Day: a selection of stories from around the Diocese



The Good Shepherd, Lee, created a different kind of Garden of Remembrance this year, above, by encouraging people to “plant a poppy” in the churchyard over the course of several days. This meant that members of the church and wider community could pay their respects while maintaining social distancing.



Bishop Christopher led an Act of Remembrance at Guy’s and St Thomas’ NHS Trust on 11 November, above, alongside the Revd Mia Hilborn, lead chaplain at the Trust. The Bishop is pictured here alongside reservists from the Braganza Street Army Reserve Centre, the regimental headquarters of the 256 Field Hospital, in front of a statue of the pioneering British-Jamaican nurse Mary Seacole. Seacole set up her own nursing home behind the lines for troops during the Crimean War, and was posthumously awarded the Jamaican Order of Merit in 1991.



Charles Medhurst, above, a 95-year-old veteran who worships at Christ Church, East Greenwich, was asked by the Revd Margaret Cave to speak about the importance of Remembrance Day to him. “It means a great deal,” he said. “I think of my brother, who was aged 18 when he died in Burma, and the effect it had on my mother. I don’t think she ever got over it.”



The Revd Canon Dr Ann Nickson, above, Team Rector of Mortlake with East Sheen Team Ministry, held an Act of Remembrance at St Mary, Mortlake’s Roll of Honour, before commencing the service. As the bell tolled, she commended to God’s safekeeping those who had died for their country in war, those whom we knew, those listed on the memorial, and those known only to God.



St James and St Anne, Bermondsey led the Bermondsey Community Remembrance Service (available on YouTube at youtu.be/J19GalU3dcE). Alongside the worship, Jon Dyer, above left, Director of FA Albin and Sons Funeral Directors, talked to the Church Army’s Captain Paul Warren about firm’s repatriation work for the Ministry of Defence. The Pearly King and Queen Jimmy and Michelle, below left, also shared their experiences of working with UK Homes for Heroes. The service concluded with an Act of Remembrance at the war memorial in Old Jamaica Road, Bermondsey.





ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

Watching, waiting, and hoping

This is a Christmas like no other, but it could also offer an opportunity to look at Advent afresh. Andrew Nunn, Dean of Southwark, shares his ideas for marking the season in these strange times, while on pages 7-8 we catch up with news and ideas from our parishes.

The bus we used to get back from town to where we lived when I was growing up in Leicester went past a house that always, from Bonfire Night, had its Christmas decorations prominently up. The twinkling lights would be on, there would be a garland on the door and it all looked a lot like Christmas. We were almost told to avert our eyes by our scandalised mum! But from all the recent news reports it seems as though a great many people have decided that they need to start Christmas now, to get into the cupboards or the loft or wherever they keep the boxes of Christmas stuff, dust it off, get it out and cheer themselves up.

This is not the year to take the Scrooge approach; we need something a great deal more generous. As a consequence I think that what we are being handed on a plate as churches at the hearts of our communities is an opportunity to help people keep Christmas well.

But surely, you may be saying, if people have already started isn't it already out of our hands? I don't think so, and in fact, although Christmas is of its very nature a Christian festival – the Christ Mass from which we get our name – the whole truth of the incarnation, that as St John tells us, "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1.14), is that God is out there in the world, beyond the confines of

church and religion. Christmas is our feast but not our possession; it's God's gift to his people.

December is always a very busy month at the Cathedral. We would normally have almost 40 carol services and carol concerts, charities, schools, businesses coming along to sing the carols and hear the readings and celebrate together. We would expect at least 20,000 people through our doors in 25 days. This year will be completely different.

Our first response was, "well, we will get Advent back!" It's true, we can focus on Advent, one of the most wonderful seasons in the church year, all about anticipation and preparation, which is often overshadowed by Christmas. But what are we going to do with it?

What to do with Advent?

Those of my generation will have memories of the Advent Crown being made on the BBC children's show *Blue Peter*. Every year, the presenters would take wire coat hangers, tinsel and candles and make a crown. They used it to count down the last four programmes before Christmas. But we use the crown to count down those four last Sundays and the fifth candle brings it all to a wonderful completeness on Christmas Day.



every day. But whatever you do, try to get a calendar to help you count down.

Communities also are being really imaginative about making very different Advent Calendars (see Nine Elms, pictured above). Perhaps in your street or block of flats you and your neighbours could become a living calendar, with a different house lighting a candle in a window every evening. It's COVID-secure and fun. You may have even better ideas about how to involve friends and neighbours.

Something to think about

Every evening we have Night Prayer online for the Cathedral congregation. We were wondering how to make those extra special this Advent. Then we came across a new book, *Frequencies of God: Walking through Advent with R S Thomas*, by Carys Walsh. The author provides a different poem and a reflection for each day in Advent. Poetry might not be your thing but if it is you might want to join us in following this route to Christmas. If you want to join us you can get the book from the Cathedral online shop: <https://southwarkcathedralshop.org/>

What, no singing?

The fact that we can't sing carols together as normal is really sad. You are allowed to sing at home or in your bubble. So how about getting various households to record a carol each and stitch them together into something really fun online. There will be someone who knows how to do this and your vicar or minister will know who has the skills. Then invite people in the parish and neighbourhood to tune in when you put it up on your church website or Facebook page. And don't worry about being musical – the great thing about carols is you don't have to be able to sing to sing them!

Continued on page 7 ►



◀ Continued from page 6

'It's all about the children!'

That's what people often say about Christmas. Personally, I don't believe them. Christmas is my favourite time of the year. But a lot of that is the leftover joy and the memories of wonderful Christmases in the past. So how will we give our children a Christmas to remember?

Well, I suspect that in most people's stockings this year will be some face masks. What about making some Christmas masks with either your own children or with the children at church? Combine the mask with a Santa beard or angel sparkles (be careful of anything that could be breathed in or swallowed – we need to keep safe!) but the artistic and handy amongst you could have great fun.

Then think carefully and imaginatively about the Christmas crib in church and at home. We would normally have a huge Crib Service on Christmas Eve in the Cathedral; this year we can't do it. So instead we will be setting up the crib and a trail to get to it and inviting everyone to make the journey to Bethlehem around the building until they arrive, like shepherds, angels or wise people, at the crib.

You don't need a big church to do it in, or a big crib, just lots of imagination and a group of people willing to give up time on Christmas Eve to welcome people to your church. And when they have come you must give them something to take home. This is where Comfort and Joy comes in.

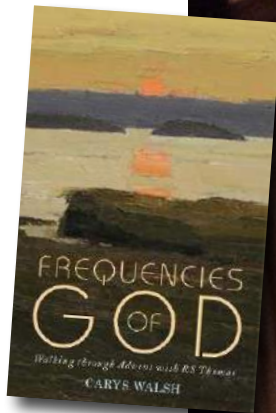
Comfort and Joy

The Church of England has produced wonderful material for us to use this Christmas all around the theme of "Comfort and Joy". They have prayer cards and bookmarks available as well as a little booklet with a reading and reflection for each of the 12 days of Christmas. Make those available to those who come to church because it will keep the festivities going – and use it yourself! Find more details here: <https://bit.ly/ComfortAndJoy>

Christmas greetings

Finally, make a point of sending cards this year, actual or virtual. My own preference is for a card through the door. This year you have time to make them. They are a festive cuddle for someone receiving it.

Put cards through your neighbours' doors; make a point of sending a card to people



Choristers at a Christmas service in Southwark Cathedral. This year, people will have to be more creative about singing.

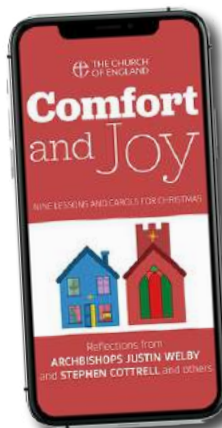
who have been shielding and will be feeling particularly alone. Remember those who have been sick and the thousands of families who have been bereaved. They all need a message of hope and as a Christian you are the one who can deliver it.

So much you can do. But in all this busyness don't forget yourself. Stop, keep silence and say a prayer. Jesus is born for you and me – that is the Good News of Christmas and, as the poet John Betjeman so brilliantly put it in one of his Christmas poems:

*And is it true? For if it is,
No loving fingers tying strings
Around those tissued fripperies,
The sweet and silly Christmas things,
Bath salts and inexpensive
scent*

*And hideous tie so kindly meant,
No love that in a family dwells,
No carolling in frosty air,
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells
Can with this single Truth compare –
That God was man in Palestine
And lives today in Bread and Wine.*

*Lord Jesus Christ,
your birth at Bethlehem
draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven
touching earth:
accept our heartfelt praise
as we worship you,
our Saviour and our eternal God. Amen.
(Common Worship © Church of England)*



LET US PRAY

These prayers for Advent are taken from the material produced by the Bishop's Advisory Group for Liturgy for the season, and read by Eric Collins, who worships at Southwark Cathedral. You can download the complete BAGL materials from: <https://bit.ly/3mhVtrT>

We are waiting, Jesus; come and live with us soon.

*Jesus, we are waiting because we know who you are:
the Creator of the world,
the God who took on human form,
the son of Mary, a girl just like any other girl.*

*We are waiting, Jesus; Maranatha:
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.*

Jesus, we are waiting because we have faith in you.

*We know that we can trust you.
We remember that you are good to us,
and we thank you for all the good things that you give to us every day.
We are waiting, Jesus; Maranatha:
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.*

*Jesus, we are waiting here, here in Southwark,
waiting for you to come into our houses, our streets, our shops and offices,
to fill them with your light and peace.
We are waiting, Jesus; Maranatha:
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.*

*Jesus, we are waiting for you to come and change things:
to bring health to our sick ones,
to make our asylum seekers welcome,
to comfort those who have lost loved ones;
and to turn us around
so that we can be your hands and feet, your eyes and ears,
in this world that needs you so much.
We are waiting, Jesus; Maranatha:
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.*



To listen to an audio version of these prayers, visit our website: southwark.anglican.org/news/dailyprayer



ADVENT & CHRISTMAS



Sharing the Christmas message in a shop window



“There was a very amusing day when I was walking around the village in my collar with a giant stable under one arm and a camel under the other. It was straight out of an episode of Rev.”

This was the moment that the Revd Liz Barnett, Curate at St Barnabas, Dulwich, found herself carrying Nativity figures made out of MDF through Dulwich Village.

Her mission came about after the Dulwich Estate had agreed to let St Barnabas take over a vacant shop window and create an Advent display, “to be a blessing to the community”.

Liz and her Vicar, the Revd John Watson, commissioned Andrew Mitchell, a set designer and member of St Barnabas’ congregation, to come up a series of cut-out figures. These would then be distributed among local schools who



would then decorate them. There were no restrictions on the pupils’ creativity – all they had to do was keep to the shape of the MDF pieces.

Once the pieces were returned, Andrew assembled the scene. In addition to the camels, sheep, Magi, stable and the rest,



Andrew Mitchell in front of the Advent window (above); close-up of some of the schools’ work (left).

Andrew had “also made a Bethlehem scene, which will go at the back, and sand dunes,” said Liz.

There was a grand unveiling on Sunday 28 November, and the scene will remain in situ throughout Advent. During the day it is spotlit – “showing the decoration the children have done” – and at night it will be backlit to appear as a silhouette.

“We hope that people walking through the village will be blessed by it and it will indeed bring some comfort and joy,” said Liz. “Whether you’re a Christian or not, there’s something very comforting in that scene.”

Camel-wrangling at Good Shepherd, Lee



What’s Christmas without a 7ft camel? This magnificent beast will form an integral part of the Good Shepherd, Lee’s Lighting the Lamps COVID-safe Christmas service, alongside more than 500 origami angels.

All Saints, Sanderstead to brighten Advent with virtual calendar

All Saints, Sanderstead is taking children on an ADVENTure this year, with a series of videos to be released each day in Advent exploring the meaning of Christmas and customs throughout the world.

The videos, which have been made by individuals and community groups across Sanderstead, will only be unlocked on the appropriate day – so no peeking allowed. Each film will conclude with a Daily Advent Reflection.

For families suffering cabin fever, there is an ADVENTure trail to try in the grounds of the church, and the video for 7 December features a craft project, with instructions on how to make a Christingle in advance of the live-streamed



service on 13 December. The series will conclude with a live-streamed crib service on 24 December at 5.00pm.

Pictured above is a sneak preview from Day 5. Find the full Virtual Advent Calendar here: <https://bit.ly/39dmjUx>

St Margaret, Putney shares Christmas cheer with local families



St Margaret, Putney is one of the many parishes in the Diocese using Advent as an opportunity to help people in need.

The team is partnering with local charities Rackets Cubed and Regenerate UK, as well as Heathmere Primary School, to provide some Christmas cheer for struggling families in the form of parcels containing treats, crafts and gifts. They have a target of 150 boxes; pictured left are some of the products ready for distribution.



ADVENT IDEAS TO TRY



Advent activities from the National Church

While we are unable to gather as freely as we would like, the National Church has produced some ideas for a reflective Advent. The activities are suitable for all ages, and could be done together on each Advent Sunday. Download the Advent Activity Calendar from: <https://bit.ly/2HxRMtT>

Tips for a green Christmas

If you are looking for eco-friendly Advent alternatives and an antidote to the consumerism of the season, the Diocesan Environmental Team has produced *10 Tips for a Green Christmas* to help. Download them here: [southwark.anglican.org/downloads/environment/Tips for a Green Christmas.docx](http://southwark.anglican.org/downloads/environment/Tips%20for%20a%20Green%20Christmas.docx)

Carol singing with a twist

With congregations only allowed to sing carols outdoors this year, you may like to try something different. The Church Pastoral Aid Society has come up with instructions for holding a drive-in carol service. Find the advice at: www.cpas.org.uk/browse-everything/drive-christmas-carol-service

For churches that don't have the space or resources for a drive-in service, Carols on the Doorstep is encouraging people across the country to gather on 16 December and sing in a giant, socially distanced carol service. For details on how to get involved, see: www.doorstepcarols.co.uk/

Resources for children and young people

The Children and Young People team has a selection of resources from Dioceses around the country to help families make this Christmas special despite the restrictions. Find out more at: southwark.anglican.org/cypmm/faith-at-home/

Managing expectations: essential advice for clergy



This Christmas will be like no other. Never before have we had to abide by guidelines from the Government to keep us safe.

Members of our communities will likely want to attend services over Christmas. So, to ensure that people will be able to worship safely, plan well in advance what your service is going to look like and let your parish and wider community know.

You can communicate this on your website, in the local media, on a noticeboard outside the church, or via WhatsApp or e-mail. If you know that your congregation is larger than usual at this time of year, set up a ticketing page on EventBrite.

In all your communications, let people know that once you have reached capacity you will be restricting entry. Do all this early enough so as not to disappoint. If you are continuing with streaming your services, please make this clear too.

You can find more advice at: <https://southwark.anglican.org/coronavirus/>



IN FOCUS...

Other news

Robes SleepIN helps those forced to sleep out



The Robes SleepOut charity event has been a fixture in the Southwark Cathedral calendar for the past 10 years, so when Coronavirus restrictions meant it could not take place as normal, the team knew they wanted to do something special instead.

The result was the Robes SleepIN, with the Very Revd Andrew Nunn, Dean of Southwark, directing activities from inside the Cathedral while people watched online from home.

Instead of being sponsored to sleep in the Cathedral grounds, participants bedded down in their own gardens or on their floors at home. Altogether around 80 people took part, not far short of the 100 who usually turn up to show their support.

The evening began with a Zoom conversation (above), so participants and old friends could greet each other. Later, there was a competition for the best photograph and, for younger participants, a competition for the best drawing. Bishop Christopher, who turned up to say Compline before staying the night in the Cathedral, presented prizes.

There was also a taped performance by gospel group Shalom Chorale, who reached the semi-finals of *Britain's Got Talent* this year, as well as a quiz from a very special quizmaster: Jay Flynn.

Jay became an accidental quiz sensation during lockdown when he left his Facebook posts public and ended up running the country's largest online pub quiz, with a record of 189,000 joining in.

Maggie Still, one of the event organisers, said: "It was lovely that he agreed to do it for us, because back in 2007 he found himself homeless. He was sleeping out on the streets on the Embankment for two

years until one of the workers from St Martin's helped him get back on his feet."

The evening also offered the chance to update people on Robes' activities. Usually they accommodate 35 guests over the course of a winter, with churches taking a turn to host and provide a cooked breakfast on rotation. This year, none of that has been possible, so Robes has partnered with Southwark Council to house guests at the Best Western Hotel in Peckham. Volunteers continue to offer the guests advice and assistance in moving on to other accommodation and, hopefully, a



"The marvellous thing about the project is that it's brought churches together in the Diocese"

job; there is also a regular drop-in Tuesday Club which provides a hot meal for about 40-50 people each week.

George Martin, the outgoing Chair who has been with the charity since it started in 2006, is extremely proud of what Robes has achieved. "The marvellous thing about the project is that it's brought churches together in the Diocese," he said. "People have developed skills they never thought they had, and they've been the backbone of our charity."

Some £35,000 was raised on the night, with the total set to rise as more sponsorship comes in. This will add to the £875,000 raised over 10 years by the Robes SleepOut. "We are hoping to make it £1 million," said George. "That would be astonishing for a small charity."

<https://robes.org.uk/>



DISCIPLESHIP & MINISTRY

Everyday faith

'My church's support got me through'

Sheila Kinsella, a SPA at Charlton United Benefice, gives thanks for the hard work of the parish team

March 2020 appeared to be so different from any we had experienced before. People in the vulnerable category were told to shield at home. One of the biggest concerns was the lack of PPE for hospital staff and staff in care homes. Sadly, we lost a lot of our medical staff.

During this very difficult time, many people pulled out all the stops to help. Volunteers shopped for the elderly and vulnerable, those with underlying health issues or disabilities. There was a togetherness. People were reaching out to help neighbours.

Our own local council, Greenwich, enlisted volunteers to shop and pick up prescriptions for vulnerable people.

Thursdays became a time when people came out of their homes to show their appreciation for our NHS workers. In our road we all clapped, and my husband, James, was asked to sing. This brought our community closer together and it all took part whilst social distancing.

What made me want to put pen to paper, however, was all the work of our Rector, the Revd Liz Newman, and her team, the Revd Joe Lee, the Revd Bennett Spong and the Revd Adelaide Davies, our curate.

The team set up a Zoom group to allow us to attend a church Sunday service from our homes. This allowed people to



feel connected with the church family. In addition, people who could not connect using Zoom kept in contact by phone.

The clergy team produced sermons that were very powerful and meaningful in relation to what was happening in our world. A lot of people relied on them to get through this uncertain time.

Building connections

After the Zoom services, people had coffee so they could catch up with those they could not see in person. Newsletters reached people who had no access to computers, and these were gratefully received. Phone-line buddies were set up to make sure people were OK; if they weren't, it was acted upon.

A nature group, Thom's Times Eco,

started by Liz Buck continued online (see *The Bridge*, May edition). This was a great way for both children and adults to share the wonders of plants, trees and animals, to make sure God's Creation was treasured.

Another initiative called Count your Blessings was set up to support, encourage and comfort those who were thought to need it. That same initiative continues to give great support, with the theme being God working within all of us.

In Charlton, we have been so fortunate to have Liz and her team during this very difficult time. They showed a lot of insight into people's needs and vulnerabilities. Even former members of our benefice who had moved away got involved in our online services.

I have now been a SPA for more than 13 years. Due to having major surgery I feel I have been limited in what help I could give. Having to go into hospital at this time was quite daunting. No visitors; everyone masked without smiles. Being hearing-impaired, it was hard to read people's reactions. But I put my trust in God and found comfort in doing so.

All this could have made me feel isolated but instead my faith made me feel stronger. God's light shone, and the support my church and community have given me gave me a warmth and feeling of love that got me through.

Lockdown lessons in preaching the Gospel

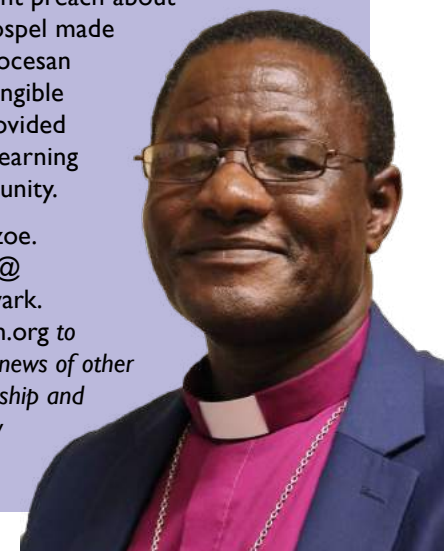
It has been easy to categorise 2020 as a year of negatives, with the impact of COVID-19 on our lives and our ministries, writes the Revd Dr Raewynne Whiteley, Deputy Director of Discipleship and Lay Ministry.

However, there have also been positives. Each autumn, the Discipleship and Ministry team puts on a half-day class on preaching the Gospel for the new Lectionary year. Last year, 17 Readers and clergy came; this year, of necessity, we moved to Zoom, and were delighted to have more than 100 people registered.

We were also delighted that doing this on Zoom made it possible for colleagues from our Link Dioceses in Zimbabwe to join us, including Bishop Ignatios (below) from the Diocese of Central Zimbabwe.

Hearing how Mark's Gospel sounds in a very different culture, comparing notes on the weather and the impact of Coronavirus, and working together to think on how we might preach about this Gospel made our Diocesan links tangible and provided a rich learning opportunity.

E-mail zoe.skilton@southwark.anglican.org to receive news of other Discipleship and Ministry events



"It is an exciting time for lay ministries": report from the Lay Council

I take up my post as Diocesan SPA at an exciting time for lay ministries within the Diocese and in the country, with the publication by the Church of England of *Kingdom Calling*, writes Wendy Stephens (right).

In the year since the Lay Council's inaugural meeting in October 2019, much has happened in the development of new areas of lay ministry in the Diocese.

In September, St Augustine's College of Theology began the first programme for Licensed Pioneer Ministers. The Revd Dr

Raewynne Whiteley, Deputy Director of Discipleship and Lay Ministry; Aike Kennett-Brown, Mission Support Officer (Children and Young People); and I gave a short presentation on the new affirmed ministries which will be discerned, trained and affirmed at parish level.

It is hoped that the first Affirmed Pastoral Assistants will be authorised in the New Year, as the invaluable work done during lockdown by volunteers in pastoral ministry is recognised.

Aike talked about Affirmed Children, Youth and Family

Ministry, including all who work with children, young people and families in our Diocese. There was exciting news, too, that there are to be Affirmed Children or Young People roles, enabling young people to be affirmed in their ministry.

There was also news of an



upcoming newsletter that will incorporate stories and news about all lay ministries, similar in design to *The Bridge*.

Time was spent in breakout groups discussing the emerging church and state of lay ministry post-COVID. Comments covered the fact that, although there has been a rapid advance in how we communicate with our congregations via social media, live-

streaming of services and Zoom, there are still many people who cannot access this form of interaction. There are many, too, for whom it is the physical act of coming to church which is important.

Bishop Christopher summed up by saying that we must have continuity not revolution moving forward, and that the emerging Church has to hold faith.

I look forward to the years ahead, working with others on the Lay Council to further the growth and development of all lay ministries in the Diocese.

WHAT'S ON

Please send details of your next events for FEBRUARY ONWARDS to Trinity House **BY FRIDAY 22 JANUARY**



December

WEDNESDAY 2 DECEMBER

- * **ONLINE** — Black & Blue: Christian police officers on racism, law and order and their Christian faith. Churches Together in Britain and Ireland webinar in which both serving and former Black police officers will share their views on Black Lives Matter and how their faith has informed their work. 7.30pm. Free. Book at: <https://bit.ly/32YcOOy>

THURSDAY 3 DECEMBER

- * **ONLINE** — Defining and Measuring Net Zero. One in a series of Net Zero webinars from the Church of England, focusing on what is meant by net zero and how to measure it. 4.00pm. Free. Book at: bit.ly/DefiningNetZero

MONDAY 7 DECEMBER

- * **ONLINE** — Action Planning. One in a series of Net Zero webinars from the Church of England. Jo Chamberlain, National Environment Officer, shares ideas for getting to net zero across all Diocesan activities. 4.00pm. Free. Book at: bit.ly/NetZeroAction
- * **ONLINE** — Power the Fight: Trauma and Lockdown. Clinical psychologist Dr Zeyana Ramadhan leads this online workshop exploring the effect of trauma and lockdown on young people, and how to support them. 7.00pm. Cost: £16.76–£54.49. Book at: bit.ly/PowerTheFight

Covid Tales from Tom's Bench

Covid Tales from Tom's Bench: a Photography Exhibition by Jim Grover

Showing online until 31 December at www.jimgroverphotography.com

Each day in August 2020, award-winning social documentary photographer Jim Grover photographed someone or some group sitting on the same park bench, erected in memory of "Honest Tom", on Clapham Common, South London and asked them how Covid had affected their lives. The resulting photographs and stories are available to view until the end of December 2020.



2nd August. Dave. Photo by Jim Grover

WEDNESDAY 9 DECEMBER

- * **ONLINE** — Development & growth for non-profits. An interactive webinar from Third Sector Network focusing on how to attract attention for your cause, on a charity's budget. 4.00pm. £4.36-£8.14. Book at: <https://bit.ly/2UFICVI>

THURSDAY 10 DECEMBER

- * **ONLINE** — Energy Management at the Wallace Collection. One in a series of Net Zero webinars from the Church of England. Jurgen Huber, a Senior Furniture Conservator, reveals how the museum has cut its energy use. 12.00pm. Free. Book at: bit.ly/WallaceNetZero

THURSDAY 17 DECEMBER

- * **ONLINE** — Housekeeping and Quick Wins. One in a series of Net Zero webinars from the Church of England. Matt Fulford, of Inspired Efficiency and the sustainability advisor at Gloucester Diocese, shares tips and tricks on where to start with going net zero. 12.00pm. Free. Book at: bit.ly/NetZeroQuickWinsI
- * **ONLINE** — Charity and Non-Profit Networking. An interactive webinar from Third Sector Network aimed at boosting social media management skills. 7.00pm. £3.28-£5.98. Book at: <https://bit.ly/3nBpTp4>

January

FRIDAY 8 JANUARY & SATURDAY 9 JANUARY

- * **ONLINE** — Faith and Science in the Local Church, a two-day online conference from the Faraday Institute for lay and ordained Christian leaders. £50. Book at: <http://bit.ly/FaradayChurch>

TUESDAY 26 JANUARY

- * **ONLINE** — Housekeeping and Quick Wins. One in a series of Net Zero webinars from the Church of England. Matt Fulford, of Inspired Efficiency and the sustainability advisor at Gloucester Diocese, shares tips and tricks on where to start with going net zero. 6.00pm. Free. Book at: bit.ly/NetZeroQuickWins2

WE NEED YOUR HELP!



We want the What's On page to reflect what's happening across Southwark, but we need to hear from you.

If you have an event taking place, either online or in person, please e-mail bridge@southwark.angican.org

Thank you!

Watching the lockdown months go by in St Peter, Walworth

When the UK first went into lockdown in March, Donna Grant's friend suggested they meet at 6.30am for a walk in Burgess Park, Walworth.

"I said, 'no thank you, don't be ridiculous!'" said Donna, a Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary at St Peter, Walworth and Front of House Coordinator at local charity InSpire. Within half an hour, however, she had changed her mind and a habit was born.

Over the following weeks, Donna took photos of whatever caught her attention during her morning walk round the park. "Because I'm registered blind, a lot of the things I take pictures of I can't really see properly. I just take what I think looks nice and when I get home I can zoom in."



Donna shared her photos with the St Peter's WhatsApp group, one of whom suggested she make them into a calendar. With a little help, Donna printed enough calendars to sell. Once her costs are covered, she hopes to raise as much as £420 for St Peter's.

"It makes me really proud," she said. "Apparently I've got to keep it up now and do a calendar every year!"

Pictured above is the image for March.

Vicar's Covid Chronicle to be published by PM programme

When the Revd Stephen Stavrou went into lockdown, he never expected that, eight months later, he would be featuring in a book put together by the BBC Radio 4 PM programme.

The book is a compilation of the Covid Chronicles sent in from all corners of the UK to the programme as people adjusted to the new restrictions.

Reflecting on having had to close St Michael and All Angels, Barnes, where he is Vicar, Stephen was inspired by listening to the experiences of others to send in his own chronicle.

"It was during Lent and the whole experience felt very Lenten," he said. "It was quite personal and emotional, but that was how we were all feeling at the time."



Lockdown did bring positives: a renewed sense of the importance of church and of prayer, Stephen said. Now he is bringing these reflections into St Michael's Advent preparations.

More unusually, he is also preparing to appear in *The Daily Telegraph* because of his chronicle: "We had a slightly hilarious photoshoot yesterday," he said. "I've never done anything like that before!"

Dean of Women's Ministry appointed Queen's Chaplain

The Revd Canon Anna Eltringham, Dean of Women's Ministry for the Diocese of Southwark and Team Rector in the Oxted Team Ministry, has been appointed a Chaplain to The Queen.

A Chaplain to The Queen is a member of the clergy who, after distinguished service, is appointed to an honorary role in service of the monarch. There are currently more than 30 such appointees.

Anna was nominated for the position by Bishop Christopher. On hearing the news, he said: "I am delighted that Anna has been appointed as a Chaplain to the Queen and will be for this purpose, alongside her full-time ministry, part of the Royal Household."

He added: "In serving and ministering to people from all walks of life, Anna will bring many gifts and a wealth of experience to the role. We all wish her well and assure her of our prayers."

Speaking of her new position, Anna said:



"I am both surprised and excited to be nominated for this very special honorary role. There are over thirty Chaplains to the Queen who meet together and are invited to preach at the Chapel Royal annually. Her Majesty the Queen is much admired for her strong Christian faith and her willingness to share it with the nation, bringing hope and comfort to many. It will be a privilege to take on this role and I look forward to it immensely."

Queen's Chaplains wear a scarlet cassock and special bronze badge to denote



Above: Anna Eltringham presides over a wedding in her parish © Nicky Hill Photography; left: HM The Queen on a visit to Southwark Cathedral, being greeted by Bishop Christopher and Andrew Nunn, the Dean.

their status. Anna joked that she was particularly looking forward to "turning up to services and events across the Diocese wearing these!"

Anna has spent the entirety of her ministry in Southwark. She served her curacy in Holy Innocents, South Norwood from 2008, before joining St Mary, Oxted

as Team Vicar in 2014. In 2017, she was appointed Dean of Women's Ministry for the Diocese.

She was also installed as an Honorary Canon at Southwark Cathedral earlier this year (see the October edition of *The Bridge*: southwark.anglican.org/news/the-bridge/2020/)

Diocese marks 20 years since Damilola Taylor's death

The Diocese of Southwark remembered Damilola Taylor in its prayers on 27 November, on the 20th anniversary of the boy's death.



A memorial service at Southwark Cathedral planned for the day was postponed until May 2021 owing to Coronavirus restrictions. Instead, prayers were said at Damilola's graveside (above).

Damilola Taylor was killed on 27 November 2000. He was just 10 years old. Born and brought up in Nigeria, he had been in the UK only a few months when he was stabbed with a broken bottle by two brothers and left to die in a stairwell on the North Peckham Estate. His killers, Danny and Ricky Preddie, were eventually convicted of manslaughter in 2006.

The Very Revd Andrew Nunn, Dean of Southwark, said: "The community at Southwark Cathedral will be holding Damilola and his family in our prayers."

He added: "We should have been hosting a celebration of his life on the day of the 20th anniversary. We cannot do that. But we can still pray and remember and hope and act that things will be different for this generation of black children and all people of colour in south London and everywhere. Damilola's life mattered and still does."

Bishop Christopher introduces new SPAs in Commissioning service

On Monday 30 November, Bishop Christopher commissioned four Southwark Pastoral Auxiliaries (SPAs).

The service took place over Zoom and was also live-streamed on the Diocesan YouTube channel. After Bishop Christopher officially commissioned each of the SPAs, all taking part in the service unmuted themselves to give the new ministers a round of applause.

The four new SPAs were: Lara Sholu (Church of the Cross, Thamesmead); Jane Ward (St Mildred, Addiscombe); Dorothy Lupinda (St Francis, Horley); and Michael Brockett (St Augustine, South Croydon). Wendy Stephens was commissioned as the new Diocesan SPA at the same service.

In her sermon on the parable of the sheep and the goats, the Revd Dr Raewynne Whiteley, Deputy Director



of Discipleship and Ministry, told the new SPAs: "You are to develop pastoral and caring work on behalf of the Church. In that work you are to be heralds of the kingdom of heaven, where every person is created in God's image and precious, beloved, a child of God."

Wendy Stephens said after her commissioning: "It is exciting times for all SPA ministry. I look forward to the many years ahead as Diocesan SPA."

Dioceses of Southwark and Jerusalem to sign Covenant Agreement

Archbishop Suheil, Archbishop in Jerusalem, and Bishop Christopher will cement the bond between the Dioceses of Jerusalem and Southwark at a special event on 20 January.

After a short service of prayer, the two men will formally sign a Covenant Agreement between the two Dioceses, which will then be registered with the Anglican Communion Office.

The covenant states: "We commit ourselves to a relationship of mutuality, building on the strong bonds of personal friendship that have been built up through our bishops, cathedrals and institutions over time."

A recording of the signing will be available after the event.

