

2017 REPORT OF THE PRIEST-IN-CHARGE OF CHRIST CHURCH FOR THE 2018 APCM

My first year as Priest in Charge of Christ Church has been a very full and eventful one indeed. There have been new people to meet and new ways of working to learn. Thank you for your welcome and for helping to make me feel quickly at home. I am enormously grateful in particular to Julie Grainger and Sal Edmunds for their constant help and support. We have been very fortunate to have them as Wardens. We are sorry to lose Sal as Churchwarden and thank her very much for her work over these past 4 years. We are glad that Julie is willing to stand for a further year. It has also been good to work with Sarah Castle (our SPA), Farhad Hedayati (Reader) and to welcome Flis Bank as our new Reader on her Licensing. The church as a whole is indebted to Sara Taylor our Administrator who works so efficiently behind the scenes and make so much go smoothly. We were sorry to lose Richard Hall in July 2017 and thank him for his work as our Director of Music. He has proved to be a hard act to follow – but we are grateful to the choir and our supply organists who have kept the musical life of Christ Church going strongly. We wished Grace Tapping a good retirement after many faithful years as our Verger; she has not been easy to replace but we thank Nick Lindsay, Julie Grainger and Sue Rocksborough-Smith for covering some of her duties. The PCC has worked hard this past year; in particular we thank Debbie Morley for her work as PCC Secretary and also thank Godfrey Banks for agreeing to take back the role of PCC Treasurer and for his long hours of work, supported by Flis, to try to sort the accounts into some proper and correct order; we thank too those who count and bank the collection money. This year Chris Larkman, Mary Ann Bown and Ian Christie are stepping down from the PCC and we thank them for their strong contributions. There are many to thank who contribute to the life of Christ Church; I can't possibly mention everybody but am grateful to them all including church cleaners, flower arrangers, servers, chalice assistants, readers, intercessors, stewards, refreshment servers, small group convenors, gardeners, handyman, lift givers, pastoral team members, the social events committee and those who supervise our Hall and its users – and many others too. One of the most encouraging features of Christ Church is the number of young families and children who attend – and we are indebted to the leaders of Junior Church, Stepping Up and KFH. We have to work hard at our communications in today's world and there will be more work to implement the new Guidance on Data Protection Regulations which comes into force in May 2018 and which will have implications as to how we communicate with the congregation and those associated with the

church. Meanwhile we are grateful to Paul Brazier for maintaining the website and to Brenda Clark and Naomi Lowe for producing such an attractive quarterly magazine. Safeguarding is a vital issue for every church to ensure proper procedures are in place for children and vulnerable adults and we are very grateful to Jenny Tomlinson who looks after this important aspect of our life for us.

But it has not all been plain sailing. The PCC has not yet been able to formulate firm plans for the refurbishment of the Hall; there have been numerous issues with the church building and grounds to be resolved and there will be some major expenditure to come; we have not yet begun to tackle the long overdue major refurbishment to the organ or the much needed internal redecoration of the church. We also urgently need to review our Mission Action Plan and to take steps to create a Vision for Christ Church. This and many other matters will be on the PCC agenda in the coming months.

But we should never forget that the local parish church also exists for those who are not its members – and so it is good to be able to spend time in some of the schools and residential homes in the parish and to baptise, marry and bury those who wish to use our pastoral services. We are also part of the Diocese of Southwark, the Deanery of Merton and of Churches Together in West Wimbledon and it is vital we play an active role in those organisations. I have also had to undergo some statutory safeguarding and induction training into the Diocese. So it has been a very full year.

But of course what unites us together is our worship of God and our care for others and that is the foundation stone of our lives as Christians. The hour or so we spend together in Church on Sundays in worship and the care and welcome we offer are crucial and I pray that we will faithfully continue to do that together week by week.

Michael Burns, April 2018