

The Parish of St Thomas and St Edmund Salisbury

# A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF THE PARISH 2019





## Rector's Introduction to Annual Report:

Looking back on 2019, there are perhaps three features of a busy year that stand out: Charter Sunday, Fundraising, and Works.

\* Charter Sunday in 2019 took place on the eve of the first anniversary of 'the incident' which brought Salisbury such unwelcome attention around the world. This meant that as the media returned to see how things were, there was a positive story to tell about our civic traditions and community life. St Thomas's featured strongly in this.

\* The efforts of the Appeal Fundraising Committee in 2019 were extraordinary, including an antiques fair, murder mystery play, cycle ride, autumn fayre and auction of promises. That we have achieved so much is down to much generosity but also the labours of those who organised these events.

\* Scaffolding went up in August and all the high level works were completed before Remembrance Sunday including works to the clerestory, the dramatic cleaning and renovation of the Doom, the cleaning of walls and ceiling, new lighting, new children's area, the re-siting of the Eyre stones and the cleaning of the Eyre monument.



Canon Angela Tilby, churchwarden  
Michael Humphreys, conservator Peter  
Martindale and churchwarden Fi Green

Visitors to the parish have included Bishop Nicholas with Ruth Wilde of Inclusive Church for a seminar on sexuality in February, the Archdeacon of Sarum in March to award Aldhelm Certificates, Jeffrey John to speak in May, and Angela Tilby to preach on Christ the King in November to mark the completion of the Doom

renovation. Bishop Nicholas returned the same day to chair hustings for December's general election.

The Lent Lunches this year were notable for thoughtful contributions from members of the congregation about their life and faith. On Good Friday, the Cathedral joined with us to hold a family service at St Thomas's. The choir led the services at Canterbury Cathedral on the second Sunday of Easter and witnessed a remarkable act of love from members of the Muslim community there. The bounds of the parish were beaten by a small group of walkers in May. St Thomas's once more sponsored the young entrepreneur award at the Chamber of Commerce business awards. In the days leading up to Armed Forces Weekend in June, St Thomas's hosted a magnificent display of hundreds of embroidered Flags of Thanks arranged by Neil Stace, the 'sewing soldier', for Alabaré.

Other events through the year included the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Race, many concerts including one by Melvyn Tan as part of the Salisbury Festival, a west African meal for Christian Aid, a harvest lunch and a retreat at Hilfield. Four of our young people were admitted as communicant members of the church under our Children in Communion policy in February and in November Abbie was confirmed at the Cathedral.

In February, we said farewell to Dominic Thornton who served us well in his title post and has now moved with his young family to Old Basing in Winchester diocese where his wife Heather is vicar.

Our life at St Thomas's, and my own ministry, are considerably enhanced by the contribution of a team of clergy who, it should be remembered, serve as volunteers. We are grateful for all they do to Wendy Cooper as an associate priest, Bruce Duncan, Alan Gill and Ann Philp, joined more recently by Tom Clammer, Robert Prance and Jim Greasley. On Maundy Thursday, Selina Deacon was licensed an associate priest in the parish by the Bishop of Ramsbury.

In July, Jonathan Plows left us to take up a full-time post as priest in charge of the churches of the Wylde and Till Valley parishes. Over 12 years as an ordained minister in the parish his contribution has been immense. He has involved himself in every aspect of our shared life with energy, enthusiasm and kindness. That St Thomas's is so involved in the life of the city is due in no small part to Jonathan's hard work. It is good to know that he is thriving in his new ministry.

Your parochial church council has continued to serve with great commitment in complex times. Recently it has conducted an experiment in dividing into working groups to undertake areas of its work in more detail. We shall report back on how this goes.

Meanwhile our prayer always is that, in all that we do, may God's purposes be served and may God's glory be known.

**Kelvin Inglis - Rector**

## Safeguarding Report:

The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy states that the Church "will train and equip church officers to have the confidence and skills they need to care for and support children, young people and vulnerable adults, and to recognise and respond to abuse". (*Church of England Parish Safeguarding Handbook 2019*)

### Safeguarding courses

Keeping up to date with safeguarding training is therefore a vital part of maintaining awareness and ensuring the safety of those in our church communities. As well as volunteers attending diocesan training, there have also been several in-house C1 courses led by Michael Humphreys in St Thomas's House, and last November an in-house C5 course was led by Jonathan Whiter, Diocesan Safeguarding Trainer, for 18 volunteers who needed their C1 or C2 courses updating.

### New structure

The Church of England has recently altered the structure of its safeguarding courses, as follows:

- **Basic Awareness** (formerly C0) - recommended for anyone who needs a basic awareness of safeguarding.
- **Foundation safeguarding** (formerly C1) - required for anyone who has safeguarding responsibilities or contact with children and/or vulnerable adults.
- **Leadership** (formerly C3) - required for anyone who has safeguarding leadership responsibilities or is leading activities involving children and/or vulnerable adults.
- **Senior Staff** (formerly C4) - senior staff who have key roles in safeguarding policy, strategy and practice.

These courses have all been revised and updated with new information and examples. The Basic Awareness and Foundation courses can be completed by any member of the congregation, to encourage a culture of support and awareness in the church. The courses will be available as training sessions arranged by the diocese in the near future, and are currently available on-line. For further details visit <https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org>

However, the Coronavirus health crisis has meant that all face-to-face courses have had to be cancelled for the foreseeable future. Volunteers therefore currently need to do their training on-line, and those who do not have access to a computer will need to undergo training or updating as soon as possible when the restrictions are lifted. Heather Bland, the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, is aware there are several volunteers within the parish to whom this applies.

There are numerous other volunteers who attended the C1 course in early 2017 but whose current role does not require safeguarding training. These volunteers are all aware that regular updating is encouraged, and that they can now update on-line if they wish to, or they can wait until the course is available as a diocesan training session if they prefer.

## **Parish DBS Verifier**

Brian Sharpe is now our Parish Data and Barring Service (DBS) Verifier, having undergone the Safer Recruitment process and diocesan training last summer. He is the person who will contact you if you require a DBS clearance for your role.

## **Photo Policy**

At its meeting in January 2020, the PCC approved a policy on taking, using and storing photographs and video recordings of children, young people and vulnerable adults. The policy is available to read on the Safeguarding page of St Thomas's website, as will be included in the 2020 edition of St Thomas's Safeguarding Handbook.

## **Logo**

As you may have noticed above, Safeguarding at St Thomas's now has its own logo! This symbol will appear alongside any safeguarding information - in church / on the website / in the diary - to make the topic more noticeable.

## **Thank you**

Thank you to everyone at St Thomas's for your awareness and understanding of the importance of safeguarding. It remains a vital part of keeping each other safe: abuse can take many forms, and it is up to every one of us to ensure others' safety and wellbeing.

If you have a safeguarding query or concern, please contact one of us via the Parish Office on 01722 322537, or via email:

[safeguarding@stthomassalisbury.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@stthomassalisbury.co.uk) (*your email will only be seen by a member of the safeguarding team*), or contact the rector, Kelvin Inglis, on 01722 239463.

**Rosie Norman**

Parish Safeguarding Officer

**Michael Humphreys**

Deputy Parish Safeguarding Officer

## **Adult Education Team:**

The Adult Education Team works to provide a range of opportunities for learning, reflection, discussion and spiritual growth within the congregation.

### **Membership:**

Fiona Hulbert (Chair); Jill Britton; Wendy Pugh; Pat Inglis; Kelvin Inglis; Selina Deacon.

During the year Mark Manterfield, Jonathan Plows and Judith Marriott stood down from the Team.

Events we have organised in the last year include:

**Mondays@St Thomas's:** Periodic opportunities for reflection and discussion based around poetry, art or scripture. In the last year these have included series on the Kingdom of God, the Eucharist and John's Gospel.

**Creation Season:** Three gatherings to view and discuss extracts from David Attenborough's Netflix series 'Our Planet', and a creation-themed evensong with prayer stations.

**Coming to our Senses:** A series to explore how our senses connect us to God and faith, led by Pat Inglis.

**Hilfield Weekend:** In September, 18 members of the congregation went for another weekend at Hilfield Franciscan Friary in Dorset, led by Kelvin Inglis.

**Saturday Discussion Cafés:** These informal gatherings continue on the third Saturday of each month for open discussion on various topics related to our faith and practice. These have varied from disability and life in a digital society to the Holy Trinity!

**Lent 2020:** This year's programme featured a course on 'Say Yes to Life', the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent book, led by Wendy Cooper, a talk by Tom Clammer on 'I believe in the Devil...?' and another series of Lent lunches with talks given by members of the congregation about their callings in different areas of life and work.

As always ideas and offers for future events are welcome.

**Fiona Hulbert**

## **The Bellringers:**

We have continued to ring for most of the Sunday Parish Communion and Evensong services. We also rang for a wedding, some funerals, Mayor Making, Remembrance Day, the New Year and, as last year, for Christingle and Carols for Busy People. An unusual one this year was ringing as part of a nationwide initiative in solidarity with the French following the disastrous fire at Notre Dame.

Two resignations plus both long- and short-term illnesses have made it very difficult to meet our obligations. My wife and I, now both accredited as teachers by the Association of Ringing Teachers (ART), have continued with an extensive weekly programme of teaching. Our learners have progressed; two of them have now passed ART level 2 and they and one other are working on level 3. We are planning further recruitment in 2020 but are having to resist Thursday evening bookings for the church taking over our practice nights.

We hold a monthly advanced practice that brings in ringers from a wide area. We enjoyed a number of social events organised by our dynamic Social Secretary, Penny Ibbs. We had an excellent tower outing in June organised by Hilary.

We continued to man the second Saturday coffee mornings in the church and this year again split the takings equally between the church and the church Quest 2020 appeal. Our December coffee morning did not this year coincide with the Tree Festival, but we were asked to man that Saturday in addition to our usual Saturday. It was exceedingly busy.

Following the departure of the person who set up our website, it has now been closed. We are taking steps to update the information in the bellringers' section of the church website.

**Nigel Orchard - Tower Captain**

**Margaret Romano - Deputy Tower Captain**

## **The Bookstall:**

The Bookstall has had another good year with takings of £3,134. A big thank you to all my excellent team.

The 'old' Bookstall is now a thing of the past and I look forward to telling you about our new setup. Unfortunately, there is a delay in the design, production, delivery and installation of the new format. Hopefully we will be able to open for business sooner rather than later.

**Geoff Bishop.**

## **Care and Connect:**

Care and Connect is a small group that meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday each month (except in August) to offer coffee, conversation and a 2-course lunch to older members of the church family. Some of our guests are collected by the Wiltshire Community Transport bus whilst others make their own way to church. We meet at 11.00am in St Michaels's room for coffee and conversation followed by a short talk, usually given by one of the clergy. After this we go to St Thomas's house for lunch. Our guests seem to value this outreach: the meals are always well received, and it is a good opportunity for meeting others, particularly for those of us who live alone.

This year we had 2 special meetings. In July we joined the parents and children of Tommy's Toddlers for an afternoon tea party in St Thomas's house. This was the first time the two groups had joined together but it was extremely well received by all and is something we hope to continue in future. In December we returned to Britford Farm shop for a Christmas afternoon tea with members of other church groups. The event is always good fun, especially the carol singing led by Robert Lewis.

As ever we are very grateful to those who chaperone and help, those who cook, prepare food, lay tables, serve and wash up, and to all who contribute to this valued ministry. We are always happy to welcome anyone who can help us on a regular or occasional basis.

Sadly, towards the end of the year we lost 2 of our long-standing guests – Margaret Curtis and Eva Daniels. They will be greatly missed by all. We have welcomed several new members during the year and if you wish to join or know of anyone who would like to join please contact Di Durnford.

We ask you to hold Care and Connect and its guests and helpers in your prayers.

## **Contemplative Community:**

Have you ever wanted to draw closer to God in prayer, but found that words get in the way, even the ones that aren't spoken? This is the experience of many people who attend Contemplative Community. Instead we follow a practice called centring prayer in which we sit in quiet for 20 minutes, silently turning and returning to God's love and care every time our minds wander off. This may sound daunting but it's much easier when part of a group of people sitting quietly together.

Once a month we practice 'lectio divina' – using a passage of scripture or sacred writing to read, meditate, and pray upon. It is amazing how familiar passages suddenly come alive and connect with us.

This is the 'contemplative' part; the other aspect of our group is community. Each week we share anything that has occurred to us since the last time that we wish to talk about – and the rest of the group listens without interrupting. The atmosphere is respectful acceptance. We also share meals from time to time, and retreat days. We are a group that includes Methodists, Roman Catholics as well as Anglicans from St Thomas's and we welcome members from all faith traditions. New members join us from time to time and fit in well.

Here are some quotes from our members:

'As a relatively new member of St Thomas I found that becoming part of Contemplative Community from early on has given me an easy way to make and deepen friendships at St Thomas. The opportunities to get together socially have been enjoyable as well.'

'Contemplation and contemplative practice allow me to enter the mystery that exists between reality and imagination - a strange place that offers the opportunity of experiencing God.'

Contemplative Community meets weekly on Wednesdays, 7.30pm in St Thomas's House (usually downstairs).

**Clare Tawney**

### **The Choir:**

Throughout St Thomas's 800 years singing has played a key part in the life of the church, and the choir (and congregation) maintain the tradition.

The main highlight for the choir this year was the invitation from Canterbury Cathedral to sing the weekend services after Easter. The singing and the social aspect were really successful. It was very fortunate that we sang the Canticles composed by Harry Brockway, who also sang in the choir. It was a great shock to hear of his sudden death. Harry started his musical career as a chorister in the choir. He will be greatly missed.

The choir have sung in a number of special services. On Passion Sunday there was Music for Passiontide, which included Allegri's Miserere, and Fauré's Requiem for Remembrance Sunday.

In addition, there have been two very successful lunchtime concerts for Quest 2020 – Palaces, Temples and Dwellings and Christmas Delights.

Congratulations are in order for Elliot Groillon who auditioned successfully for the Cathedral Choir – their gain is our loss. We thank him for his contribution and wish him well, as we do Emma Knowles, who has been a member of the choir for 12 years and has gone to university in Southampton. We welcome Francis and Lucy as new recruits (more are needed).

On a sad note, David Power, our organist, suffered a severe heart attack and has not been able to resume his post. We thank him for his fantastic service and wish him well.

Congratulations are also due to Annabel, Beatrix, Elara and William who have progressed up the RSCM medal table, and to Benjamin Jacobs and Brendan Fletcher, who gained their Dean's Awards.

**John Dempster - Director of Music**

## **Christian Aid:**

St Thomas's members regularly support Christian Aid through their personal giving and their organizing. Collections in 2019 from Lent lunches and the December Carols for Busy People service came to over £1500. During Christian Aid Week we organized a coffee morning, and 10 volunteers participated in the house-to-house collection which altogether raised over £1700.

The theme of Christian Aid Week 2019 was maternal health services in Sierra Leone – a country which has been badly affected by civil war and Ebola in the recent past, with a knock-on effect on public health services. Celebrating positive aspects of the region, in July we held a West African themed meal, cooked by Sandra, Josephine and Benedicta from Ghana, and featuring mouth-watering chicken and jollof rice. The sun shone, and we sat in the garden at St Thomas's House, eating our meals upon beautiful African tablecloths. The event was a sell-out, and we raised £609.

2020 started with the annual Christian Aid Quiz. It was great to have Jonathan Plows as quiz master again, returning to us from his Wylke parishes. He devised an ingenious Climate Change round, along with the regular rounds.

Climate Change affects Christian Aid partners through droughts and flooding and we all need to support their efforts at adaptation as well as committing ourselves to reducing carbon emissions on an individual, community and national level. This is a theme that is especially pertinent in 2020. In November the UK Government will be hosting crucial United Nations talks on climate change, COP26, in Glasgow. All eyes will be on the UK and the government has an opportunity to show its leadership. Now is the time to hold their feet to the fire!

**Clare Tawney**

## **St Thomas's Cleaning Teams:**

It has been a busier year than usual. There was much to do as a result of scaffolding, and a greater use of the church for various events, which is important. There are five cleaning teams each with five members and all of them have been faithful in turning up and rising to the challenges. I should like to thank them all.

There is always room for more – so if you would like to join us please contact

**Rosemary Cox** on 01722 332373

## **PCC St Thomas & St Edmund Fricker Charity:**

Two charitable funds are distributed under the auspices of the parish: (a) the St Thomas & St Edmund's Charity and (b) the parish's share of the Fricker Charity. The Trustees of the St Thomas & St Edmund's Charity are the Rector, Sally Vaughan (Secretary), Nigel Orchard (Treasurer), Bobbie Chettleburgh and Martin Inglis. The Rector of St Thomas's is the designated recipient and distributor of the parish's share of the Fricker Charity funds; he uses the St Thomas's Charity trustees to advise him on distribution of the Fricker funds. The Trustees met four times in 2019.

The St Thomas & St Edmund income comes from a Charities' Commission ethical fund (COIF) into which were consolidated the investments from 11 old charities. The St Thomas & St Edmund's Charity funds are restricted to the parish and to Bemerton Heath.

The income from the Fricker Charity (arising from the rental of a shop in Salisbury and distributed according to the terms of a will made in 1696) is passed equally to the rectors of St Thomas's and St Martin's and the trustees of The Trinity Hospital, Salisbury. The Fricker distribution area covers the entire city, Laverstock and Harnham.

Grants may be made to needy individuals or organisations serving the needy in the area of the two charities. The contact email is: [StTCharities@btinternet.com](mailto:StTCharities@btinternet.com) or phone the parish office in the first instance:

In 2019, the St Thomas & St Edmund's Charity had an investment income of £3,877. The Fricker fund income was £6,600. No expenses are incurred in the administration of these funds by the parish. Copies of the accounts are available on request.

**Nigel Orchard - Treasurer**

### **Tuesday Coffee Mornings:**

It is always a pleasure to write this report as it gives me a chance to reflect on how many people we have welcomed into St Thomas's. As well as our regular visitors, this year we all remembered the Flag Exhibition at the end of June with lots of extra visitors that morning, who were delighted to be able to purchase refreshments as well as look at the Flags.

Amongst our other visitors some residents from Braemar Lodge Care Home came to coffee. Also, once a month we welcome our older church members, who come to Care and Connect. We usually go down to St Michael's room to say hello.

Sadly, we shall miss Eva Daniels (who started up the coffee morning some years ago with our friends from the Mothers Union). She always enjoyed hearing a report of how we were getting on. Several of us attended her memorial service in December. As well as Tuesday mornings, we helped with the 2020 Saturday coffee mornings in March and October and also the Autumn Fayre and the Christmas Tree Festival.

A huge thankyou to everyone who comes to our coffee mornings for helping us to make the record sum of almost £9000 for Church Funds. We look forward to seeing you all in 2020.

**Jill Bushnell**

### **Saturday Coffee Mornings:**

The Saturday coffee morning rota for this year is up and running as usual. The Bellringers provide the service loyally every second Saturday in the month and the Quest 2020 Fundraising Appeal every third. Both events are a steady source of income.

Of the twelve Saturdays when “outside charities” can hire the kitchen (for £45), as I write, only one remains un-booked. There are still a few empty dates for anyone interested in fundraising for causes relating to our church or, indeed, keen on organising a morning just for St Thomas’s regular running costs.

This year is my final involvement with this rota as Brenda Whitehead has very kindly agreed to take on the duty for 2021. Good luck and many thanks to her.

**Jennie Hoare**

### **Christmas Tree Festival 2018:**

The 2019 Christmas Tree Festival – the fifteenth of its kind – was again a very popular and successful community event in the first week of December, with a record number of exhibits and visitors. We are so grateful to all the exhibitors, musicians, technicians, stewards, caterers, money counters and many other individuals who contributed their time and talents to the Festival. For the second year running, workshops were held in St Thomas’s House for making Christmas wreaths and table decorations and were a much appreciated and enjoyable extension of the Festival.

At the Carols for Busy People Service on 17th December the beneficiary charities, Care Home Volunteers and Family Counselling Trust (Wiltshire), each received a cheque for £5,750. The residue of the proceeds of £5,939.25 went to St Thomas’s general purposes fund.

Many thanks are due to the generosity of over 16,000 visitors to the Festival and to our sponsors for helping us to raise such a total.

**Diane Emsley and John Cox - Christmas Tree Festival Co-organisers on behalf of the hard-working Festival Committee**

## **Fabric Committee:**

### Introduction

2019 was a very busy, but ultimately satisfying and successful year for the Fabric Committee (FC). With generous funding from Quest 2020 and the PCC, the team was able to complete the majority of works both on the fabric and in support of the Reordering project. The majority of the works identified in the Quinquennial Inspection (QI) of 2015 have been completed and the church now has far more to offer the visitor with a more flexible arrangement and brighter environment for the congregation.

### Doom Plus Project

For many years it had been the aspiration of the church to undertake the restoration of the Doom painting, the largest of the remaining few in the country. Work started in July and saw the erection of a large scaffolding platform with 3 levels and across 2 bays of the nave. Peter Martindale undertook the work with support from other specialist conservators. The scaffolding was taken down on 5 November exposing a much cleaner, repaired and restored painting which far exceeded our expectations and that will hopefully help preserve it for a number of decades. The removal of the tie bar, which proved unconnected and supporting nothing, was a bonus that we did not expect.

Work was also undertaken on the stonework and roof painting. Much of the dark varnish on the second beam and some areas of the roof woodwork was removed exposing the polychrome underneath.

The cleaning of the stonework has also been most satisfactory and made a huge improvement to the light of the church.

One of the works identified in the QI was the need to reinforce a buttress on the South Clerestory. This was undertaken by Colin Avery which, with luck, will have stopped leaks in that area. While the scaffolding was up we discovered a further area of degradation on the clerestory where a blind panel was separating from the main structure due to spalling of the stonework. This has also been remedied. A cherry picker was hired for the day to enable inspection of all similar areas in the nave, both North and South. While there are areas of weakness none of these require urgent work and will be integrated into the next Quinquennial Inspection, due in late 2020.

### Lady Chapel

Ruth and Torquil McNeilage undertook a very successful cleaning and restoration of the Christopher and Esther Eyre memorial on the North side of the Chapel. The result has been very well received so much so that a generous donation has been promised potentially enabling us to undertake cleaning of the Thomas and Elizabeth memorial next year. Effective lighting of both memorials to fully expose their charms remains an outstanding issue.

The Eyre stones were dug up from their position on the South side and repositioned on the north wall of the chapel where they are easily viewed.

The removal of the pews in the nave gave an opportunity to use some of the decorated ends and fronts and these were grafted onto the front and back pews in the chapel.

### Lighting and Electrical

JHM Electrical, under the supervision of Simon Knight (a member of the church) of Lux Lucis the lighting designers, installed liturgical and performance lighting in the altar area. This also effectively lights the Doom painting enhancing the work carried out on it. Cabling has been contained in discrete trunking painted to tie in with the stone. This work was used as a trial to see what lighting might be required for the rest of the church – a project on the 'to do' list.

In support of reordering additional power points were installed throughout the church on walls and in the floor and much of the low-level cabling and heating trunking on the south wall and in front of the chancel boxed in. During the work it was identified that the distribution box was out of date and inadequate.

Accordingly, permission was given for JHM to install a new board with the necessary surge protection.

### Heating

Again, as identified in the Reordering, new radiators were installed in the Young Peoples' Area and boxed in for safety reasons. One of the radiators removed was installed on the north wall. To mitigate the loss of heat occasioned by the West window and enclosure of two large radiators in the glass lobby two trench heaters were installed.

Having engaged a new contractor for the boiler maintenance we promptly lost them as they closed down that part of the business. However, a new one undertook an inspection of the boilers and systems and made safety and system improvements. The possibility that we may have to replace the boilers, remains.

### Nave

The parquet flooring in the nave and aisles was sanded, repaired and coated. The result making the whole area much lighter. The floor in the Remembrance area was relaid and edged to complement the main floor.

The bases of all the piers were cleaned by Minerva Stone Conservation.

### Project Management

With the need to coordinate various trades and with work to facilitate some of the above it was decided to employ a company to undertake these works and project manage the requirement. This was conducted by Gallagher & Sons with Lloyd Palmer as the project manager. And, of course, none of this could have been achieved without the input of our Church Architect, Antony Feltham-King from the St Ann's Partnership.

**Peter Heier**

## **The Garden Team:**

As usual, the early winter days of 2019 were quiet for the garden team (consisting of Malcolm, Jonathan, Bob, and Ann). This is when nature carefully allows the plants and trees to retreat to their slumber and rest as the bad weather rages, until the first signs of spring appear, welcoming the start of new life once again.

It was not until the end of March that work could commence once again, and we began by improving the South Churchyard. We decided that we would plant two rows of rose bushes adjacent to the Haunch of Venison pub, much of this historical building is hidden by large bushes which provides privacy in the churchyard and we hoped to bring some much needed colour to this space. We also planted a row of Rosa Rugose rose bushes which would provide a sturdy barrier next to the new rose bed. Bob made a wooden surround for the new roses which would provide a dedicated space for our new bushes. Over the next few months our new rose bushes flourished, and we were rewarded with an array of colour. We also put new soil and plants in the wooden pots between the church benches. They were – I am sure, appreciated by the many people that visit the churchyard during the summer months.

The dying ceanothus tree that grew on the wall of the house had been taken down in 2018 and a new trellis installed. We planted some clematis plants against the trellis and are hopeful that they will flourish in the following year. We also planted three matching bee loving plants in the garden, and we are hopeful that bees will be encouraged to make a home in our bee hotel which is attached to a large tree. As the year moved into autumn, we noticed that the trellis that stood between the Cote restaurant and St Thomas's garden was breaking up and had to be replaced. This was difficult because the original construction was held in place by cement and the plants growing against the trellis had attached themselves very firmly by growing into the old structure. It was a challenge to save the established plants, but some, thankfully, did survive ... and the new trellis was installed before winter set in.

By December, a Christmas tree was once again adorning the Church door entrance and welcoming our many annual Christmas Tree Festival visitors.

**We are grateful to Wilton Garden Centre which supports St Thomas's Garden Team with a 10% discount on all purchases we make on behalf of the Church.**

**Ann Horwood on behalf of the Garden Team**

### **The Olive Branch:**

The Olive Branch have enjoyed many interesting speakers during 2019, covering topics from the making of the programme 'Call the Midwife'; the challenging pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela; time spent in China; Horatio's Garden and Salisbury City Almshouses, together with a summer outing, lunch at the White Hart and a coffee morning in church. We have also contributed from our funds to provide two new chairs for the church. We would be pleased to welcome any new ladies to our meetings on the second Thursday of the month in St. Thomas's House commencing at 7.30 p.m.

**Jan Winterman**

### **Organ Refurbishment Project:**

When I reported for this publication in 2018, the contractor's then estimate for completion was the end of April 2019 (already a considerable slippage on the contract completion date). The death of David Coram, the partner of the main contractor, added, according to the main contractor, a delay of 6 months, making completion October 2019. Very disappointingly, he has continually revised his programme and failed to meet all the revised dates by a big margin. His current estimate is completion by end August 2020, but I am not convinced even this will be met.

I continue, with my technical adviser, to monitor the works closely, and he confirms that the work done is to a high standard.

**Nigel Orchard - Project Manager**

### **Praying Together:**

Praying Together as a group has met weekly throughout the year every Tuesday between 10.00-10.30am in the St Michael's Room.

Our numbers tend to fluctuate from week to week, but there is a dedicated group of people who attend regularly, and I wish to record my grateful thanks to them for their support and encouragement. Our prayer ministry underpins our faith and we offer prayers for our congregation, the ministry team, Quest 2020, our PCC and all involved in the life, work and mission of our church and for many other events within the Diocese and parish, and the world in general. We pray for people in need, those named on our parish prayer list, and we have the privilege and responsibility to offer the prayers placed upon the prayer board situated in the Lady Chapel. This is a valid ministry in that we continue to see increased usage of the prayer board by pilgrims, visitors and members of St. Thomas's congregation. I would emphasise that all prayer requests are dealt with in confidence.

Again, we entered a Prayer Tree at the Christmas Tree Festival, and we had many prayers placed upon the Prayer Tree - hence a visible tangible sign of need. Perhaps you might be encouraged to come along to participate in Praying Together. We would always be delighted to welcome you.

**Pat Inglis**

## **Quest 2020 Fundraising Appeal Committee:**

Before writing this report, I looked back at last year's account of what we hoped to do in 2019. Remarkably, we have achieved most of our ambitions for the first part of the renewal and repair of parts of the church fabric. It seems a long time ago that the nave was dominated by scaffolding for four months, but that has been removed, and now we can admire the wonderful restoration work that has been done to the Doom painting, as well as the cleaning of the first two bays of the ceiling. At the same time that this was done, repairs were carried out to parts of the clerestory.

By the time this report is read, the next phase of the work will have been completed – the installation of the Matthew Burt altar on its new dais, and the replacement of the pews with modern benches.

And we have managed to maintain a sufficient income flow to keep pace with the expenditure. We had some notable fund-raising events during the year, including an Antiques Valuation evening, a sponsored cycle ride, the Autumn Fayre, an Auction of Promises, a Murder Mystery evening, a series of talks on aspects of the church, and several memorable concerts including visits from Anita D'Atellis and the Sarum Six. We had donations from a number of Trusts, and of course our congregation continued to give generously to Quest 2020.

**John Bruce-Ball – Chair**

## **Redevelopment Project Team:**

The Redevelopment Project Team consists of Ute Schwarting, Di Durnford, Martin Marriott, Kelvin Inglis, John Foster and Antony Feltham-King (architect). Nigel Orchard attends all meetings as he draws up and submits the faculty applications, as does John Bruce-Ball on behalf of Quest 2020.

2019 was spent in preparation for all the changes which you can now see in the nave area of the church. This has been a combined operation between the RPT and the Fabric Committee which required close cooperation at all stages. In the autumn we put in place the new young people's area and moved the Eyre stones into the Lady Chapel. This enabled us to create level flooring in their place for more seating when needed.

We then turned our attention to all the work undertaken in January/February 2020 which is outside the timescale of this report but is now complete.

Looking ahead we have already begun work on preparing for a faculty application for the final stage of the project. This is for a font, removal of the current font, and cupboards in the south west corner for chairs and storage, all of which requires approval by the PCC before submitting the faculty application.

**John Foster – Chair of the RPT**

## **Sacristan Team:**

At the beginning of the year we lost one of our stalwart members when Mike O'Connell moved north. The remaining seven members have continued to set up and clear up from the Communion services of the week until lockdown. Since then our services have not been needed to the same degree. We do need another person to add to our numbers. In normal times a pair of sacristans are to be found in the Vestry on Saturday morning and, of course, after the 10.15 service on Sundays, with short visits at other times depending on the services (Christmas and Holy Week are a bit busier). Two more people wash all the small linen (purificators etc) each week. We are grateful to Alison Orchard who has made new items of small linen, especially a large corporal for use on the new altar. If you are interested in becoming a member of the team do come and have a chat.

**Diana Ruddle**

## **Tommy's Toddlers:**

As I write, all is well with the Toddlers and our loyal friendly families. The star of this year being a regular attender, with her two-year-old, and she herself increasingly "great with child". Having appeared on a Tuesday, she gave birth on the Friday then joined us on the following Tuesday complete with a gorgeous baby boy! A four-day old is a novelty for us but gave huge pleasure to everyone present!

Right now, we are looking out at the weather and eagerly anticipating the spring and being able to go outside. Everyone enjoys the freedom of playing in the lovely garden, which is so well looked after by our hard-working gardeners.

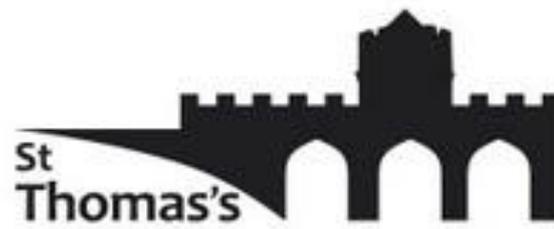
We three not-so-young, and Yvonne...leaders, manage Toddlers but we'd be delighted to hear from anyone who might step in –if one of us is away or unwell- to help, even on an occasional basis.

**Jennie Hoare for the TT Team**

## **Welcomers:**

In January 2018 a group of 18 members of the parish began to Welcome our visitors to the church on a weekly basis. During the 11 months up to last year's Christmas Tree Festival, these people put in 1196 hours Welcoming 11,212 visitors. We now have 28 Welcomers and in the first 11 months of the year they have given 1131 hours to Welcoming 13,464 visitors. Once our church reopens in February, we expect to Welcome many more visitors to our church. We all very much enjoy what we do, not least because it is so obviously appreciated by our visitors. We could still do with a few more Welcomers to cover some gaps in the week. We all do one or two hours a week. If any of you would be interested in joining us, please have a word with me.

**Martin Marriott**



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