

St Philip & All Saints Church
(The Barn Church)
Atwood Avenue, Kew



Reports for the
Annual Parish Meeting
Sunday 10th May 2026

Vicar's Report

Introduction: Reflecting with Gratitude and Hope

As we gather for our APCM, it is both a privilege and a joy to reflect on the year that has passed and to look ahead with hope and expectation.

Over the past year, our PCC has intentionally taken time to pause, to pray, and to listen—both to one another and to the prompting of the Holy Spirit, particularly at our PCC Away Day last summer. Together, we have begun to discern better God's vision for us, and our mission goals over the next few years. New projects and exciting developments are now beginning to emerge.

This period of reflection is especially significant as we look ahead to a major milestone in the life of our church. In 2029, just a few years away, we will celebrate our centenary—100 years of worship, witness, and service at our beautiful Barn Church. This is not only an opportunity to give thanks for all that has gone before, but also a moment to look forward with intention. Plans are beginning to take shape for a centenary project that will honour our past while ensuring that we are well placed—spiritually, structurally, and financially—to serve future generations. Our prayer is not simply to mark 100 years, but to lay foundations for the next 100.

There is much to be thankful for, and much to be excited about. I am deeply grateful for the faithfulness, generosity, and openness of this congregation as we continue this journey together.

Moments of Joy and Celebration

Along with our successful away day, we have also been blessed by the strengthening of our PCC, particularly with the appointment of Giles Williams, joining Judi as one of our Church Wardens, and Eram Cooper as PCC Secretary. Giles has already brought wisdom, energy, and a deep commitment to the life of the church, and we are very grateful for his willingness to serve in this important role. Eram too brings many gifts, not least her organisational abilities and her warmth and kindness

Another exciting area of development has been our involvement in the Parish Development and Renewal Programme (PDRP) run by the diocese. It has enabled us to get some future projects off the ground - both as a parish and as a benefice. The programme has involved regular weekends away for training, prayer and connection with other parishes, and I would like to express my sincere thanks to Felice and Giles for their commitment, enthusiasm, and faithful participation in this process. Their contribution has been invaluable.

There have also been important milestones in the faith journeys of our congregation. It was a particular joy to celebrate at Southwark Cathedral the confirmations of Isabella, Lydia, Owen and Vera during the year. I look forward to more confirmations next year!

Our engagement with young people continues to grow, and our increasing participation in Youth Ministry in Communion (YMIC), a diocesan initiative, has been especially encouraging. This has proved to be a rich and fruitful offering for our older children, providing them with opportunities for fellowship, teaching, and spiritual growth alongside peers from across the diocese.

All of these moments—big and small—are signs of a living, active faith community, and we give thanks to God for each one.

Giving Thanks for Hannah's Ministry

As Hannah prepares to finish her training with us and move on to her first role after curacy, as Team Vicar of Christ Church Collier's Wood, I would like to give thanks for Hannah and all that she has brought to our Church and Benefice. Her ministry has been marked by creativity, energy, theological depth, and a deep pastoral heart. She has enriched our worship, strengthened our community life, and helped us to grow in faith. She also, with the support of our Church Wardens, held our churches during my sabbatical and I know many of you have told me about how much you have appreciated her ministry.

It has been a privilege for me personally to serve as Hannah's Training Incumbent. To walk alongside her during this formative stage of ministry has been both a responsibility and a blessing, and I am deeply grateful for all that I have learned from her as well.

During her time with us, Hannah has helped initiate and develop a number of new Benefice activities and projects. These include the Light Party, Children's Easter Crafts, and a renewed focus on pastoral visiting and youth work. As we look to the future, continuing her projects and activities will depend on the willingness of volunteers to step forward and offer their time and gifts. As **safeguarding** must always be at the forefront of our planning as a church, anyone wishing to volunteer, particularly with those activities involving children or vulnerable adults, must have an up-to-date DBS check and have completed the required diocesan safeguarding training. This is not simply a requirement, but a reflection of our commitment to safeguarding and being a safe and welcoming church for all.

Giving Thanks for Judi Braddock's Term as Church Warden

Judi's commitment to the Barn Church, to the benefice, and to the clergy during her term as Church Warden has been truly outstanding, and I have been so grateful for everything she has done for us. Her wisdom, her kindness, her willingness to roll up her sleeves up for the grittiest challenges, and direct her keen brain to everything from HR to retrieving our Gift Aid funds; from Mission Action Planning to making sure our housekeepers have all they need; from offering and coordinating prayers to administering the chalice, and not forgetting her excellent proofreading and cooking skills – these are just a few of her many talents which she has been so generous in sharing with us. She has been a source of considerable support to my ministry since I arrived here in June 2021 and I will always be grateful. I hope Judi will continue to share her gifts, and most of all her caring and wise presence, within our church community for years to come.

Thanksgiving for Volunteers

No church can flourish without the dedication and generosity of its volunteers, and this is certainly true of our community.

Beyond those already mentioned I would like to thank:

- **Bart Edgar**, our Treasurer – thank you for your thoughtful, strategic care of our finances and for the clarity and encouragement you bring to our planning.
- **Paul Gregorowski**- Paul's contribution to the life of the Barn Church is immeasurable. Thank you for all you do, and for all your support and wisdom.
- **Linda Whittaker** – for her kind help with the banking.
- **Jenny Giangrande**, our Junior Church Lead. Thank you for your warmth, creativity, and care for our children. We continue to be blessed by your ideas and enthusiasm. A heartfelt thank you also to all the parents who give their time and energy to help lead Junior Church sessions – your presence and support make such a difference.
- **Mark Dowling**, and all our **choir** – for the music that has lifted our worship and deepened our prayer. Thanks also to **Mark** for his brilliant **Concert Series** which is a great offering and outreach to our community.
- Our **PCC** – thank you for the wisdom, prayerfulness, and diligence you bring to guiding the life and mission of the church, particularly in this last year looking at strategy, mission and vision for the future of The Barn Church.
- **Victoria Summer**, our **Safeguarding Officer for Children**, and **Clare Vollum**, our **Safeguarding Officer for Vulnerable Adults** – thank you for your important work in helping make our church a place of safety and trust for all.
- **Anna Gane**, for faithfully editing and sending **The Barn Bulletin** each week – this quiet ministry of communication helps keep us connected and informed.
- Our **Gardening Team**, led by **Faith Polya**, who continue to tend our church garden so beautifully – it is a place of life, peace, and welcome.
- Thanks also to **Faith** for managing our coffee rota – an essential expression of our hospitality!
- **Richard Wright** for his attentive work caring for the maintenance of the Barn Church building, often going on quietly behind the scenes, and his gentle care of visitors and hirers.
- **Matthew Pannett**, for all your hard work maintaining our church building, often going above (sometimes up ladders!) and beyond, to care for our space.
- **Terry Robson** and **Angela Hollingworth** for their help with finding people to give intercessions and readings.
- **Penny Sharman** for her care of our altar linens.
- **Felice Oxborrow**, **Beth Elliott** and the **Barn Ents** team, for your creative, energetic work – not only raising vital funds but also opening our doors wide to the community.
- **Beni Woolmer**, for offering the **Christian Meditation Group** each week in the Barn Church – a beautiful ministry drawing people from both our churches into deeper reflection and prayer.
- **Jeff Harris**, for being our Deanery Rep.

- **Veronica Willoughby**, for your wonderful work with the church flowers, often going above and beyond to help and support.
- I want to express my gratitude to **David Polya** and our wonderful team of **welcomers and sides-people**. Their warm hospitality ensures that all who come through our doors feel welcomed and valued.
- Finally, I want to thank **Marie**, our **Parish Administrator**, for the incredible support she provides to the church and to each of us. Even at her busiest, Marie's warmth, care, and professionalism shine through in everything she does. We are so grateful for her dedication and the care she gives to our church family. Notably in recent months, her care and diligence over **safeguarding training and checks**.

To all who volunteer in any capacity: thank you. Your commitment is deeply appreciated, and your contribution makes a real difference.

An Invitation to Prayer and Commitment

As we look ahead, I want to end with an invitation—an invitation to prayer, to reflection, and to renewed commitment.

Each of us is part of the life of this church, and each of us has a role to play. I would encourage you to take time to reflect on how you are called to support this community—whether through prayer, volunteering, or financial giving.

Both time and money are vital to the sustainability and growth of our church. **Regular giving** enables us to plan with confidence and to maintain the ministries and structures upon which we rely. **Legacies** enable us look ahead to a longer-term future. **One-off donations** also play an important role, particularly as we begin to look ahead to significant projects which will become part of our broader **centenary developments and celebrations**.

One such project will be the **replacement of our roof**, which will form a key part of our centenary plans. This is not simply about maintaining a building, but about ensuring that we have a secure and welcoming space for worship, mission, and community life for many years to come.

As we prepare for our centenary, we do so with gratitude for the past and hope for the future. But more than that, we do so with faith—faith that God, who has been faithful through the past 100 years, will continue to guide and provide for us in the years ahead.

Let us continue to pray together, to serve together, and to trust together, as we seek to be the church God calls us to be here in Kew.

**With every blessing,
Melanie**

Curate's Report

Time passes as swiftly as ever, and I can't quite believe that I'm approaching the end of three years with you all at The Barn Church and the end of my curacy. It has been a great privilege and a great joy to be Assistant Curate in the United Benefice, Kew—and my final year has only confirmed my awareness of my good fortune of having the opportunity to serve here. It has also been a real joy to host my curate colleagues Rev. Natalie Jones and Rev. Jack Belloli to deacon and to preach here, something that they both enjoyed immensely and found helpful in their training, so thank you for making them so welcome. I am also grateful to have been able to have been released for two short-term placements, in Kings College London's Chaplaincy, and at Bristol Cathedral, which have been incredibly helpful to me in discerning possible future steps in my own ministry.

I have been so well prepared for the next steps in ministry in being able to gain a wide range of experiences and good practice at a lot of different things. In the last year, I very much appreciated having the opportunity to step up and hold the fort during Rev. Melanie's well-deserved sabbatical and am grateful to have been so well supported and encouraged by our church wardens Judi and Giles as well as the whole of the congregation. It was a particular treat to present Owen at his confirmation in Southwark Cathedral in November, and to be present with Lydia, Izzy and Vera for theirs in May, and I hope that confirmations become an annual part of the Benefice's life, alongside Baptisms and Admission to Communion.

Highlights of the past year here in Kew have included our Turkish Evening, where I was able to speak about the pilgrimage Bishop Christopher led to the Seven Churches of Asia Minor and enjoy some great food with you all. It's also been great to see the ongoing success of our Light Party and Easter Crafts sessions for children and families in our community. I know that Jenny Giangrande and the Junior Church are keen to see these continue, as are the St Luke's Junior Church and I hope that a number of you will take the opportunity to support them in planning and hosting these events into the future, and having fun exploring our Christian faith with our children and young people.

I've also immensely enjoyed our continuing regular Bible Study which now meets on the first and third Thursdays of the month, and which started 2026 by discussing the Nicene Creed. Meeting together to read and discuss scripture and other elements of our faith, like the creed, is a great way of helping all of us connect our Sunday worship services with our daily lives; it helps us to understand what we do in Church and to think about how that connects with what we think and believe and do every day in ways that can make our lives and the life of the world better and richer, in ways that are so rewarding. I very much hope that this regular group can continue into the future, alongside the special Advent and Lent series.

As I prepare to take my next steps, I am keen to make sure my responsibilities are handed over well, focusing particularly on the Pastoral Care team and the church's communications. We're very fortunate to have Anna ably looking after our newsletter every week and it would be great for her to be supported by people who can keep the Barn Church's Facebook page and website up-to-date—I'd really like to encourage you to think about helping out if you

already have the kind of skills for digital comms, as it's a great way to help the church continue to welcome people in.

I will miss you all, and the beauty of the Barn Church, immensely as I go. The Barn and St Luke's will always be the sites of many special 'firsts' for me in ministry. I will be praying that you continue to thrive and grow, and I hope to continue to stay in touch.

With every blessing
Hannah

Churchwarden Report

I began my tenure as churchwarden in September and have spent a fulfilling period learning the functions of the role and, more importantly, getting to know the people involved in making this church the special place that it is. The love and commitment that so many have to the buildings and grounds place are such a gift to our community: I am particularly grateful to Richard Wright, Matt Pannett, Mike and Felice Oxborrow, David and Faith Polya and Paul Gregorowski for all that they do to keep the ship afloat. Great thanks also to Marie Mitton in the benefice office for all that she does to keep the administrative side of things in such great shape.

The building that we know and love is showing its age and we are approaching the stage where serious consideration needs to be given to the fabric. As the Barn Church approaches its centenary in 2029, we must grapple with the challenge of replacing the roof of the worship space, the adjoining hall building has reached the end of its useful life and other elements such as the organ, heating and electrics require attention.

In the six months since I became warden, we have had to spend a significant sum on repairing the underfloor heating pipes of which only a portion was covered by insurance. Such reactive maintenance places an ever-increasing burden on church finances. A major renovation of our plant, confirmed by the 5-yearly report in 2024, is necessary and this is a reality which needs to be embraced as soon as possible.

I am convinced that as a church we can meet the challenge of making the Barn Church fit for another hundred years. To do so, we will need strong, decisive leadership and a collective desire to achieve our aims. By having a clearly defined objective and through working together, we will be able to carry out His will and act as the hands and feet of Christ to the community in Kew that we are called to serve.

Giles Williams

PCC Secretary's Report

The Barn PCC members for 2025-26 were as follows:

Rev. Dr. Melanie Harrington, Rev. Dr. Hannah Swithinbank (Curate), Judi Braddock (Churchwarden), Giles Williams (Church Warden), Bart Edgar (Treasurer), Matthew Pannett (Premises), Felice Oxborrow (Fundraising and Events), Jenny Giangrande (Junior Church), Beth Elliot, Ela Nistor (former PCC Secretary), Faith Polya (Garden maintenance), Victoria Summers (Safeguarding), Eram Cooper (current PCC Secretary) and Marie Mitton (Parish Administrator).

I have only recently begun my role as the PCC Secretary from February 2026. I have been attending the Barn Church services for three years now. Since I have joined the PCC have had one meeting for which the minutes have been submitted.

Eram Cooper

Barn Church sides-people

I am very grateful for the following people who throughout the year have regularly carried out the duties of welcoming people, distributing hymn books, taking collection and co-ordinating the taking of communion at Sunday services.

Chris Lynch, Alison Pearce, Tim Woolmer, Richard Wright, Linda Whitaker, Abdul Akodu, Ursula Gonzalez.

We need more members who would be willing to help out once a month, if you are interested in helping please contact me to discuss further.

Thank you again to the team, their hard work has been very supportive in the running of the services.

David Polya

The Christian Meditation Group Report

The meditation group began on April 17th 2023 and has been held weekly ever since. It is open to all the churches in Kew- and indeed anyone who wishes to join us. We meditate on Monday evenings for 30 minutes from 7-7.30pm in the side chapel of the Barn church and start a few minutes before 7pm in order to do some calming, breathing exercises to help us to become settled and present. There is a group attendance of 10 people regularly and people join us from time to time to see if this might be helpful for them.

Meditation is a universal, spiritual discipline existing in many religions. In Psalm 46 we have the well-known phrase "Be still and know that I am God." Meditation is a silent prayer rooted in stillness first described by the desert fathers and mothers in the 3rd and 4th centuries and fundamental to the early monastic traditions.

We try to say the ancient, Aramaic word “Maranatha” one of the earliest prayers in the Christian church, meaning “Come Lord” continuously. It doesn’t have to be Marantha- if another phrase resonates better for you, use that- but stay with the same phrase. We try to keep returning to the word when distractions come and give it our full attention as if the word is the only thing that matters in this moment.

You would be very welcome to attend if you wanted to “Come and See”. I think it has become a valued time of quiet stillness in our rushed and busy world for those who attend.

Beni Woolmer

Safeguarding for Children

Marie Mitton has set up the new DBS system this year and is organising in person safeguarding training for the benefice on May 23rd TBC. Marie has been sent copies of certificates. All members of the PCC have been asked to complete the course and the importance of Safeguarding training for the PCC and volunteers has been emphasised.

Following a high attendance at the Light Party it was felt more adults were needed to help organise and maintain safeguarding.

One PCC meeting annually has a safeguarding theme and safeguarding is an existing standing agenda item at each PCC meeting.

The safeguarding email is safeguarding@kewbenefice.org We continue to work within the Church of England National Safeguarding Standards alongside ‘A Safe Church’ from the Diocese of Southwark.

Victoria Summer

Safeguarding officer for Children

Safeguarding for Adults

There have been no reports of an Adult safeguarding issue this year

Clare Vollum

Safeguarding Officer for Adults

Pastoral Visiting Team

Over the past year we have continued to work steadily towards getting our Benefice Pastoral Visiting Team. I’m delighted that we now five members of the team and that the administrative side of things is all set up, which will help us to ensure that those who we visit and those who are visiting are well looked after and properly safeguarded.

As a team we hope to visit and support the congregation and wider parish community of both churches, whether at home or for a cup of coffee or a walk in Kew, regularly or just once when someone needs it. We offer a listening ear, supportive company, and spiritual care. It's a real privilege for us as a team to be able to offer this, and a really good way of sharing in the caring ministry of the church alongside the clergy. If you would like someone to visit or meet with you, please do get in touch with the team.

I continue to be particularly grateful for the support of our Parish Safeguarding Officers for their advice, and to Harriet Grace and Beni Woolmer for their wisdom and support. I know that our pastoral visitors will be well looked after by them, supported by Rev. Melanie, and we are hoping that someone will be able to help with the administrative side of things going forwards as well. As a team we now meet every two months for mutual support and supervision, as well as any necessary training. If you think you would be interested in joining the team, please do speak to one of the clergy.

Hannah Swithinbank

Youth Group

2025-26 has been a transition year for our youth work in the Benefice, and we continue to work together as the Barn Church and St Luke's Church to find ways of supporting them and of continuing to nurture their faith and relationship to our churches. Both Bishop Christopher and Archdeacon Bridget have enjoyed having the chance to meet and chat with youngsters from each of the churches during their visits for Parish Conversations—and we are really happy and fortunate to have them within our congregation. It has also been a great joy to see four of our older teens from the Barn Church confirmed in the past year, and we hope that this will be a step that more of our teenagers would like to explore in futures years.

A number of our youngsters who have been keen members of our Wednesday youth group for the previous year have moved on to secondary schools, making our original Wednesday afternoon slot a difficult one to make work and so we have sadly retired this for the time being. Despite this, it is really encouraging to see our youngsters continuing to join us on Sundays and for other church events, and to have them being a part of music making, serving, and helping with junior church. We have also been really glad to be able to participate in some of the diocese's YMIC events in the past six months. YMIC – or Youth Ministry in Communion – is an inclusive network in the Kingston area of South that offers youth events and support for youth work in churches whose worship tradition is centred on the eucharist. A number of our youngsters have really enjoyed YMIC's termly events, which combine food, energetic activities (roller disco! Paintball!), discussion and Taizé-style worship, and it's great to see them exploring their own spirituality and connections to faith in this space. I'm delighted that the PCCs of both St Luke's and the Barn Church have decided to become partner members in order to continue this relationship. If you're the parent of a young person in year six and above, and would like to know more, please chat to Melanie or Hannah.

Hannah Swithinbank

Junior Church Report

The Barn Junior Church meets weekly, excepting all-age service days and holidays. On average, around 5-10 children join in our sessions where we tell Bible stories, play games, sing, and craft to help us embed what we've learned. The children enjoy sharing their activities with the rest of the congregation towards the end of each service.

The group is currently organised by Jenny Giangrande. Each session is run by a different family, who volunteer to plan and deliver their sessions. Theme and activity ideas are provided by Jenny, usually taken from the online Raise Up Faith resources which Junior Church has paid membership of.

Jenny would like to thank all those who have volunteered to take sessions, for their creativity and energy in taking big topics and making them accessible for little ones. It has been great to have new families volunteering over this year.

Looking back –

- The children have enjoyed stories, games and crafts, learning and thinking about topics including 'treasure' – things Jesus loves about us, early Old Testament stories such as the Garden of Eden and Tower of Babel, and learning about Jesus through different animals. We also enjoy sessions on annual days and celebrations like Mothers' Day, Remembrance Day and of course Christmas and Easter.
- The children have been involved with church festivities at special times. At Christmas, the children enjoy being part of the Crib Service. At Easter, some of our children and parents took part in the passion reading on Palm Sunday. On Mothering Sunday, the children enjoyed handing out daffodils to the congregation. We also had a session with Mark Dowling, which the children enjoyed and performed what they learned with the congregation afterwards.
- We have continued reaching out more to our local community together with our friends at St Luke's. We brought new friends to church to enjoy our well-attended Light Party in October. This was an alternative Halloween party focussing on telling good stories instead of scary ones. About 28 children attended. Around 8 children attended our benefice Easter Crafts morning on Good Friday at St Luke's church, where children learned about Easter Story with a game and enjoyed a range of crafts - we planted seeds, made chocolate nests and much more. We attribute low turnout to the date of the session, which we will review.
- JC is keen to support church fundraising, and once again organised and ran the food café at the Christmas Fair in December 2025 which was a great success. Many families from Junior Church (but also volunteers from the wider congregation) donated food, drink and time and made sure it ran smoothly.

Looking forward –

- We plan to continue and grow our community events, and work more closely with the St Luke's JC.
- We would like to encourage new people to volunteer at JC from current parents and the whole congregation.
- We would like to grow our JC and encourage new members of the Kew community to join us

Jenny Giangrande

Music Report

It has been a great pleasure being a part of the Barn church for the last year and a half as its music director. I have met so many great people and have been able to encourage them to continue serving or, to start, in some small way, to participate within that great ministry of music in church worship.

The choir continue to develop in their ability to sing a wide range of Christian worship. We are continuously expanding our choice of repertoire, utilising both traditional and more contemporary forms of hymnody.

I have begun the work of encouraging more to be involved with the church choir through posters and notices of the choir in public facing events - One or two have shown interest.

In addition to this, I'd like to extend my gratitude to organists Giles Williams and Peter Dowling for their contribution to church worship. I'd like to thank Mike Oxborrow for his willingness to conduct the choir when I am unable to do so and for his strong tenor voice which has aided in supporting other singers and in performing solo for various aspects of our church worship throughout the year.

I hope to form a list of other competent musicians to play at our services - organists, pianists and other instrumentalists of all ages. This will strengthen our musical experience in worship and give others the opportunity to use their God-given gifts in the service of the local church.

As above, my aim is to grow the music team at The Barn Church. Part of that includes the forming of an 'All age' worship band. I intend to put on an afternoon of music and snacks for children who play an instrument that might be interested in this so that we can explore this idea further and encourage children to get more involved in church services. Alongside this, I am keen to teach songs in Junior church more regularly. I had a very enjoyable session just before advent where I taught the children a song and lead a craft. This regular contact

would help create opportunities for the children to sing in services and feel more a part of the church.

Over Easter, I worked with Mary Noyes and St Lukes church choir on Benefice services. This was great in strengthening benefice relations and enhancing our musical experience of worship in our very important Holy Week services such as maundy Thursday and good Friday.

The Barn Church Music Series is coming along very well. Each month, we see new faces, increased numbers in attendance and a steady rate of donations. I have recently acquired a connection with the London College of Music which means that we have had and will continue to have some concerts featuring students from this institution which not only benefits us in our outreach but, the students too, in their gaining a platform to practice performance skills with a live audience outside of the university context. I am working to connect with a Richmond based Piano school to gather other performers and explore other outreach ideas that show the church's ability to help young people develop in their musical giftings. Alongside these connections, we have had amazing and diverse performances from professional pianists such as Ophelia Gordon, Professional Sitar player, Amisha's Sitar and The Dowling Trio with special guest soprano, Auline Jean and in-house poet and sacristan - Paul Gregorawski.

I am continually grateful for Felice Oxborrow for her collaboration in organising the teas, cakes and logistics of these events, Liz Holden for her publicity of these events on the TW9 website, Anna Gane for including the digital poster on our newsletter and Richard Wright who has begun to work with us and produce CDs for performers as part of the event. I couldn't facilitate these events without their help,

The piano is in good condition. It needs more regular tuning due to its increased usage. It would be worth considering an upgrade of piano at some point in the future as we develop our Barn Church Music Series. Our piano is fine but could do with a dynamic boost. It is somewhat muted and more forte dynamics are harder to achieve due to its mechanics.

The organ has a wonderful tone. However, it needs tuning as the reeds are flat. I am arranging this with Martin Kemp. The organ could do with an overhaul. It would be efficacious for us to seek funding or some kind of grant to cover the cost of this as this is a special instrument worthy of care and refinement. The organ is at the core of the English church music heritage. Further to this, it may be worth considering three tunes a year. We only had the organ tuned before Eastertide and the reeds are already flat. Exploring how to regulate the temperature of the organ throughout the week would be a good course of action to prolong its longevity.

I am thankful for the church's support of me in this relatively new role. I am enjoying the experience, fellowship and visible growth of the church. I hope to fulfil the role as music director here at the Barn more fully this coming year. Thank you so much.

Mark Dowling
Director of Music

Barn Fundraising events

A wide variety of events took place at the Barn in 2025, showcasing not only how versatile the space is but also what a wonderful location it is for shared experiences. The three aims that underpin our staging of events remain a constant: that they should be enjoyed by **all** participants; that they bring the congregation together; and that they bring the wider community into the church.

New for 2025 was the beginning of the Barn Church Music Series in May. These concerts which are staged once a month in the Barn have already brought a wide variety of music and performers to Kew. Thanks go to Mark Dowling, our Director of Music, for curating such an interesting series. The concerts are free to attend and light refreshments are on offer after (and sometimes during) the performances. The audiences have been very appreciative of the events and have been generous in their donations for the Barn.

Spring also saw the return of the always-popular London Welsh Rugby choir in May. A varied programme was well-received by a large audience of over 100 people and the Barn roof was nearly raised when in the finale, everyone joined in the singing of the Welsh National Anthem – stirring stuff! Our thanks go to this great choir and their talented accompanist Dafydd Chapman (who gave a small solo piano recital as part of the evening) in their generous support of the Barn.

We were delighted to join with St Luke's in June in holding a joint benefice Turkish evening at the Barn that arose out of Reverend Hannah's pilgrimage to the Seven churches of Asia Minor. Realising that most of the sites sit within modern-day Turkey, it was a natural choice to offer a meze selection during an interval in Hannah's account of her pilgrimage and also some linked music. A good crowd attended the evening and all learned more about the Seven churches of the book of Revelations.

With the days drawing in, we once more held the Autumn Barn Dance in early October. Always a firm favourite with many people, the music and barn-dancing expertise was provided by an excellent, lively band who made sure that there was something to enthuse

everyone in the packed Barn. When it was time for a break, a delicious buffet was served giving everyone the opportunity to catch up with old friends and make some new ones.

The year ended with our fifth Frost Fair and although the weather on the day wasn't frosty, it certainly started to get people into the Christmas spirit. Thanks go to Terry Smith and Ukelele; Nova; and the Motleys for providing some superb live seasonal music. A great mix of independent traders and church stalls; many kids' activities; and the ever-popular café gave a warm welcome to around 300 people. The Fair is always an opportunity to link in with the local community and enable many visitors to also explore the unique interior of the church.

We are very grateful to Halletts for sponsoring the Barn Dance, and the Frost Fair – their continued, kind sponsorship enables us to cover a significant amount of our fixed costs when staging events.

Last but by no means least, the list of thank yous for those in the church who have made these events so wonderful would extend for a further page – heartfelt thanks to all for all that you do.

The Barn Ents team

Buildings Report

Over the past year, there has been a steady stream of work, some planned, some rather more "unexpected", to keep our church buildings safe, functional, and welcoming.

A particular highlight (or perhaps lowlight) has been the discovery that rather tough, local squirrels have developed a taste not only for adventure but also for lead lighting and window frames. Their efforts left sections of our windows chewed and missing, including the lead strips, allowing the weather in and some rotting to occur. Repairs have now been carried out to both the lead lighting and the window sills in an attempt to keep out the weather and also the squirrels, who you wouldn't want to meet in the dark.

Attention has also been given to the less visible but equally important infrastructure beneath our feet. Pipework from the boiler, located below the floor, required repair to prevent further leaks. In addition, damage resulting from a break-in earlier in the year has been addressed, and necessary repairs completed to restore security and appearance.

In the church hall, sections of rotten wood around the windows have been replaced, although this is very much a stop-gap measure and not a long term fix. Routine but essential maintenance has included clearing gutters, which is one of the more glamorous jobs at the church (apprentices always welcomed!).

Looking ahead, we are exploring a creative solution to a longstanding practical challenge: a "Wallace and Gromit-style" mechanism to lower the candle above the altar safely, reducing the need for precarious climbs up tall ladders. Watch this space, or rather the ceiling.

None of this work would have been possible without the time, skills, and quiet dedication of the many individuals who contribute to the care of our buildings. Their efforts, often unseen, are deeply appreciated and form an essential part of our shared life.

While much has been achieved, there remains a clear need for longer-term planning, particularly regarding the church roof and the ongoing upkeep of the church hall. These will require careful thought, prioritisation, and, inevitably, resources in the years ahead.

Thank you to everyone who continues to support and care for these buildings—they are, quite literally, the framework within which so much of our community life takes place.

Matthew Pannett

Church and Hall Bookings Report

Over the past year, the Hall and Church have continued to be well used community spaces, supporting a wide range of activities and events. A total of 64 invoices were issued to a combination of one off and regular hirers, reflecting steady demand throughout the year.

Our regular hirers included Hanshi Karate, the Jazz Workshop, Kew Sinfonia, and The Motleys. Two new groups joined us in October—Monday Maths Tuition and the Silver Swans Dance group on Tuesdays. Although the Maths Tuition group hired the Hall for only one term due to financial challenges, the Silver Swans continue to be a valued part of our weekly schedule. As a result, we are currently seeking new regular evening hirers for the Hall on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Alongside our regular users, we welcomed a wide variety of one-off bookings. These included Richmond Dance Collective, the Sri Lankan Leukaemia Society, the Small Steps for Africa quiz night, and several children's parties. Additional performances and events were hosted by the Welsh Rugby Choir, Kew Wind Orchestra, Kew Riverside School, and the Casa Montessori Nursery.

We continue to enjoy a positive working relationship with Little Kew Nursery, who hire the Hall on weekdays during the daytime and remain an important long-term partner.

Special thanks are extended to Richard Wright for his voluntary role as caretaker. His help with opening and closing, showing people around, and dealing with maintenance has been invaluable. I'd also like to thank Judi and Giles for their support with the bookings and looking after our hirers.

Overall, it's been a positive year with plenty of community activity, a good mix of bookings, and steady demand for our spaces and we look forward to continuing this in the year ahead.

Marie Mitton

Deanery Synod Report

The Synod met twice in the Deanery year - in September and February. It represents fifteen churches in Richmond and the Barnes Deanery. Rev.Alex Barrow, from All Saints, East Sheen has now stepped down as Area Dean and replaced by Rev.Eils Osgood Assistant Area Dean, from Holy Trinity Richmond. Suzie O'Brien from St.Luke's is its Eco Champion and is part of the Deanery Leadership Team.

SEPTEMBER 2025 at St.Mary Magdalene, Richmond.

Rev. Eils Osgood was commissioned to the role of Area Dean by Ven Bridget Shepherd, the ArchDeacon of Wandsworth who in her introduction gave an insight into her career in the Church. As this group had not met since September 2024, the opportunity to reconnect was very important. The meeting broke into small groups to discuss and report back on two questions:

1.What are the current joys and challenges in our parishes?

JOYS

Included:

The presence of places to pray

The arrival of new clergy in several churches

Growth in ministry among children

The willingness of volunteers to get 'stuck in'

Fellowship between churches and opportunities for the parish to work together on various projects

CHALLENGES

Included:

The difficulty associated with financing and maintenance of buildings

The numbers of people attending services

How to attract new (especially younger) members while keeping existing (especially older) congregations engaged

Having sufficient volunteers

2.What might we focus on as a Deanery Synod in the season ahead so as to best serve our parishes and wider mission of the Church?

Included:

The need to integrate the churches into their local communities and draw people in -while not necessarily expecting anything back

How to inspire financial giving and respond well to the PSF

More practical advice and support around maintaining and developing buildings.

Explore how volunteering can be encouraged within our congregations.

FEBRUARY 10TH 2026 at Holy Trinity Church, Sheen Park

Meeting of some 20+ representatives from all the local Anglican churches; well chaired by the newly-appointed Area Dean, Rev Eils Osgood.

Presentation by John Ancock from Christ Church, East Sheen on their initiative for a "messy church". This involved opening the church on a Monday to local primary school children, accompanied by a parent, to play areas, painting, pasting, eating cakes, crumpets and cup

cakes from 3:30 to 5:00. The positives were that it was popular, won some families over to church attendance and increased baptisms. The negatives were that there was work for the volunteers in clearing up afterwards, and the cost of catering.

How relevant would this be to our churches? It would need volunteers, finance for the catering and a separate space, not the church. Christ Church has the advantage of being opposite to a well established primary school, but we also have good local schools.

Eils Osgood presented her initial thoughts on the development of a Deanery Strategy. She was anxious to develop Mission Action Plans in line with the diocesan strategy of being Christ Centred and Outward Facing. Clearly this is still in the development stage but she stressed the need for a lay Deanery Chair and a Deanery Secretary to support her – three meetings a year only.

A presentation on the Diocese of Matabeleland was given by Rev Jonathan Haynes, a co-chair of the Link Committee. A well presented and well received talk, despite the failure of the visuals, stressing the benefits of the link with our diocese for the congregations in Matabeleland. The challenge was how to make the existing good links more tangible.

The next meeting will be Wednesday 20th May at St Mary the Virgin, Mortlake

We would welcome other members of St.Luke's and the Barn Church as Deanery Synod Representatives, please do ask us any questions.

It is a great way of looking beyond your local parish and seeing your church in a wider context. The commitment is three meetings a year, reporting back to the PCC (although you do not necessarily need to be a PCC member).

Diane Morris and Suzie O'Brien - St. Luke's

Jeff Harris - The Barn

On Behalf of the Benefice

Gardening at the Barn Church

Every few weeks, depending on the season, a group of volunteers meets to work on the Barn Church garden.

We aim to ensure that the space remains suitable for use in terms of access, outdoor church services, outdoor fairs etc. However, we also retain plenty of green vegetation, and allow habitat for insects, invertebrates, amphibians, birds and small mammals, keeping the climate crisis and species extinction in mind. For example, we don't use herbicides, pesticides or other poisons and we don't cut the hedge during the bird nesting season (March to end of August).

There is plenty of scope for improvement and we always welcome new volunteers! Gardening sessions are usually on a Saturday morning and are followed by coffee and biscuits under the magnificent oak tree! If you'd like to join in, please contact Faith at faith.polya@gmail.com

Faith Polya

Flowers report

In 2026 we have had flowers for Mother's Day, daffodils, and the Tenebrae Service during Easter week when Rev Melanie organised lilies for members of the congregation to buy in memory of loved ones. The lilies cost £7 each and were arranged by me and Rev Melanie in the Lady Chapel in the Barn Church. One member of the congregation wanted white roses instead so I went out and bought her a bunch of white roses at £6. They were arranged in small vases with extra flowers picked in the church garden and ivy twined round each vase. The arrangements were liked by the congregation and the people were given seats in front of the flowers at the Service to remember and pray for their loved ones. The church remained open for them to be there as long as they wished. On Easter Day the Service was in the garden and we left the Lilies in the Lady Chapel.

There is one wedding on May 2nd 2026 and I am going to provide flowers on the windowsills.

Veronica Willoughby

Barn Church Christian Aid Report 2025

Total Figure for House to House Collection and Church Envelopes: £1,326.35

Online Giving for The Barn Church: £150.00

Total: £1,476.35

One CAF cheque: £30.00

Total Gift Aid figure: £218.75

Results of Christian Aid Riverside Walk September 2025: £190.50 with approximately £30.00 in online donations.

We had fewer walkers this year but as always, it was a bright day and enjoyed by those who took part.

Anne Lynch

Christian Aid Rep for the Barn Church

Churches Together in Kew (CTK)

CTK has representation from all 5 churches in Kew:

- St Luke's - Sally Durant
- The Barn - Felice Oxborrow (Secretary)
- St Anne's - Annabel Clark (Chair)
- St Winefride's – Majella Forster, Valerie Booth & Alexis Fitzgerald
- Raleigh Road Church – Sue Cutler

On 8th June 2025, CTK organised an Ecumenical Service hosted by Canon John Weatherill at St Winefride's. Reverend Melanie was invited to preach. It was very well attended and many of the attendees stayed for refreshments in the church hall after the service. The refreshments were generously provided by St Winefride's.

Once again, CTK organised the production, printing and delivery of 5500 CTK Christmas cards to every house/flat in Kew and the part of Richmond between Kew Road and the A316. The cards contained details of all the church services over the Christmas period including carol services. The King's School organised an art competition for their Year 6 pupils to illustrate the cards and the winning design was selected by the art teacher. All the churches helped with the delivery and families from The King's School delivered cards to the Kew Riverside and Levett Square developments. The cost of printing the cards was £546.

It was decided to organise Lent Groups again this year. There were 6 groups in hosts' houses. 47 people (including hosts) took part, mainly from St Winefride's & St Anne's. 5 parishioners from The Barn participated with 2 hosting but only 1 from St Luke's. A book written by local author, Rhidian Brook 'Notes on an Execution' was used as a starting point for discussion and was well received. Attendees bought their own copies and so no costs were incurred by CTK.

In February 2025 funds were requested to cover future costs with St Anne's & St Winefride's contributing £200 each, St Luke's & The Barn £100 each and Raleigh Road Church £50. The current balance in the CTK account is £142 and so further funds will be required this year. A meeting of the CTK committee will be held in April to set the budget and agree on activities for the next year.

Sally Durant

On Behalf of the Benefice

Vineyard Lunches

The Barn participates in the Sunday lunch scheme which runs fortnightly and rotates around Richmond churches

Last year we hosted 2 Sundays and around 20 people attended. Many thanks to our church volunteers who cook food, provide raffle prizes, serve and clear up.

Clare Vollum