

The Parish of St George the Martyr, Shirley
Following Christ + Serving the community + Welcoming all

Agenda for the Annual Vestry Meeting for 2024
to be held in the Church Hall on Sunday 18th May 2025 at 12.00 pm.

Apologies

Minutes

Appointment of Church Wardens

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Apologies

Minutes

Reports

Priest in Charge

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Any Other Business

Report from the Priest-in-Charge
to the APCM on 18th May 2025

I was licensed as Priest-in-Charge of St George's on 3rd October 2024 and so this report covers just three months of 2024 and my first three months in post. I am delighted to be here, many thanks for your welcome. Thank you to all those who worked hard during the Vacancy – especially Jan, Hilary and the ministry team. I came to this Church because I felt called to serve here and to love these people, to love you. That calling remains and that is what will inspire my ministry going forward into 2025.

I am proud to be part of this particular Church family here in Shirley and to be part of a team. I am also proud to be part of an Eco Church, and an Inclusive Church, and I believe we excel in these areas and there is more we can do. I look forward to celebrating our vision and developing our Mission Action Plan with our three main priorities which are serving the Local community, All-Age discipleship and Stewardship.

We held an All Age service to mark Black History month, we held a service called: Wave of Light for Baby Loss Awareness week, we held a service to mark Transgender Day of Remembrance, we held an All Age Parade service for Remembrance Sunday. We held an Advent course, and a range of services over Christmas including a Crib Service, and a Christingle. We continue with our regular pattern of services which include a 10 am service on Sunday, an 11:30 am Eucharist in the Lady Chapel on Wednesdays and Morning Prayer on Zoom, Monday to Fridays. Many thanks to all those who are involved in leading, preaching, preparing, serving, singing, and simply turning up to ensure our worship runs smoothly.

My first three months in post involved listening and learning and as I continue in my first year here at St George's I continue very much in that vein. I understand there is concern about our finances and about our Building Project. These are challenges which we will work out together, I won't be making any unilateral decisions. I very much believe in the collective responsibility of the PCC. However, I will be putting in place some light changes to our governance, such as electing a Standing Committee and to ensure that we are able to think strategically and address the issues which are of importance to our Mission and Ministry. Finally, thank you for supporting me, thank you for loving your Church, thank you for being you. Here's to the next exciting Chapter at St George's!

Churchwardens' Report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the Church

March 2024 - March 2025

Last year saw the last nine months of the interregnum which culminated in the appointment and subsequent licensing of Jenny as our Priest-in-Charge at the beginning of October. We were all then able to start to get to know Jenny as she settled into life in the parish and within the St. George's family.

On a more mundane level, our five yearly electrical inspection and lightning conductor installation took place in February, both of which are legal requirements and included in the QI. The urgent repointing, particularly on the wall around the Missen window has also been carried out, again as referred to in our last QI.

All the statutory maintenance checks have been carried out (including the boilers, fire-fighting equipment and portable appliance testing) and the tower ladder serviced. The drains and gutters are regularly checked and cleared. The Church Log Book has once again been updated.

We now have a defibrillator for the site which is located in the church hall but with appropriate signage and a hall key also available in the church porch.

As ever, I am grateful to you all for your continued support, especially to Tony Aufenast for his continuing leadership and coordination of his 'Sound System' team; to the 'Premises/Maintenance' team ably led by Evan and Kwame who respond to requests for additional or specific help; and to Steve Westray, Jan Turner and their team for continuing to maintain and develop the garden so that it remains a place of peace, solace and beauty.

I also have to say a huge thank you to the Assistant Wardens, Alexander and Evan, who have found themselves with additional and unexpected responsibilities since the end of last year and have both gone out of their way to support me in every way they possibly can.

Finally, I need to thank Hilary for her guidance and leadership during the interregnum, and subsequently Jenny as she took on her new role, along with the staff team who so ably support both of them, along with Heather and myself, over the past year.

I hope my successor will find this role as much of a privilege to hold as I have done, and that with all your continued love and support, we can all further strengthen our church's position at the heart of our community.

Jan Payne April 2025

ELECTORAL ROLL 2025

At last year's Parish meeting the Electoral Roll stood at 116.

Every 6 years we are required to completely renew the Electoral Roll and no names are carried forward from the previous Roll and all parishioners must make a new application to be included on the new Roll.

This exercise is being completed as this report is being drafted and an oral update will be provided at the meeting. Inevitably, numbers on the Roll drop significantly when it is completely renewed but increase again during the subsequent year.

Owen Whalley

Electoral Roll Officer

April 2025

Statement of Financial Activities & Balance Sheet

Reproduced at the end of the “Other Reports” or separately available to Download from the Church website

Hall Report for APCM 2025

2024 was generally another successful year for children’s party bookings in the hall, although there was a slight lull around the middle of last year when we weren’t sure how long the hall was going to remain standing. We have also welcomed some wider community events and Shirley Neighbourhood Care continue as permanent hirers of the Hall Meeting Room.

The hall finances continue to be under the umbrella of the Finance Team (which includes the Hall Manager) but due to increased utility bills and some urgent, outstanding repairs, you will see from the accounts that our finances are now very tight and rents have therefore, once again, been increased accordingly. I am particularly grateful to Liz Bebington for her continued oversight of the Hall’s accounts.

Once again, the bulk of the income from bookings has gone towards Hall salaries, utility bills, heating (including routine maintenance), insurance and running repairs. Whilst we aim to keep these costs to a minimum, some of them are still unavoidable.

I am extremely grateful once again to Evan (who must sometimes dread a call or message from me asking for help with some of the routine maintenance), my pleas are always responded to quickly and with a smile. This year, I must also include thanks to Steve Barrett, Evan and his neighbour for their work on the hall door and to Selwin for his amazing work on strengthening and replacing some of the hall entrance flooring. Lastly, I must thank all of you who so generously support us through the 100 Club which continues to be a crucial part of our funding to keep the hall going.

In a marked contrast to my report last year, it now appears that our church and community will continue to enjoy the benefits of the church hall for longer than anticipated so your continued support is more important than ever.

Jan Payne

April 2025

PCC Report to the APCM May 2025

Role of the PCC is to ensure the finances are well managed and the premises kept in good order. During In 2024 the PCC held regular meetings plus additional meetings to deal with specific matters.

The regular meetings covered a wide range of things, the mundane matters like ensuring the rubbish is collected through to recruiting a new incumbent. Matters relating to the finances, safeguarding matters, health & safety, and the upkeep of the premises are regularly reviewed..

Expenditure on major items, like the repair of the brickwork has to be approved by the PCC but authority to pay smaller bills has delegated.

In the latter part of the year the PCC was delighted to welcome the Revd Jenny Walpole as its the new Chair.

A major concern of the PCC is monitoring the church finances, looking for way to reduce expenditure and organising events to raise much needed money.

Eric Baldwin-Smith PCC Secretary

Croydon Addington Deanery Synod Report for the APCM 2024/5

St George's lay Deanery Synod representatives are Helen Aylward, Fay Westray and Ray Wheeler.

Croydon Addington Deanery is our local subdivision of the Archdeaconry of Croydon and includes the Anglican churches in Shirley, West Wickham, Addington, New Addington and Selsdon. Croydon Archdeaconry is one of six which make up Southwark Diocese. It is the Deanery that elects members to the Diocesan Synod (our reps are now Christopher Parker and Paul Waddell) . Deanery Synod also elects members across the Diocese to the General Synod. This shows the importance that members of Deanery Synod have in the responsibility and governance of the Church of England.

There were three formal meetings in 2024/5 plus a Deanery Ascension Day Service and a Deanery Confirmation both held here at St George's, a Pilgrimage around the various churches in September 2023 and a Social in November 2023.

At the Deanery Synod meetings we meet other Synod representatives and hear about their church activities and commit to sharing events and initiatives within our own churches. In addition, we receive updates from General Synod and discuss, in smaller groups topics of the day and approaches to ministry and church life. There are also social events organised to help representatives get to know each other and consolidate the deanery network.

This last year we had a talk regarding Bereavement Support; an update on the various authorised lay ministries within the Diocese; plus a workshop on Love Matters – a report by the Archbishop of Canterbury on families. Deanery Synod also welcomed Revd Jenny Walpole as the new Priest-in-Charge of St George's, Shirley.

Synod will celebrate **Thy Kingdom Come at the Ascension Tide service on Sunday 1st June at 3pm.** The next **Deanery Pilgrimage** is due to take place on **21st June.** Further details to come.

Fay Westray for St George's Deanery Synod Lay Reps.

Safeguarding Report to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting for 2024 - 2025

The Safeguarding Committee has met three times since last year's APCM and will meet again in the near future following the APCM and appointment of new Churchwardens.

'Safeguarding Sunday' was held for the third year running in November 2024 during a main 10am Eucharist for the whole congregation. We follow material produced by the charity Thirtyone:eight.

There is generally a very good understanding of safeguarding matters amongst members of the congregation.

Comprehensive records covering DBS renewals and Safeguarding training are maintained and regularly reviewed. The Diocese requires DBS checks to be renewed every 3 years; currently there is one person to be contacted who will be asked to complete a DBS check in respect of volunteering with Little Dragons. All members of the PCC, the staff team, Junior Church leaders and assistants, Little Dragons volunteers, paid staff and other volunteers working with children are required to undertake online safeguarding training. Susan Wheeler has been liaising with PCC members and Little Dragons volunteers in this respect. New members of the PCC will be required to complete online safeguarding training modules at the Basic and Foundations levels and will also be required to complete an online module on Domestic Abuse. Those who complete this training receive certification through the Church of England safeguarding portal. As Trustees of a Charity, PCC members are legally required to complete this training.

Anyone involved with recruiting volunteers/paid workers to roles in the parish has undertaken the Church of England Safer Recruitment online training module and follows Diocesan guidelines in respect of recruiting personnel safely. This includes the Junior Church Leader, Priest-in-Charge and the outgoing Churchwarden.

All safeguarding policies and procedures will be reviewed by the new PCC at their first meeting. Current policies are on display in the church porch, in the hall and on the parish website where they are readily available to view. Following recent events, protocols around livestreaming main services will be written in the near future for review by the PCC.

Susan Wheeler and Toyin Magbagbeola

Parish Safeguarding Officers

23.04.2025

Health & Safety Report

During the year we have reviewed the Health & Safety policy with a view to this being updated, the revised policy will hopefully be completed in the year ahead for approval at PCC. Health & Safety is kept under regular review at PCC meetings with any issues raised being discussed and actions often developed when needed. It is important that we all remember our role in keeping St George's a healthy and safe environment, especially considering food preparation, lifting anything, especially furniture, and the movement of vehicles on site.

JUNIOR CHURCH REPORT May 2024 - April 2025

I am pleased to say the leadership of Junior Church continues to be well supported by members of the congregation: the two newest leaders to the team are Fay Westray and Tanya White – although neither are new to teaching children at St George's having both been volunteers when their own children were Sunday School age. In November Ash Wasalatantri went to Sri Lanka for an extended period and we have missed his presence on the team. We are hoping to welcome him back to the team in the near future. At present we have fifteen children on the register with an average attendance of around nine children most Sundays.

At the end of July 2024, we had another happy Junior Church Family Picnic with games based on the Paris Olympics: fencing; long jump; synchronised 'swimming' routines amongst some of the activities organised by the leaders. Medals were handed out to every child taking part and, although the preceding weeks had been pretty gloomy weather-wise, the day of the picnic itself was perfect and ice lollies were enjoyed by everyone at the end of the afternoon.

At the start of September, as has become tradition, the children and young people had their school and college bags blessed at the beginning of the service and before the new academic term began.

Due to the wide age range of children and youth now worshipping at St George's, we regularly have differentiated teaching with an older group joining in discussions and bible reading in the hall whilst the younger age group (4-9 year olds) participate in craft activities linked to a bible story. Miranda Haslem and myself also run Youth Church for the older children from 12-2pm most months of the year, with games, simple food and drinks and an opportunity to discuss various topics.

Our children and young people contribute regularly to the monthly All-Age Services when they may be Welcomers, Intercessors, Lesson Readers or assisting with the Offertory. All of the school age children are competent readers and enjoy participating in services. In forthcoming weeks some of the young people are also to be trained on the livestreaming and as Servers.

On Good Friday we once again ran the annual children's workshop with craft activities, music, and dramatized readings based on the events of Holy Week: Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday with the crucifixion of our Lord and Easter morning when Mary Magdalene met Jesus in the garden. It was a happy occasion with a total of 13 children attending (five from local primary schools; eight from church families).

Please join with me in taking this opportunity to acknowledge the dedication, faithfulness and commitment of Timi Ashaye; Liz Bebington; Mary Brown; Miranda Haslem; Ash Wasalatantri; Fay Westray and Tanya White.

Susan Wheeler

Junior Church Leader

23.04.2025

LITTLE DRAGONS REPORT APRIL 2025

The Little Dragons toddler group at St George's has been running with a few volunteers. Every Sunday after church we rearrange the chairs (with regular help from Nick, Evan, John and Tony) to setup toys and equipment making sure the environment is safe for children to play and run around.

Little Dragons meet on Monday mornings, starting at 9.30 and finishing at 11.30 and tidy-up continues till after 12pm, with regular help from Debbie, Mary, Ann and Shante.

Activities include: Play dough table, colouring table, book corner, train and car corner, baby corner, drumming and dancing, bubble time and many more.

We have rhyme and song time, starting with wind the bobbin up and ending with the song sleeping bunnies, Mary puts the kettle on, and I am a little tea pot, which give the children the signal is refreshment time.

We have been receiving lots of toy donations.

The group is always busy with the highest number of 35 children excluding parents and carers.

Not only the children love's Little Dragons, but the parents, carers, Grandparents and childminders love's it too at Little Dragons, it is like a big family house filled with joy and happiness. I am delighted to say Little Dragons has been the biggest outreach in St. George's. The children referrers to the play group as "Church". Reaching out to so many children and their families. Families enquiring about Hall hire, Baptisms and Weddings.

Refreshments tops it all, with tea, coffee, biscuits, bananas and satsumas and squash after song and rhyme time. I have introduced fruit of the week, it could be watermelon, pineapple, mango etc. I have also introduced Makaton Sign Language, which Heather was very helpful to support me with manual.

We started charge £2.00 per child from September 2024. Financially Little Dragons sustain itself, after expenses, we pay the rest of the money into church funds towards the cost of Gas and Electricity.

We had new families join in Little Dragons. Our End of Academic year party in July was a success and we said goodbye to children going to full time nursery and Reception.

We had a wonderful Christmas party with Nativity story told by Reverend Jennifer with Christmas songs. Every child took a little gift home.

Running Little Dragons is a big commitment. Debbie does the weekly food shopping. Mary, Shante and Ann help with refreshments and we all tidy up and rearrange the chairs back to normal church service settings. Tony in the background helps with administration and on call anytime he is needed, Jan obviously pops in and pops out to "Pop In" and always on standby.

I am very grateful and thankful to God that I have a very strong network volunteer team, which has make the running of Little Dragons very smooth and successful. Glory be to God.

My sincere thanks goes to Mary, Debbie, Ann, Evan, Nick, John, Shante, just to mention a few and not forgetting little Sebastian always at the door saying hello and goodbye making sure all the children are happy by offering them a toy to play with especially if it is their first time, which makes them feel at home and at ease.

Regina

Eco Group report for APCM 2025

The most important news for this year is that the Eco Group have worked extremely hard and St. George the Martyr is now a Gold Eco Church. The certificate and badge have been downloaded to add to our website. The Gold Award Plaque has also been ordered.

Following a meeting of representatives from A Rocha on 9th April, we were granted the Gold status on 17th April, 2025. In their report, our visitors stated:

"We very much enjoyed our visit and are really grateful that so many members of the team - and churchwarden and new incumbent - took part. Thank you very much for your generous hospitality. Everything we saw and heard complemented and extended the impressions we gained

from the evidence you submitted. It was a great pleasure to witness the commitment, enthusiasm and teamwork you have brought to your eco church journey so far.”

We have the following recommendations to work on within the next six months:

- Strengthen our written land management plan to include a map
- Strengthen our net zero action plan to include dates
- Commission a full energy audit
- Develop a Procurement Policy
- Have a wonderful gold Eco Church celebration

In addition, Jan Turner has become a volunteer Archdeaconry Eco Champion. The role is to encourage and support other churches in our Archdeaconry working towards Eco Church awards. This is a new venture: the first meeting will be held in May.

The quarterly litter picks continue. There seems to be less litter each time we meet and it is hoped that this means we are making a real difference in the local area.

In addition to working through A Rocha's guidelines, the longstanding Eco Group members: Helen Aylward, Liz Bebington, Sophie Clayton-Wareham, Janet Fitt, Brian McGinnis, Helen McMullen, Jan Turner and Susan Wheeler have met regularly on Zoom to plan various activities. Further activities are in the pipeline for 2025.

Jan Turner

Georgettes Report for APCM May 2025

The Georgettes met several times last year with events geared around social gatherings, including craft and film evenings, visits to the Churchill Theatre and just enjoying each other's company. Our events are always well attended and we also continue to welcome new members.

This year we have once again planned events right up to December, with different group members again taking the lead on specific events and activities which has already significantly impacted on the variety of interesting events we are able to offer.

Jan Payne

April 2025

MEN OF ST GEORGE

The men's group meet regularly each Wednesday by Zoom. The numbers vary but usually there are 5 or 6 on line, including members who have moved away. There is no set programme and what we talk about is just what comes up on the day. We visited Chartwell house and Ightham mote and meet regularly for breakfast at the Shirley cafe. The members also run the model railway at the Fetes to raise money. New members will be welcome, for details contact Tony Aufenast.

POP IN

The Pop In membership has increased and it is flourishing with the average attendance now around thirty. Activities are varied but include quizzes. The occasional Fish & Chip lunch proves very popular. Later on in 2025 it is hoped that it may be possible to organise a coach outing.

PROPERTY REPORT – APCM 18/05/2025

THE CHURCH ROOF

This was repaired/resealed by Kwami Apodei as a result of a water leak in the children's area which resulted in the inside wall being damp – it is still in need of some attention.

OUTSIDE WALL

Needed repointing which was done in the Autumn of 2024.

On the outside front of the Church was a higher wall that also needed pointing and this was done by a known building company who had carried out similar work for St George's in the past and this was done at a reduced price as they didn't need to use scaffolding.

THE BACK DOOR

Of the Church building needed urgent attention as it was warped and very difficult to shut. Steve Barratt spent some hours working on it until the problem was rectified and varnished it to blend in.

CHURCH HALL

Still in use until further notice but is in need of constant repair as things get broken or fall off through age.

The Hall door has been repaired 3 times this year already by members of the congregation, namely Steve Barrett, Selvin Palwell and Evan Russell (with a builder friend Alan).

Selvin also repaired the floor board and joists by the front door that had rotted and became dangerous.

The broken window in the kitchen needs to be replaced. The outside wall is also in need of attention.

Evan Russell

11/05/2025

SHRUBLANDS FOODBANK – APCM 18/05/2025

REPORT 2025/25

The church continues to support the Shrublands Foodbank with a donation of £150 each month. The Foodbank sends us a list of items most needed in any particular month.

Further donations are received by generous individual members of the congregation and this usually brings the amount from St Georges up to around £200 per month.

The task of shopping skilfully and getting the best deal requires keeping an eye out for the items needed at any given time to get the amount required and the best value. Food prices have gone up significantly but basic items are still in great need.

Shopping for the above is usually over a 2-day period monthly. It is taken to Shrublands shortly after going shopping. On a weekly basis the food donations left at Church is collected and taken to Shrublands Foodbank every Thursday.

I am glad to be able to continue in this supporting role and have had the help of others on occasions.

Evan Russell

11/05/2025

Gardening Group Report for APCM

A Gardening Group has now been set up to manage the significant workload to keep the church garden in good order. The aim of the group is to create a garden space which meets the needs of all those using and appreciating the garden spaces and ensure we adhere to Eco Group requirements. The group comprises Brian McGinnis, Jan Turner, Evan Russell, Mike Ellis and Steve Westray and will be meeting quarterly to review progress and plan ahead.

During the year, the main priority has been to maintain the lawns and flower beds in line with the current Land Management Plan and mowing regime. A new self-propelled 21" petrol mower was purchased this year to replace the existing sit on mower which uneconomical to repair. A successful Parish Gardening Day took place on 7th September. The event was well attended, and much work was done to clear weeds and ivy from the southern boundary of the church and to attend to some of the flower beds. We will have further Parish Gardening Days in the future as the need arises. We have also begun the process of assigning the responsibility for the maintenance and development of flower beds and improvements have already been made.

The Group also supported the A Rocha Gold Award preparation and inspection day. A litter pick was conducted prior to the inspection, the garden was prepared, and members of the Gardening Group were available on the day of the inspection to conduct a tour of the church garden.

Going forward we will be creating a mowing rota, a gardening fund for plant and equipment purchases, and an updated integrated land management plan in accordance with A Rocha requirements post inspection visit. The plan will include a map of the site, the allocation of flowerbeds and a project plan with timescales for the development of the garden to meet Eco Gold Award requirements.

Reports to the APCM (Brian McGINNIS)

Monday Evening Bible Study Group: The group is now firmly grounded in its Zoom base, thanks to the Four Zoom hosts. (We don't impose on the church Zoom account.) This does mean that anyone else who would like to join us, occasionally or regularly or experimentally,

needs to check with us for the link for their first Monday. Please do! We have three regular members who live in the parish, a further two regular members who attend St George's but don't live in the parish, a further two regulars who used to be part of St George's but now live some way (or a very long way) off, and one new member who has never seen St George's and lives far away. Another parishioner from outside the parish is able to join us occasionally. Thanks be for the technology that enables us to learn together. Having explored the relatively unfamiliar territory of the Book of Ecclesiasticus, we have moved on to the Letters of (or attributed to) James, John, Peter and Jude. Looking ahead, the Book of Revelation has been suggested as one option for a return visit. Members take turns in leading as well as in hosting, but the emphasis is on shared learning – re-enforced by a good commentary where appropriate. We don't always agree. We do always learn. See the Parish Website and Church Magazine for further information and updates.

Book Reading Group: Conscious of costs and time constraints, we have been looking at a more limited range of books than has traditionally been the case. Physical meetings have been replaced by thought swapping through Emails. There is a steady flow of thought-provoking literature that can enlarge our Christian thinking, and while accessing most of it is beyond most of us, accessing some of it is within reach and well worthwhile. Currently on the list are: "The Lord and His Prayer" by Tom Wright, "The Everyday God" by Jonathan Arnold, and "Finding Flourishing" by Naomi Aidoo.

Church Magazine: Having a Church Magazine is becoming more unusual these days. Some churches have shifted from an outreach magazine to something which is more like an additional prayer book for regular attenders. Other churches, particularly in "tourist" areas, have created a community magazine with information about the local church or churches. Many have just given up. We and Shirley Methodist have gone for something more in the traditional church magazine format – with both information, and, perhaps even more important, thought-provoking material for church members and others: seeking to engage and not just inform. The printed word does have to struggle for attention these days, as against on-line sound bites.....sad, given that the sounding gong is often a better source of prejudice than of understanding. WE have been blessed by an extension of the Editorial Team to include Anne Louise Clayton: fresh eyes and a fresh voice. Others are being encouraged to contribute: learning material preferred to teaching material – in other words, here is something to think about, rather than here is the answer.

Christian Aid: Christian Aid is not just a once a year thing; but Christian Aid Week is an important awareness and fund-raising focal point. May 11th to 18th this year. Gone are the days when we could hope to drop envelopes through every door in the parish (including those where "begging letters" were discouraged or where dogs stood on guard). But, thanks to volunteer distributors and hosts, about 750 envelopes will be delivered, with an invitation to return them. Envelopes will also be available in church; and the option to host e.g. coffee morning or tea party is always there. Times are quite hard for a lot of people in this country at the present time; but even in hard times it is good to remember those in other countries whose situation is a great deal worse – and potentially getting worse still. Thursday June 26th 10 30 a.m. to 12 30 Coffee morning at 79 Shirley Way. Christian Aid does do emergency relief; but it also does a great deal, in co-operation with local groups, to help people in hugely challenging circumstances build a better future.

Overseas Missions: For 87 years, we have worked with what is now USPG as partners in global mission. (A little test for you: what are the initials USPG short for?) The "Revive" magazine will tell you more. The Spring 2025 edition features news from around the world, including the possibilities for and challenges to the worldwide Anglican Communion. There never has been complete agreement on everything. There are now radical divergencies on a number of important things, both within the Church of England and within the worldwide Anglican fellowship.

Some of this perhaps seems a world away from the day-to-day business of personal discipleship and shared discipleship at parish level; but we are not going to impress the outside world if what that world sees is division more than unity....and often not just agreeing to differ, but hostile and sometimes vitriolic division. “We have a Gospel to proclaim”, in word and in deed. Yes we do; but if we can’t agree what that Gospel is.....? Pick up a copy of “Revive”, and try a bit of reviving.

Churches Together in Shirley: It is good to have a list of Christian churches that work in this area. Better still to have an active fellowship in which those churches work a lot together as well as each church doing its own thing and maybe inviting others to participate. CTIS member churches do share information, but they also share activity. Different structures and different ways of doing public worship are not a barrier to shared worship and shared enterprise. Rev Jennifer is Vice Chairperson of CTIS. Brian McGinnis does a bit of paperwork as Secretary. Three others are regularly involved. Is this something in which you could be involved...and perhaps encourage us into fresh initiatives? Next big scheduled event: Advent Quiet Day, led by Rev Hilary Fife, on Saturday November 29th at St John’s. Book a place with Brian.

Religious Drama: We still do this in Junior Church and in multi-voice lesson reading... and in the Crib Service. It has an impact, on both participants and congregation, that adds effectively to what the single voice can achieve. This brief “report” is also a reminder that larger scale drama – so much part of the St George’s tradition – could again become part of annual cycle of doing and learning. Passion Play, Christmas Play,?