



The BRIDGE

Newspaper of the Anglican Diocese of Southwark

**Walking
Welcoming
Growing**

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October 2021

Life lessons

Bishop's Certificate students graduate with honours

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Unsung heroes

Richard Reddie on Black British trailblazers

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Local tragedy

South London parishes join vigil for murdered girl

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Bishop of Croydon to leave Southwark after 10 years

The Bishop of Croydon, the Rt Revd Jonathan Clark, announced on 8 September that he would be taking his leave from Southwark on 21 March 2022, 10 years to the day since his consecration.

Bishop Jonathan will be moving to Orkney with his wife, Alison, who will be continuing her creative and academic work. The Bishop, meanwhile, will be writing, teaching, leading retreats, and mentoring clergy.

He will also be acting as Episcopal Commissary for the Falkland Islands, into which post he was commissioned on 20 September by the Archbishop of Canterbury, The Most Revd Justin Welby.

The service took place during a College

of Bishops meeting at St Margaret, Oxford.

Speaking of his new appointment, Bishop Jonathan said: "The Falkland Islands are under the direct jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Serving the islands' population of less than 3,000, Christ Church Cathedral in Port Stanley is the most southerly Anglican cathedral in the world. I was very glad to be asked to act as the Archbishop's commissary to exercise episcopal ministry on the Islands. Once travel restrictions are lifted, I'm looking forward to taking the opportunity to visit the islands myself."

Bishop Christopher said: "Bishop Jonathan has served the Diocese of Southwark with energy, integrity and vision for 10 years as the Bishop of Croydon. He has



The Most Revd Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, commissions Bishop Jonathan as Episcopal Commissary for the Falkland Islands.

been a superb colleague and has also served the wider Diocese as Chair of the Southwark Board of Education as well as the National Church in various additional roles, particularly on Ministry Council and as one of the lead bishops for refugee issues. I am grateful to him for all he has accomplished, for his companionship in episcopal ministry, and for his loving

service of God's people. He and Alison go with our prayers and gratitude as they move forward to the next stage of life and ministry."

More on Bishop Jonathan can be found on page 12

Friendship blossoms as Sutton welcomes Hong Kong arrivals with festival

Bishop Jonathan joined church members from across Sutton on Saturday 18 September to welcome families newly arrived in the borough from Hong Kong.

More than 1,000 people turned up to Beddington Park to take part in the inaugural Sutton Friendship Festival, led by Sutton Vineyard Church.

The event aimed to introduce some of the 3,000 Hong Kongers who have sought, or are planning to seek, refuge in Sutton to their new community. A new security law imposed in Hong Kong limiting freedom



of speech and protest, among other restrictions, has led tens of thousands to come to the UK via a British National (Overseas) visa route.



Bishop Jonathan (above left) gave a speech which was warmly received by the crowd. Ruth Dombey, head of Sutton Council, and Councillor Trish Fivey, Mayor of Sutton,

also spoke. Some of the new arrivals shared their experiences of coming to the UK, and children from a Cantonese choir sang songs in both Cantonese and English (left), with the crowd joining in with *It's a Small World*.

There was a bouncy slide and face-painting for the children, as well as Chinese milk tea, paper lantern making and a live band.

Making Room at the Inn: a Roundtable Discussion on how the Church of England Can Welcome & Support People Arriving from Hong Kong will be taking place online on 10 November from 10.00am-4.00pm. Find more information and register at: bit.ly/31OV94H

A view from The BRIDGE



As I write, the Church is celebrating the festival of St Michael and All Angels. Recently, there was an interesting statistic from research that younger people are more likely to pray than the over-55s (www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-58681075)

I was startled by that, and I think another statistic we would discover, if we researched it, is that most people do believe in angels, although perhaps with some significant differences in perception of what that means. For lovers of God it testifies to faith in what is seen and also unseen, visible and invisible.

On Saturday 2 October we start our celebrations of Black History Month with a service and workshops in the Cathedral rejoicing in UKME contributions to Business, Science and the Arts. It is very disappointing that, for so long, the achievements and contributions of UKME heroes have appeared invisible. You can read more about some of these heroes in the centre spread of the Bridge (pages 6-7) and do join us in person at the event if you can.

At the service on Saturday, the Venerable Dr Rosemarie Mallett, Archdeacon of Croydon and Bishop's Lead on Diversity and Inclusion, will also be explaining the significance of our Anti-Racism Charter approved earlier this year by our trustees and Diocesan Synod.

We all know that the wider Church is facing change and challenge and we are delighted that Southwark has so many seeking election to the General Synod. We have one of the highest numbers of candidates from any Diocese – 25 clergy and 27 lay

members of our parishes. Thank you again to all those who have been willing to put themselves forward for this very important role in the life of the Church, and thank you too to all those recently elected to the new Diocesan Synod, where induction events are already underway.

We have much else to celebrate. This month we are delighted to report that so far this year parishes are delivering nearly 99% of the amounts pledged to support ministry and mission across the Diocese through the Parish Support Fund (PSF). Thank you so much.

Moreover, we now have 70% of the pledges received for 2022 and there is an overall increase in pledges from last year, demonstrating a commitment from parishes to rebuilding the PSF following the pandemic. This will be so important as we seek to achieve the level of giving we had in 2019, before the pandemic, so that we can continue to resource our ministry in a Diocese firmly determined to support parish structures.

During the last 18 months we have all felt tested in so many ways: in our work, our families and our concern for others and for our parishes. That there is so much to be thankful for is surely testament to the mystery of faith, that we can look back at difficult times and marvel at how we have been supported by the prayer and care of others, by the seen and unseen, the visible and the invisible. For that we thank God.

Ruth Martin



NEWS IN BRIEF

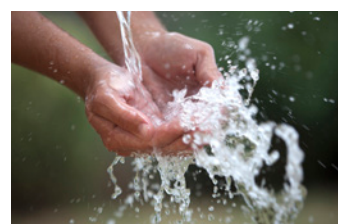
Archbishop of Jerusalem to speak at Clergy Study Day

The theme of this year's Clergy Study Day is *Jerusalem – The Holy City*. The Most Revd Hosam Naoum (right), Archbishop of Jerusalem, has agreed to contribute and will be speaking on the current situation in the Holy Land. The Revd Dr Andrew Davison, Starbridge Senior Lecturer in Theology and Natural Sciences, Fellow in Theology and Dean of Chapel, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, will speak on the Heavenly Jerusalem.

Tuesday 19 October, 9.30am-1.00pm, Zoom. Find more information and sign up here: bit.ly/ClergyStudy21



Last chance to book for Diocesan Spirituality Day: Wells of Salvation



Guest speaker Justine Allain Chapman, Archdeacon of Boston and author of *The Resilient Disciple*, will be reflecting on the resilience that God can give us. Nick Mayhew-Smith, writer and broadcaster, will be speaking about ancient holy wells. Bishop Christopher will bring the morning to an end with a talk on finding joy in your salvation.

Saturday 9 October, 10.00am-1.00pm, Southwark Cathedral, £5. Buy your ticket at: spirituality-day.eventbrite.co.uk

National Churches Trust fundraising workshop

The National Churches Trust is running a free online workshop to introduce its grants programmes on Monday 25 October at 11:00am. Find out more and book tickets here: www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/grant-enquiry-session-tickets-160191070805

Help from Historic England

Are you struggling to know how much is too much regarding COVID-19 precautions around cleaning artefacts in your church? Historic England has issued detailed, research-based guidance for cleaning and disinfecting historic surfaces in line with the Government's guidance on how to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading in the workplace. It can be found here: historicengland.org.uk/coronavirus/historic-places/cleaning-disinfecting-historic-surfaces

For those at risk of metal theft, Historic England has also published updated guidance on preventing the theft of metal from church roofs. Find it here: historicengland.org.uk/advice/caring-for-heritage/places-of-worship/places-of-worship-at-risk/metal-theft

Take a subsidised step towards carbon net zero

Parish Buying is offering churches the chance to apply for a subsidised Energy Audit as they work towards carbon net zero 2030. An Energy Audit assesses how and where a church can reduce its energy usage and carbon footprint; a typical energy-saving calculation for a church is around 20% of its current consumption. Only 100 subsidised Energy Audits are available, so the advice is to apply as soon as possible. Full priced audits will still be available after the 100 subsidies have been allocated. Full details here: www.parishbuying.org.uk/categories/energy/energy-basket/audit

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Next Issue: Submission deadline and guidance

The NOVEMBER edition is due to be published online on 1 November 2021. Material for that edition must be with Sophia Jones by e-mail by **FRIDAY 22 OCTOBER**.

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

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



IN FOCUS...

News from the Diocese

Diocese celebrates achievement of Bishop's Certificate graduates



Bishop Christopher with the 2021 Bishop's Certificate students. © Eve Milner

Southwark Cathedral buzzed with excitement on Saturday 25 September as participants of the Bishop's Certificate in Discipleship: Growing in Love and Faith, gathered for Evensong and to receive their certificate from Bishop Christopher.

The Revd Canon Wendy Robins, Director of Discipleship, Lay Ministry and Continuing Ministerial Education, welcomed the congregation saying how good it was that they could come together in person.

The participants reflected the Diocese's vibrant diversity. There were two groups, the first from the class of 2019-2020

"For a year you have put aside a time each week to learn more about God and how those before us have met with him"

and the second from the class of 2020-2021. A service for the former group was postponed because of the pandemic.

Peter Graystone, the Lay Training Officer, led the responsorial Psalm 119 vs. 33-40 and 89-96. The first Bible reading from 1 Kings 19:9-18 was read by Charlie Davies and the second from Acts 21: 27-36 was read by Oyeyemi Akinsanmi.

In her sermon, The Venerable Moira Astin, Archdeacon of Reigate, drew from the story in Kings and visiting the cave where Elijah is believed to have hidden. "Here is a site of deep sanctity to the Jews, a place of quiet prayer, somewhere where the

curtain between heaven and earth is thin, when Elijah prepared for his confrontation by spending time reflecting on God's deeds, his nature and listening for God's voice," she said.

"That is what the Bishop's Certificate is for us. For a year you have put aside a time each week to learn more about God and how those before us have met with him, you have taken space to be quiet and reflective, to listen and read and had to sweat over some essays too. I hope you have found it a valuable experience which has deepened your knowledge of God – not just head knowledge, but the heart knowledge that really knows God," she continued.

Peter Graystone led a lively interview with participants Neal Long, from the 2020-21 group, and Penny Beschizza, from the 2019-20 group (with BSL translator Eunice Adeleke). When asked what he loved most about the course, Neal said: "I didn't enjoy the assignments, but what I loved was that the six tutors each had a passion, highly knowledgeable and a huge gift to encourage discussion. I am thankful to them. It was an enjoyable, well organised and fulfilling experience."

Penny hopes to put what she has learned into practice by ministering especially to the deaf community. She said: "The course has given me a lot of understanding and built my confidence. I'm looking forward to the adventure God has for me."

After handing the scrolls to the participants, Bishop Christopher expressed gratitude to all those who organised the course. He concluded by commending the participants for their commitment, despite the challenge of the pandemic.

Living Bankside puts Southwark SPA on the map with road name change



A street on Bankside has been renamed after former Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary Marion Marples, in a tribute to the work she did in the local community before her sudden death in 2019.

The naming ceremony took place on 25 September at Gambia Street Garden, now Marion's Way. A plaque was unveiled recognising Marion's work in relation to the garden, and the Dean of Southwark Cathedral, the Very Revd Andrew Nunn, gave a blessing.

Andrew said: "For many years Marion had looked after the Confraternity of St James, the organisation based at Christchurch, Blackfriars, that encourages and supports those walking El Camino to the shrine of St James at Santiago de Compostela. Marion believed not just that walking 'the Way' was a great spiritual experience but that it was a model



Top: the naming ceremony © Eve Milner. **Above: Marion's scallop shell mosaic.**

of the Christian life, which is always a call to pilgrimage, to be people of the way. It is therefore wonderful that a street opposite where Marion and her family lived for so many years is to be named after her and a privilege to be asked to bless it."

He added: "Into Marion's Way is set a scallop shell, the symbol of pilgrimage, and it is hoped that everyone who walks that path, whatever their own faith, will travel well."

Southwark Cathedral marks 20th anniversary of 9/11



Southwark Cathedral marked the 20th anniversary of the attack on the Twin Towers by broadcasting an intimate service of remembrance on 11 September. Bishop Christopher led the service, and guests included American members of the Cathedral congregation and community. Martin South, the President of Marsh McLennan, who sponsored the fig tree memorial, recorded an address. Left: the Bishop ties a ribbon of remembrance to the fig tree.



IN FOCUS...

News from our parishes

Worshipping together in Chaldon, whatever the weather



St Peter and St Paul prepares for one of its outdoor services.

Churches nationwide have had to be inventive about worship during lockdown since early last year due to the COVID pandemic, but the tiny Norman church of St Peter and St Paul, nestling amongst the rural fields of Chaldon, Surrey, has soldiered on throughout and has in fact increased its congregation, writes Wray Dallas.

Ever since the church had to be locked in June 2020 and even now that churches have been reopened, services have been held in the meadow graveyard outside the church, come rain or shine.

The congregation bring their own seats and appropriate weather gear and have worshipped and celebrated Eucharist at 10.30am on Sunday in the face of searing heat last year, torrential rain this year, freezing winter weather and the bi-monthly deafening clay pigeon shoot which takes place in the neighbouring field. There was even an outside service

on Christmas Eve. This year alone, the church performed seven outside christenings using a portable font, placed beside the moveable altar.

The church normally enjoys many visitors who ramble, cycle or drive here, largely to see its famous medieval mural. Whilst the church was locked, the churchyard was a haven for locals taking their daily exercise and so the congregation began to hang message ribbons on the trees. These included messages for Mothering Sunday, Pentecost, stars for Christmas and even a tree displaying people of faith whose lives had inspired members of the church.

When the church reopened, distancing rules meant that only 13 worshippers could attend a service and so the 8.00am services have been held inside with the later service outside, amongst nature. It has been an enormous success and has meant that many children with families have attended enjoying the glorious informality of outside worship and closeness to God's creation.

A century of experience at St Dunstan, Bellingham



There was a quadruple celebration at St Dunstan, Bellingham on Sunday 26 September, when Bishop Christopher joined the congregation to present certificates to all those who had taken on a challenge to read the Bible in 365 days (above). In addition, the day also marked 20 years as a priest for the Revd David Riley, a self-supporting minister in the parish; 10 years for the Revd Timon Singh as a parish priest; and 68 years as a priest for Timon's father.

St Mary, Beddington wins £209,600 National Lottery grant

St Mary, Beddington has £209,600 to spend on urgent structural repairs to its tower thanks to a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant.

Work has started on the project, which is due to finish in mid-December 2021. Plans include tours, workshops and exhibitions to showcase the art and artefacts inside the church. There will also be a light and sound show to celebrate the end of the building work, which will be created by students at the BRIT school in collaboration with the church.

Alison Hargreaves, leader of the project steering group, said: "Although COVID meant we had to delay the start of the project, we are very excited that work can finally get underway. We



were so grateful to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for recognising the importance of our ancient church, and the National Lottery players whose money enables these grants to be made."

Sunflowers, sunshine and long service: Penny Rose-Casemore celebrates 25 years in ministry at Christ Church, Clapham

A very joyful occasion was had at Clapham, Christ Church and St John the Evangelist as the church celebrated the 25th anniversary of the ministry of their vicar, the Revd Canon Penny Rose-Casemore, in the parish.

Canon Penny presided at the Eucharist, and the Diocesan Secretary Ruth Martin (far right, with Penny) preached. A message from Bishop Christopher thanked Penny for her dedication, her fruitful ministry and her wonderful example of being Christ-centred yet focused on loving service to parishioners and the wider community.



Penny spoke movingly, saying that, whilst she had recently enjoyed services on holiday in village churches, her heart was "here at Christ Church".

The Eucharist, which Penny insisted must focus not on her but on worshipping God, included the magnificent anthem by Sir Hubert Parry, "I was glad when

they said unto me we will go unto the House of the Lord", based on Psalm 122. The church, decorated with sunflowers, was full of joyful singing.

The service was followed by gifts and a parish lunch of homemade delights prepared by parishioners, also able to celebrate their life together in the sunshine.

Opening doors at All Saints, Carshalton



Carshalton and Wallington Art Group Exhibition.

Along with many other churches across London, each September All Saints, Carshalton takes part in Open House London (OHL) – part of the Open City initiative – which encourages folk to visit historic buildings they may not have visited before or which may not usually be open to the public.

Over the course of the weekend of 4-5 September, All Saints Church welcomed 430 visitors (not including those coming for services), who were able to take part in Guided Historic Tours of the building, go up the Norman tower, see the usually hidden medieval floor brasses, explore

the exhibition from the Wallington and Carshalton Art Group, listen to some live music, be refreshed with tea, coffee and homemade cake and, for the younger visitors, take part in craft activities or have storytelling.

The Rector of Carshalton, David Fisher, said: “Putting on this weekend is hard work but so worthwhile as, in the past, new worshippers have joined through OHL; it wouldn’t be possible without the dedication of our team. It’s a wonderful opportunity to reach out into the community and encourage folk to visit our spectacular building.”

Back to school with a blessing at St Michael’s East Wickham



Class R and Class 1 at St Michael’s East Wickham Primary School got the year off to a good start when their book bags were blessed by the Revd Peter Organ at the start of term. “It’s so lovely to see some of our traditions returning now that some COVID restrictions have been lifted within school,” the school tweeted.

Balham goes green for St Mary’s Great Big Green Day



Volunteers from Trinity St Mary’s and Ravenstone primary schools at St Mary, Balham’s Great Big Green Day on 25 September. Pupils, parents, parishioners and other community members got together for a day of discussion about making Balham greener, along with singing from the children and an exhibition of their eco-themed artwork.

Harvest with a difference at St James, Merton



The Revd Mark Budden with armfuls of donations after the Sunday service at St James, Merton on 26 September. “Maybe not the traditional Harvest gifts but lots of carrier bags full of donations for Wimbledon Food Bank,” he said.

Night prayer by firelight at St Clement w St Peter, Dulwich



On 3 September, the young people of St Clement with St Peter, Dulwich and their families camped out in the churchyard and orchard. Vicar Cécile Schnyder said: “This was to raise money and awareness of the beautiful space we have which is open to all. Families from the neighbouring street were invited to join us for hot chocolate and marshmallow toasting. There were food, games and laughter, and night prayer was said around the open fire.”



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Celebrating Black heroes of business, science and the arts

As Southwark launches Black History Month with an event honouring Black entrepreneurs, scientists and artists, Richard Reddie, Director of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, tells the stories of some of Britain's most prominent UKME trailblazers.



There was a time, not so long ago, when Black History Month (BHM) in Britain revolved around the twin totems of the Revd Dr Martin Luther King Jr and the Transatlantic Slave Trade (TST). What was interesting about this paradigm was that the focus was on the USA (Dr King) and the Caribbean and Africa (TST). Over the last decade we have thankfully seen the emphasis shift toward the myriad contributions Black people have made in Britain over the centuries.

An irony is that if one scrutinises what we now consider “Black history” (in this country), it is undoubtedly British history – if taught correctly – and includes subjects and topics that are worthy of celebration and study throughout the year. This was noted in the Government’s much-maligned *Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities* (March 2021, [bit.ly/3cqvgMa](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97822/commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities-report.pdf)), which revealed that Black people have made (and continue to make) sizeable contributions to the cultural, financial and scientific life of this country. However, when “Black success” is celebrated, it is invariably linked to sport and music. (When Black Christians began celebrating BHM, they ensured that religion also featured in this equation.) However, we tend to hear less about those Black British trailblazers in science, technology, business, and enterprise.

It can be argued that Black British entrepreneurial savvy is traceable to Ignatius Sancho in mid-18th century London. Sancho, who was a former enslaved African, is largely known for his abolition work, but history reveals that he also bought and owned a grocery store in Westminster, in the building that now houses the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. He was reputedly the first person of African descent to vote in a British general election and the first known person of African descent to have an obituary published in British newspapers on his death in 1780 (www.bl.uk/people/ignatius-sancho). Such was his financial independence that he left his family around £88,000 (in today’s money) in book royalties after his passing ([bbc.in/3CEinB9](https://www.bbc.com/news/health-56828289)).

Akin to Sancho, many great Black British women and men tend to receive more acknowledgment for their involvement

in Black “equality” struggles than their chosen professions. As such, we fail to recognise the multifarious nature of their contributions. A good case in point is Jamaican-born Dr Harold Moody, who was a “brilliant student” who came “top of his class at medical school”. Despite Dr Moody’s genius, note Patrick Vernon and Angelia Osborne in *100 Great Black Britons*, he was unable to find work in a British hospital and set up his own medical practice in Peckham, southeast London in the 1930s.

Dr Moody, who was a committed Christian, is best remembered for establishing the League of Coloured Peoples in 1931, which championed for Black rights in Britain during the 1930s and 1940s. Nevertheless, his pioneering work as a general practitioner saved and transformed many lives (Black and White), in his part of London, but this often goes unmentioned.

Toasting success

A modern-day equivalent of Dr Moody is Professor Sir Geoff Palmer OBE, who, like the Peckham physician, was born in Jamaica, but has made his home in Scotland. Most Google searches for Dr Palmer highlight his sterling work in getting Scotland to acknowledge its role in the TST, and as an anti-racist activist. However, the university professor is a noted scientist who has carried out groundbreaking work in brewing. As such, anyone with a fondness for the “strong” stuff should be cognisant of Dr Palmer’s endeavours, and raise a glass to him every time they imbibe.

Another medically minded academic is Professor Dame Elizabeth Anionwu DBE who is of Nigerian/ Irish heritage. Dr Anionwu has been rightly celebrated for her pioneering work in the field of sickle cell anaemia and thalassemia – blood-related diseases that impact Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities around the globe. However, these sterling efforts have sometimes been overshadowed by her work to realise the dream of having a statue to Jamaican “nurse” Mary Seacole in front of St Thomas’ Hospital in Waterloo, London.

Conversely, noted Black fashion designers, chefs and artists are more celebrated as “personalities” and “celebrities” rather than entrepreneurs or businesspeople who run shops, restaurants and retail outlets. A good case in point is British fashion designer and style icon, Ozwald Boateng, who for many is the “king of cool”. When not appearing in the media to pronounce on all things fashionable, Boateng runs a multi-million-pound global fashion conglomerate. Equally, “celebrity” cooks and chefs, Lorraine Pascale and Ainsley Harriott, and *Dragons’ Den* winner, Levi Roots, are successful businesspeople with multifarious food-related empires.



From left: GP and founder of the League of Coloured Peoples, Dr Harold Moody © Getty Images; the UK’s first sickle-cell and thalassemia nurse specialist Professor Dame Elizabeth Anionwu DBE © Getty Images; model and television chef Lorraine Pascale © Shutterstock

While Government statistics suggest that only 11.2% of Black workers in Britain were self-employed in 2020 (bit.ly/3ACyWgo), anecdotal evidence suggests that the figure is higher than that. History shows that many Black folks, as a result of the rampant racism in the jobs market in Britain at that time, were forced to work for themselves. Again, history reveals that many of these Black folks (men in particular) were engaged in the trades (builders, painters, carpenters, plumbers and electricians), but others have gone on to establish barbershops, hairdressers, travel and estate agencies, legal and financial firms, record shops and music studios, restaurants, wine bars, night clubs, radio and TV stations, book shops, book publishers, newspapers, magazines et al. Research also discloses that many Black businesses are not present on the “high street”, and are based in industrial estates, business centres, warehouses or in people’s homes. This is particularly the case for those younger entrepreneurs involved in the “tech” and creative sectors.

Power play

Last year, in the aftermath of the George Floyd murder, the US finance-related magazine *Forbes* published a list of 25 Black British entrepreneurs who were creating waves in their respective industries (bit.ly/2XOt7lg). What made this list unique was the fact that practically all those listed were under 40; predominantly female, with a

disproportionate number engaged in the aforementioned “tech” and creative industries. The *Forbes* list finds a parallel in the British Powerful Media Ltd’s *Powerlist* and *Future Leaders* publications, which feature influencers and high achievers of African, African-Caribbean and African-American heritage (www.powerful-media.co.uk). A close perusal of both lists reveal that scientists and creatives occupy leading positions in the publication.

Any online search for “Black British businesses” will reveal a plethora of organisations and groups that support Black entrepreneurs. Such support is vital as going into business is always a precarious endeavour. However, many Black businesses struggle to receive bank loans and financial investment that enable them to operate on a steady footing. A recent report conducted by Diversity VC and RateMyInvestor found that less than 1% of venture capital is invested in Black businesses in the UK (sifted.eu/articles/black-business-crisis-uk). As a result of this, BHM usually sees calls for greater support for Black businesses and drives to buy from Black businesses (bit.ly/3o4Q2Qq). Furthermore, the annual UK Black Business Week, which takes place during the last week of BHM, encourages and supports Black enterprise and innovation in Britain (ukblackbusinessweek.com).

One of the few positives to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic has been the prominence of Black

doctors, nurses and scientists who have been at the forefront of the collective effort to tackle the virus. Primary among this work has been Scottish-born, Jamaican-raised, Professor Kevin Fenton, the Public Health England National Director for Health and Wellbeing (publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/author/kevin-fenton). Dr Fenton’s calm words and scientific know-how were balm for the many Black people who were sceptical of the vaccine and its efficacy.

Strength through adversity

In my role at Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, I have been able to organise many COVID-19-related webinars involving Black Christian GPs and medical experts who provided much insight into the work taking place to address the pandemic, and the ways in which people could protect themselves. Indeed, the outbreak led to the formation of several new Black medical related associations that took their place alongside the more established ones.

It needs to be added that there are Black businesspeople, entrepreneurs and scientists who for a variety of reasons, prefer to keep their activities “below the radar”. It is the case that a successful Black woman or man in these fields is invariably “trotted out” by politicians, the media and others as “role models”; people who can inspire others within Black communities. The truth is that not everyone feels comfortable with such a role, and many prefer to eschew such a profile. I know about two dozen Black men and women who fall into this category, but I will not use this article to name them!

Space does not permit me to talk about the numbers of Black Christians who straddle the abovementioned sectors. Suffice it to say, they are making history – Black history – and, in the process, further contributing to the financial, social, cultural and religious fabric of this country.

Find out more...

Southwark’s Black History Month Celebration: Business, Science & the Arts will take place at Southwark Cathedral on Saturday 2 October from 11.00am-1.30pm. The Rt Revd Karowei Dorgu, Bishop of Woolwich, will preside at the service and the Revd Les Isaac, founder of the Ascension Trust and Street Pastors, will preach. The service will be followed by workshops. Full details at: southwark.anglican.org/whats-on

Parishes should also look out for packs containing the Diocese’s Anti-Racism Charter, which will be delivered in the first week of October. As well as the charter, the pack contains postcards, case studies and a poster.



IN FOCUS...

News from the Diocese

Southwark churches join vigil for Sabina Nessa



When the body of murdered schoolteacher Sabina Nessa was discovered just after 5.30pm on Saturday 18 September, near the OneSpace Community Centre in Cator Park, Kidbrooke, the Centre Manager Kathryn Gosden had just locked up for the day.

Kathryn, a member of St John, Blackheath, heard the news through local Facebook networks late on Saturday evening. The days that followed saw the world's media descend on Kidbrooke. "The community is in shock," said Kathryn. "The police cordon was in place until Thursday [23 September]."

"The first condolence book is already nearly full and we have had a steady flow of people coming"

The Archdeacon of Lewisham and Greenwich, the Venerable Alastair Cutting, and other clergy from the area have been on the ground providing support to the community and assisting Kathryn with media interviews.

OneSpace is a Christian-run community centre. Its café is the hub and very popular with the local community. "It's a place where lots of people come and meet up. We serve them coffee and care for them," said Kathryn. Its trustees are members of St John's, and its Chair is the Revd Kim Hitch, Vicar of St James, Kidbrooke.

In response to the outpouring of shock and grief, Kathryn set up a faith and

prayer room for all faiths and none in the centre and a book of condolence in another room which opened on Friday 24 September.

"The first book is already nearly full and we have had a steady flow of people coming," explained Kathryn, who noticed that people lingered in the faith room. "Some have come from far away and many have said that the feel of the place is lovely. I've noticed that the Bible I left closed on the table has been looked at. As people have been coming, we have been able to share our Christian faith."

Kathryn will give the book of condolence to the police, who will pass it on to Sabina's family.

Two vigils were held on the Friday night, the first at St James, Kidbrooke. Those who attended then walked down to Pegler Square where more than 500 people gathered for the second vigil. Bishop Karowei attended both and joined other faith leaders on stage where they each said a prayer. Kathryn also spoke about the support they are giving to the community.

The OneSpace team of five are young adults, the youngest being 16. Kathryn has been mindful that they need extra care and support. They gathered together in the building with parents of staff and trustees and talked. "We then went over to see the flowers, had a meal and prayed."

Her team have started to return to work and the centre is open to the community. Prayers continue to be said in churches across the Diocese for Sabina and her family.

A walk on the wild side for CoppaFeel! breast cancer charity

An Ordinand standing at the front of church and reminding everyone to check themselves for signs of breast cancer can seem a little embarrassing. But suggesting people CoppaFeel! is a cheeky way to share a serious message. It is such an important one.

I'll be turning 50 later in the year and with less opportunity to travel I decided to challenge myself. I was selected from 800 applicants to take part in the CoppaFeel! Scottish Highlands Trek. A hundred of us walked more than 120km in the Scottish Highlands over five days, sleeping in a tent and negotiating some "hills", climbing the equivalent to halfway up Everest! We "bagged" two Munros and have now raised more than £350,000 for the breast cancer charity CoppaFeel!.

I personally did this to honour my "Scottish cousin" Johanna's fundraising effort whilst living with breast cancer before dying last year aged 50. A number of people in my parish in Betchworth and Buckland United Benefice have also recently undergone breast cancer treatment because of early detection.

CoppaFeel! is on a mission to stamp out the late diagnosis of breast cancer. The charity wants to make sure that all people are regularly checking themselves to know their bodies, and have the confidence to see their GP if something just doesn't feel normal.

The trek was led by *I'm a Celebrity* winner Giovanna Fletcher; my team leader was *Strictly's* Gemma Atkinson. Emma Willis of *The Voice*, and Candice



Brown and Selasi Gbormittah from *The Great British Bake Off* also shared the week with so many incredible people, some who were midway through treatment and others, like me, who were there in memory of those who have gone before us.

Kerry Evans, Ordinand in Betchworth and Buckland United Benefice

To find out more about the charity, and sign up for a reminder to check yourself, please visit www.coppafeel.org. Kerry's story can be found at: <https://coppafeel.enthuse.com/pf/kerry-evans>

Nations gather for Climate Sunday service before COP26

Thousands of people gathered online and in person at Glasgow Cathedral on Sunday 5 September to take part in the Nations' Climate Sunday service, a Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) initiative.

The Venerable Dr Rosemarie Mallett, Archdeacon of Croydon and a Trustee of CTBI, recorded an introduction to the service (right). "Urgent action is needed for the good of the whole planet, especially by we who live in those richer nations," she said.

"This service offers us an opportunity to come together, to give thanks to our Creator God, to give thanks for the Church's commitment and actions on the climate, to raise up the forthcoming COP26 climate talks in prayer, and to join with others, locally and globally, in committing ourselves to act now and to act justly to help heal our hurting and broken world."



Although the streaming of the service was interrupted by technical issues, many were still able to follow the hymns and prayers for the COP26 climate conference as intended.

St Denis' Primary School choir sang *St Mungo's Rhyme* and *The City of St Mungo*, while Amanda Khozi Mukwashi, chief executive of Christian Aid, gave the address. After prayers were said for those suffering the effects of climate change, there was a ceremonial handing-over of churches' commitments and requests for COP26.

Growing God’s kingdom in south London



The land surrounding St John the Evangelist, Upper Norwood, is more than a green space; it is “a space where God is remembered in this community”, says the Revd John Pritchard, Vicar at St John’s.

This transformation from neglected plot to well-regarded community resource began around eight years ago, when John first came to the parish.

In the beginning, he says, “we had lots of working parties which literally trampled down brambles that were about 5ft high”. They also enlisted the help of local groups to manage the land and make it more accessible.

Gradually, the weeds were tamed and the land planted with edible hedges, mini orchards and vegetable beds. “The invitation was for the community to come and help themselves to home-grown fresh vegetables free of charge,” says John.

There have been classes on sustainability, how to grow your own food and what to plant. People are welcome to come and sit or potter whenever they wish.

Pre-pandemic, too, the Meadow was part of a social prescribing scheme among local GPs. Under this scheme, the doctors would encourage those they felt would benefit from having some engagement with the land to visit the Meadow.

“Every Wednesday they’d turn up and come along,” says John. “That’s the day we have our drop-in as well, so they could have some food and then we’d all trot

out and work on the land and find that therapeutic relationship as well.”

There is a firepit in the Meadow, and sometimes people would boil up a kettle and even get out a guitar. The scheme was so successful that, in 2018, St John’s won a Church Times Green Health award which came with prize money of £750.

During lockdown, the land was less used. “There were some makeshift benches and now and again I would pass by and see someone sitting there quietly, but numbers were dramatically reduced because people were going to ground, really,” says John.

What did happen during lockdown was that the land reclaimed itself. “There’s a lot of management with a plot of land, but as we come out of the pandemic, what we see is that everything has just flourished because of our absence,” John says.

Now, they have a new understanding of the Meadow’s potential. “It has given us a new perspective into how the land can be,” says John, “and that it’s a place shared between nature and humankind.”

Read more

Caring for God’s Acre offers Action Packs to help with managing churchyards: bit.ly/GodsAcreBio

The National Church has resources on encouraging biodiversity in churchyards: bit.ly/CoEBiodiversity

Read more from The Bridge about another Church Times Green Health Award winner here: bit.ly/3AK3Vap

Bishop commissions new Deputy Chancellor



On Tuesday 28 September, Barrister Araba Taylor was sworn in as the Diocese of Southwark’s Deputy Chancellor at evensong in Southwark Cathedral.

In his sermon, Bishop Christopher said: “Araba, it may not appear this way when you are bringing yet another run-of-the-mill faculty application to determination; but part of your work in the Diocese is to open the future for different parishes by good judgments and encourage change where it is needful.”

He added: “Wisdom is fed by regular prayer in season and out of season.”

Speaking after the service, Araba, whose parents were born in Ghana and who is the Diocese’s first Deputy Chancellor from a UKME background, said: “It is a privilege to be able to put my legal skills at the disposal of the Church and to serve God in this new way.”

“There is an encouragement to reflect on the events of the last 18 months and to pray for all those affected by imprisonment”

The Revd Canon Tim Bryan, Bishop’s Adviser for Prison Chaplaincy, on the upcoming Prisons Week, hope after despair, and 40 years of encouraging prayer.

Prisons Week, which takes place from 10-16 October, offers an opportunity to hold our prisons across the Diocese and those caught up in the criminal justice system in prayer.

Built around the theme of “Respair”, the return of hope after a period of despair, the prayer leaflet follows a tradition of lament. It encourages a prayer journey from a dark place of pain, suffering, fear or sorrow to somewhere that the light can get in.

Using scripture and prayers from people affected and engaged with different aspects of the criminal justice system, there is an encouragement to reflect on the events of the last 18 months and to pray for all



Poetess Jess, who is performing *Consider the Raven* on behalf of Prisons Week.

those affected by imprisonment: prisoners and their families, victims of crime, chaplains and prison staff, police, probation and the judiciary, and organisations and churches supporting people on release.

The resources for Prisons Week are available at <https://prisonsweek.org> and include the prayer leaflet and a powerful supporting film *Consider the Raven* (Luke 12.24), written by Louise Alexandra Erskine and performed by Poetess Jess. Although designed for Prisons Week, it is recognised that these resources may have far wider relevance and engagement.

Prisons Week is a small charity that has been encouraging prayer for prisons over the last 40 years and is a remarkable collaboration of more than 20 Christian-based organisations who seek to encourage the Church to pray. In addition, this year there will be an online discussion on Tuesday 12 October from 7.00-8.30pm chaired by the Right Reverend Bishop Rachel Treweek, Bishop of Gloucester and Bishop to Prisons, on the theme of Respair and a 24-hour online prayer on Friday/Saturday. Details of both are on the website.

An “attitude of gratitude” at Southwark Cathedral



Dean Andrew with the *Gratitude* sculptures © Scott Kershaw Photography
Inset, below: *The Leaves of the Trees* © Cathy Fellows

Southwark Cathedral will play host to the last leg of a nationwide tour of 51 life-sized sculptures from 1-10 October.

Entitled *Gratitude*, the installation invites people to celebrate the hard work and sacrifice shown by NHS workers during the pandemic.

The sculptures, which have been decorated by individual artists and curated in partnership with creative ambassador Dame Zandra Rhodes, will be auctioned off on 12 October in support of NHS Charities Together.

The Very Revd Andrew Nunn, Dean of Southwark, said: “This will be an amazing installation and a real opportunity to thank the staff of the NHS for all they have done so far in this ongoing pandemic and to offer our continuing support in real and heartfelt gratitude. Where the exhibition takes place is exactly where St Thomas’ Hospital was founded back in the 12th century by the Augustinian friars of the Priory of St Mary Overie.”

Gratitude is the second art installation to be held at the Cathedral in as many



months. The previous event, *The Leaves of the Trees* by sculptor Peter Walker, was on show in the Cathedral sanctuary until 3 October.

Made up of 5,000 bronze leaves, each carved with the word “hope”, *The Leaves of the Trees* aimed to encourage visitors to reflect on the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic. Dean Andrew said of the leaves: “As a sign of hope they are also a reminder to us of all those we have lost during the pandemic. Each one, like a fallen leaf, is precious to us, and nothing and no one is lost from God’s sight.”



LET US PRAY...

OCTOBER

The Very Revd Andrew Nunn

Dean of Southwark

(follow @deansouthwark to see the Dean’s daily morning prayers on Twitter)

When the Olympic Games were happening in London back in 2012 one of the mascots ended up outside the Deanery. Can you remember Wenlock and Mandeville, two one-eyed figures who were decorated in different ways by different artists? Since then we have seen a succession of such public art. Over the summer as we had our summer holiday, not on the beach in Spain but touring up the east coast of England, we called in on Lincoln to find the place full of images of the famous Imp, all decorated in different ways. But I’ve also seen Paddingtons and elephants and benches all given the same treatment.

I mention this because, if you come to the Cathedral at the beginning of October, you will find lots of figures decorated by famous artists in an exhibition called *Gratitude* (see article, left). The whole thing, which features more than the decorated figures of people, is designed to inspire in us gratitude for the staff of the NHS. At the end of the exhibition, the figures will be auctioned off to raise funds to support our NHS heroes.

But that sense of gratitude goes beyond the immediate need to be grateful to those who continue to give themselves sacrificially, day-in, day-out on behalf of all of us.

The African-American actor Sterling Brown is attributed as the first person to coin the phrase “develop an attitude of gratitude”. I love the



idea that you are alert, all the time, to what you need to be grateful for, the people to whom you are grateful, and conscious of where, in the past, you have been ungrateful.

In Scripture we are more used to the language of thankfulness but the same applies. As St Paul says in his Letter to the Colossians, “Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving” (Colossians 4.2).

An attitude of gratitude, alert with thanksgiving; what a life that would be.

**God, may I be thankful,
may I be grateful, may I
count every blessing and
never cease in giving praise.
Amen.**

“Our Lord shook me up and said: ‘you have some work to do’”: Hannah Neale on being awarded the British Empire Medal

The Revd Hannah Neale, holder of the Bishop’s Permission to Officiate in Southwark Diocese, has been awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) in the Queen’s Birthday Honours list this summer.

The BEM is awarded for “hands-on” work that has made a significant difference to the local community. Although Hannah’s name is on the award, she says, “I don’t think it’s ever really one person’s award. I think that whatever we achieve is for everybody that has been involved in the work that we’re doing.”

The work in question is research done by the charity BAME Voice, which Hannah founded in 2016 to look at the impact

of local issues on UKME communities within the Borough of Merton.

When the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on the UKME population began to be felt last year, Hannah realised that BAME Voice had a role to play. She and her team started a research project into how the pandemic was affecting Black communities, which they presented to Merton Council.

“As a result of the report,” she says, “quite a bit of money has been found to help bridge the gap in the inequalities that exist within the borough”. She is hoping that some of the youth clubs and community groups that have had to close may be able to reopen as a result.



Hannah has been combining her ministry as an ordained priest with charity work in Merton for 17 years. Things have not always been easy, but, she says, the future is more hopeful. “I think what COVID

has done in terms of BAME communities is to make people aware of just how unequal society has become. And I think people’s consciences have been stirred,” she says. “Certainly I believe in Merton that people have listened and are listening and are more prepared to listen.”

This is not Hannah’s first high-profile appointment: among her other work in ministry, she was the first Black wing chaplain for the Air Training Corps. But it will not change her mission or the focus of her life. “My joy, every satisfaction I get, is from ministry,” she says. “That is where my heart is and that is where our Lord found me, shook me up and said: ‘you have some work to do’.”

WHAT'S ON

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



October

SATURDAY 2 OCTOBER

- 🎵 **DULWICH/ONLINE** — Psalms, Psinging and Psandwiches! Come and explore psalmody at this regional event of the Hymn Society on 2 October from 10:00am to 3:30pm, at St John's East Dulwich, London SE22 9AT. All welcome, sandwich lunch provided. Tickets: in person £10 tinyurl.com/psalmspp, £5 livestream tinyurl.com/psalmsppls, £12 on the door.
- * **ELTHAM** — Craft Fair and Macmillan Coffee Morning. St Luke's Church, Westmount Road (corner of Dumbreck Road), Eltham SE9 1XQ. 10.00am-1.30pm. Craft Fair in the church with various stalls selling items such as paintings, tatting, bookfolds, jewellery, textiles, woodturned items, decoupage, vegan bath products, upcycled items etc. Refreshments in aid of Macmillan. Free entry. Cash sales preferred.

2-3 OCTOBER

- * **TATSFIELD** — "All Good Gifts Around Us", Harvest Flowers, Produce and Art Display at St Mary's, Tatsfield. Church open 9.00am-5.00pm. Sunday services 9.00am, 10.00am, 5.00pm. Light refreshments in Millennium Hall 3.00pm-5.00pm. Further information: 01959 577289.

WEDNESDAY 6 OCTOBER

- * **ONLINE** — I Will Repay: the Church and Reparations. This webinar hosted by the Racial Justice Advocacy Forum is the first in a series exploring how the Church can be equipped to speak with theological confidence on reparations. 7.30-9.00pm. Free but please register at: bit.ly/3Auvnc6

SATURDAY 9 OCTOBER

- * **ONLINE** — Here I am, Lord: A time to review and renew our calling. Speakers Mark Bradford, Lucy Moore, Jo Cox-Darling and Tony Horsfall will be journeying through 1 Samuel 3, helping us take some time to reflect on God's calling for each of our lives. 10.00am-3.00pm, Zoom. Tickets £15 (individual) or £25 (household). Go to www.brforonline.org.uk/hereiamlord for more information and to book.

SATURDAY 16 OCTOBER

- 🎵 **MITCHAM** — The Merry Opera Company presents Gilbert & Sullivan's *The Mikado*, at Mitcham Parish Church, Church Road, CR4 3BP at 7.00pm. Tickets £16 (under-16s £10) from 020 8646 0666.
- 🎵 **TATSFIELD** — Classical Guitar Concert with Mark Jennings and light

Creation and the Arts Festival at St Paul, Wimbledon Parkside Ongoing to 10 October

Prayer stations, liturgy, music and arts events to help us reflect on Creation.

Sunday 3 October: Harvest Festival and Lunch following 10.00am service. Preacher: Bishop Richard.

Thursday 7 October: An Evening of Art and Music (with silent auction of items in exhibition). Net proceeds go towards funding St Paul's Youth and Children's Worker and other outreach activities. 6.00-8.00pm.

Sunday 10 October: Choral Evensong to conclude the Arts Festival with song and worship. 6.00pm.

Organ Recitals at St John the Evangelist, Upper Norwood

Free. Thursdays @ 7.30pm. sjunoffice@gmail.com; 020 8771 6686

14 October: Jeremiah Stephenson, *All Saints, Margaret Street, London*

E-mail bridge@southwark.anglican.org with your events.

refreshments at St Mary's, Tatsfield, 7.00pm. £12 by advance booking. Information and tickets: stmooffice.lttm@btmail.com or 01959 577289.

SATURDAY 23 OCTOBER

- * **SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL** — Prayer Vigil for COP26. South Bank Churches and the Diocese of Southwark invite people of all faiths to a Prayer Vigil for the success of COP26. Free, but registration in advance is essential. For full details and to book, visit: www.stjohnswaterloo.org/page/1791/vigil-cop

MONDAY 25 OCTOBER

- * **ONLINE** — A webinar introducing the National Churches Trust Grant Programmes for Places of Worship, covering what you will need to have in place to be able to apply; how to apply; and more. 11.00am-12noon. Free but please register here: bit.ly/2VZisjr

December

SATURDAY 11 DECEMBER

- * **KENNINGTON** — Synergy Network Thanksgiving Service at St Mark's, Kennington. 4.00-5.30pm. Free but please register at: bit.ly/SynergyXmas

"Each day, as I log an extra one or two kilometres, I learn something new about myself": a journey of recovery through Catford

After foot surgery left her with a fused left ankle, Catford parishioner and Deanery Synod member **Rona Dixon** decided to undertake a personal challenge as part of her recovery: to walk the Camino Francés virtually. "As I will never be able to walk the Camino in Spain, due to the restraints of surgery," she says, "I chose to undertake a virtual challenge where the terrain would be local pavements and pathways through the Corbett estate in Catford." This is her story.

29 December 2020

Today the challenge begins. Although it seems insurmountable, I know that every step will bring me nearer to my goal. I don't know if I am capable of completing it but I have to try. I have 546 days to walk 773.9km. On Day One I log 2.3km. On my virtual journey I can see on the map where my journey begins, Saint Jean-



pied-de-port. An optimised street view shows me what the terrain looks like. In my Catford world, 2.3km means I walk down my road and up the next. Shortly after beginning my virtual walk, I realise I have back pain. I find I need to support my back, with my hands, in order to complete my daily walks. This is because my feet are now in different positions and the difference in walking affects my lower back. Eventually, after months, I visit a chiropractor who helps relieve my back pain. But I know I will never walk as far as I used to. Each day I force myself to walk short

distances. Some days I just don't feel like walking but if I miss a day I feel guilty. Taking a slightly different route often feels risky. Nevertheless, I walk new routes, partly so that I am not bored and partly to challenge myself. I always wear my step counter around my neck to track the distance I travel on foot. As I walk around the Corbett estate I meet and greet people. Some people I know but many I don't. Lockdown has made me bolder and I feel it is important to communicate with others. A short chat elevates my spirits. Whilst I walk I am aware of the wildlife, the cheerful goldfinches as they dip and fly overhead, the swish of leaves as the breeze passes through the trees and shrubs and the quiet sky, with far fewer aeroplanes flying above me. Each day, as I log an extra one or two kilometres, I learn something new about myself. I realise I don't like to give up and I want to retain my independence. On

some days I make myself walk further than I think I am capable of. Sometimes I learn more about the local area. There are a number of landmarks on the estate, including St Andrew's Church. Many of these provide me with a sense of well-being. Some are places of spirituality and some give me a sense of awe and wonder. **16 August 2021** Today I cross the finishing line. I walk 6.6km to Hither Green Cemetery and back, passing the 100% milestone. This milestone means another tree will be planted for me, the fifth one during my virtual Camino. I have walked the way of Saint Frances in only 42% of the time I allotted myself to complete the challenge. I feel elated and have rediscovered the joy of walking. Every footstep has been a pilgrimage around Catford. My walk has given me a greater appreciation of the local community. It was a fitness challenge with mental and spiritual benefits.

“I’m very, very glad that God called me to do this for 10 years”

Bishop Jonathan will be stepping down in March 2022 after a decade in Croydon. Here, he talks about the highlights of his tenure, plans for the future — and advice for his successor

Many of us go on holiday and dream of what it would be like to make a life there, but few go through with it. Bishop Jonathan, however, will be doing exactly that when he leaves Croydon in March 2022 to move to Orkney.

“My wife Alison and I went on holiday there and fell in love with the place,” he says, “but more profoundly, I think it’s because we found there a community which we felt was somewhere we could fit, make a contribution and really be a part of.”

The move will allow the Bishop to pursue what he describes as “this whole other career I might have had as an academic”. “As many clergy do, I have a large bookcase of books that I’ve never really properly engaged with. And my plan is to read some of those books and begin writing,” he says.

In between times, the Bishop hopes to lead retreats, preach and offer spiritual direction to “anyone who’s happy to do it over Zoom!” He was also commissioned in September as Archbishop Justin’s Episcopal Commissary for the Falkland Islands, so will be offering advice and support to the only parish priest in the Falklands. “I think I’ve been defined as the Bishop for remote islands,” he jokes.

Despite his anticipation for the next chapter in his life, the Bishop remarks on “how many people” he will miss. “There are many, many people whom I’ve been able to work with, help, guide, learn from, and share with,” he says, adding: “The chance to offer leadership and service to the Church in that direct way has been a huge privilege and very joyful, and I’m very, very glad that God called me to do this for 10 years.”

Those 10 years have seen plenty of highlights. “Being able to ordain people has been a massive privilege and a great joy,” the Bishop says, “and similarly to confirm.” The big celebratory events, such as celebrating the Eucharist at Area Clergy Study Days, have also, he says, been “a really powerful experience”.

Soon, someone else will be celebrating those Eucharists, and the Bishop has these words of advice for whoever that will be: “I think the really, really important thing is to love your churches, to look for where God is at work and to celebrate and amplify that.”

As for the Bishop himself? He will be on Orkney, going in faith to answer God’s next call.

Clockwise from top: Bishop Jonathan on an official Area visit in May 2012; on the day of his consecration with Archbishop Rowan Williams; at a Vocations Day in April 2018; ordinations in Croydon in 2021; with the Revd Andy Dovey, Bishop’s Adviser on Healthcare Chaplaincy, during the pandemic; at the relaunch of the Croydon Plus service in February 2016.

