

St Mary's Church Newsletter

April 2018



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Table of Contents

An Associate Vicar for St Mary's	1
A letter from Aaron	1
Safeguarding, Clericalism and the 'Reputation' of the Church of England	2
Pastoral Letter from Archbishop of Canterbury on Safeguarding	4
Church spring clean	6
Syrian Refugee Crisis	6
Cake!	7
Moses 2018	7

An Associate Vicar for St Mary's

By Canon Simon Butler | April 2018

We are delighted to be able to announce that the Bishop of Southwark has, in consultation with the Revd Canon Simon Butler, appointed the Revd Aaron Kennedy to the post of Associate Vicar of St Mary's Battersea in the Deanery of Battersea, subject to the necessary legal formalities.

The appointment is for an initial period of five years.

Aaron is presently serving his curacy at St Nicholas Church, Gosforth in the diocese of Newcastle. He is married to Grace, and they are both excitedly expecting their first child, who is due in August. Aaron has a background in music - as a drummer, publishing - as an editor, and hospitality - as a coffee shop barista. As a member of the Moot community in London he helped to create and run Host Cafe, a ministry of hospitality in the City. He is passionate about community organising, and helped to lead and set up Heaton Citizens, a member organisation of Citizens UK. Grace and Aaron are both delighted to be coming to Battersea!

It is anticipated that Aaron's last Sunday at Gosforth will be 20th May and that he will be licensed at the end of June or the beginning of July.

Canon Simon Butler writes...

This is exciting news for St Mary's and for me personally. Along with our new Parish Manager, David Britten, Aaron's appointment marks the rebuilding of a Ministry Team at our church, following a period of significant ministerial departures, to retirement and relocation. The appointment panel were impressed by Aaron's prayerfulness, intellectual depth, articulate vision for community development through organising. He has a heart for those on the margins of society and of faith and is prepared to go to those places to encounter people there.

It is important that everyone at St Mary's knows that Aaron joins me as an equal colleague and not as a training curate. Aaron has completed his ordination training and his curacy. An Associate Vicar is - legally - under the authority of the incumbent, but for all intents and purposes, it is my wish (and Aaron's) that we develop a pattern of collegiality, with Aaron taking clear responsibility as an incumbent-status priest for aspects of the life of the church and particularly our mission. How that works out over time will of course be a matter for the future, but for now we can simply look forward to Aaron & Grace's arrival in the early summer.

Please pray for them both as they prepare to move to Battersea, and for the PCC as we set about finding suitable nearby accommodation to be their home (if anyone knows of a long term let coming available in north Battersea, please contact me urgently!).

A letter from Aaron

By Aaron Kennedy | April 2018

Hi!

My name is Aaron. I am married to Grace and we are really looking forward to joining you all very soon.

Download the letter as a PDF by clicking the link:

[Introducing Revd Aaron Kennedy](#)



Aaron and Grace

Safeguarding, Clericalism and the 'Reputation' of the Church of England

By Canon Simon Butler | April 2018

With much else going on in the news – a serious international incident over the poisonings in Salisbury at the top of the list – it may have been fortuitous that reports on the recent hearings of

the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) were rather overlooked by the mainstream media. However, a lack of media prominence can only be a minor sidebar in what has been an extremely damaging six weeks for the Church of England.

The focus of IICSA was on historic child sexual abuse in the Diocese of Chichester, where there was a very sorry history of incompetence, lack of attention to the voices of victims and a general willingness to believe that clergy, who appeared saintly and devout, could be capable of such an offence against the vulnerable and against God as child sexual abuse. The catalogue of horrors that was laid before the Inquiry was summed up by the Archbishop of Canterbury (himself called as a witness, though not responsible for historic oversights) when he said, "I want to put on record again - I don't know how to express it adequately - how appalled I am and how ashamed I am of the Church for what it did to those who are survivors and are coping with this. The apologies are fine, but you have got to find ways of making it different and we have got to do it as soon as possible."

While today the landscape of safeguarding has changed, and there is a clear legal duty upon all office holders in the Church of England to report allegations or concerns about the abuse of a child or vulnerable adult and the consequence of discipline if failure occurs, there is much to learn and escape from. Among the most serious habits into which the whole church has fallen is a culture of clericalism, where clergy are invested with an almost unchallengeable status and where too often we defer to the dog collar as though ordination confers infallibility. Sadly, too often clergy like to be deferred to and do not expect to be challenged. A false sense of status can be gained. We have to be very careful - with the subtle hierarchies that exist even in the most inclusive parish community - and which are underlined by the ways in which we shape our liturgy, our ministry and our decision-making processes. If you find me behaving in such clerical ways, please in the name of the good God, point it out. But clericalism is two-way street as well. Sometimes, congregations and those who are not ordained like to defer to the clergy; it's a subtle way of not taking responsibility for the life of the church as a one of the baptised, a culture of avoiding commitment to the direction and mission of the church. As John Betjeman famously quipped, "When things go wrong, it's often quicker to go and blame them on the Vicar." The horror of child sexual abuse in the church, and the incompetence of failure to follow advice or best practice, is but the worst consequence of clericalism and deference. I hope we can work together to ensure that St Mary's is not a place where clerical superiority and congregational infantilism is allowed to flourish.

As many of you will know, I'm currently a member of the 19-strong Archbishops' Council, which is the trustee body for the national Church of England. So I'm very much living and breathing the issues raised by IICSA as they are going to remain central to our life and work for the foreseeable future. There remain two further hearings in the year ahead. The Church of England is in for far more of a rough ride yet, and rightly so. However, we should not be afraid of our loss of reputation, even though such bad publicity will depress some and discourage others from belonging to the church. We serve a Saviour who "held his reputation of no account" (Philippians 2:5), and the humbled church is the Christlike church. Ultimately, while we should be completely signed up to the safeguarding agenda and ready to face the consequence of historic failures, it is the loving, gentle, and safe welcome that we offer in the local church that will persuade both sceptic and enquirer that the church is a safe space in which to thrive. We do well to remember that 80% of child abuse happens in the home or family setting. As Archbishop Justin said to me only a couple of weeks ago, what a gift the church could be in every community if it were known to be a safe space for all. Let's work at that...clergy and laity together.

Simon Butler

Do you have a safeguarding concern at St Mary's? If so, contact our Parish Safeguarding Officer, Emma Tasker, emma@tasker.biz, and she will listen to your concern.

A Pastoral Letter from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York follows under a separate link.

Pastoral Letter from Archbishop of Canterbury on Safeguarding

By Newsletter Admin | April 2018

23 March 2018

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

“so, Jesus got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him...” (John ch. 13 v. 4)

We are writing to you to ask for your prayers as Holy Week begins and as the Independent Inquiry on Child

Sexual Abuse has finished its hearing into matters in the Diocese of Chichester. Please will you pray this

Holy Week especially for all those involved, and for all affected by safeguarding issues.

We want to emphasise the crucial importance for the Church of England to be a safe place for all who join in

the worship of the living God, in God’s mission, and in ministry. Clearly, we need to hear what the Inquiry

will say when they issue their report, but, we are convinced that there is much we are doing and much we can

do better about safeguarding. Thank you for all that you do. As the Archbishop of Canterbury said last week

at the hearing, the vast majority of our parishes are safe places and many thousands of people, mainly

volunteers, are working hard to ensure church is safe and understand the need for training, good record keeping

and are committed to having policies and practices in place and kept under review.

The heart of the Church is in the parishes and other local congregations and we are very grateful to all of you

who are working so diligently, right across the Church of England. The work of clergy is very demanding.

We give thanks and pray for all of you and for all you do, as we move through this week called Holy. At this

season we will welcome many new people and occasional visitors. May we ask you all to consider how we ensure a safe and joyful welcome to all who enter our doors, in particular on Easter Day?

We take very seriously all that has been heard by the Inquiry. Archbishop Justin said when he gave evidence last week that he had learned again through listening and reading the evidence given to the Inquiry, that we must not simply say sorry, but that we must also take action that demonstrates clearly that we have learnt the lessons. It is a fact that Bishops and Archbishops are now rightly required to listen, learn and act in accordance with safeguarding legislation and good practice. We are thankful to our episcopal colleagues for all that they are doing in this area and we are grateful to Bishop Martin Warner (Bishop of Chichester) and all his team in Chichester for the particular work they have done and are doing.

There is, of course, absolutely no room for complacency. We need to learn the lessons from what has gone wrong and from the shocking abuse. There are more hearings to come which will focus on the Church of England as part of the IICSA process. So, we do need to continue to listen carefully to all that IICSA has to say and, above all, to listen to the voices of the survivors.

Holy Week is about listening to God, the priority for all Christians. Judas betrayed Jesus, Peter denied him, and the rest deserted him. The crowds turned on him. As we go through these days together again let us affirm our commitment to listen to God and to build up the relationships between us as those who are disciples of Jesus Christ. The various signs and powerful actions of this week; the Renewal of Ordination vows and the Blessing of the Oils on Maundy Thursday; the foot washing and stripping of the altars on Maundy Thursday evening; the starkness of the bare church on Good Friday; the waiting and dead silence of Holy Saturday; and the sheer unalloyed joy on Easter Day; all of these give us the opportunity to renew our trust, ensure we are open and honest one with another and commit ourselves with renewed energy to respond to the good news.

Christ is alive and so we proclaim the gospel afresh and confidently in this generation. It is indeed the wisdom of God, the power of God for salvation.

Yours in Christ,

The Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby The Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu
Archbishop of Canterbury Archbishop of York

Church spring clean

By Carole Cooles | April 2018

Some photos of the church spring clean which took place on Saturday 24 March. A very jolly time. We thank Kate Sutcliffe who organised it.



Syrian Refugee Crisis

By Serena Cox | April 2018

The terrible suffering in Syria and the resulting refugee crisis have touched us all.

Many people at St Mary's want to help but don't know where to begin. The good news is that St Mary's is already contributing through its partnership with KLS which does an enormous amount for refugees. However, much more is needed and the challenge is for every one of us to demonstrate God's love for those who have been driven from their homes by war.

On Sunday 29 April there will be presentations at the 8.30am and 11am services during which you can learn more about why and what we are doing to help support refugees in Battersea and how even small things can make a big difference.

From offering your spare room for a few nights to buying a washing up bowl from a furnishings gift list for a refugee family newly settled in Wandsworth, there are a myriad of ways you can help. You might have carpentry skills or teach English as a foreign language, have a bit of spare time to spend with refugee children or be a fantastic baker and happy to supply a fundraising stall.

A skills audit will be circulated to help identify the congregations' hidden talents what you may be able to offer.

Come along on Sunday 29 and find out more. For any further information before then, please contact serenacox@uwclub.net.

Cake!

By Damian Panton | April 2018

Thought you might like to see this. My parents (Alan & Sue Panton) celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in Friday. They got married in St Mary's in 1968. This is the cake they had.



Moses 2018

By Newsletter Admin | April 2018

Want to be part of something amazing?

Then why not be a part of the community musical theatre production of Moses 2018 Brought to you by Asinati Creative Ministries. Open to all ages, singers, musicians, dancers, Artists, back stage, promoters, etc.. Interested ? Then email: mosesasinati@gmail.com or call 07400 692 777

Look out for audition dates , auditions will begin from the week of 23rd April 2018 Workshops for building the set, making props and making costumes will begin during the May school half term week beginning 28th May 2018

All to get ready for three performances on the evening of Friday 6th July, a matinee & evening show on Saturday 7th July 2018.

Check our Face book page for updates: www.facebook.com/AsinatiCIC

