

**Rev'd Amanda would appreciate it if anyone knowing of illness or any other trouble in the Parish would notify her as soon as possible on 020 3940 1897 so that she, or a member of the Church, can call without delay.**

**If you have any enquiry about baptism, marriage or another service, or if there is something else you would like to discuss with a member of the team, please make an appointment, through the Church Office (020 8462 1373) or by emailing:**

**[info@stmaryshayeskent.co.uk](mailto:info@stmaryshayeskent.co.uk)**

## **MEET THE TEAM**

This month we will hear from another team at St Mary's, who serve the community by supporting the homeless in Bromley. A real example of service and compassion in the community. As Bishop Jonathan shared recently, 'Compassion should be the hallmark of our churches and of our character as followers of Christ.'

**Rev'd Amanda**

### **St Mary's and Bromley Homeless**

For many years St Mary's has provided food for The Bromley Homeless Shelter for a season (running roughly from November to March/April). Circumstances and requirements are constantly changing for Bromley Homeless and we have tried our best to be adaptable in our methods of provision. One of their new ventures is to run a Supper Club four times a year to help grow their team of supporters. The Supper Club will take place at Bromley United Reformed Church where their Advice Centre operates. This will enable them to show how things are actually run on the premises and for some of the homeless people to explain a little more about their lives. St Mary's have agreed to help with the first supper by providing the dessert course for 20 people. It would be wonderful to hear from anyone who is willing to provide a dessert and/or in addition be interested to help serve on the night.

You may be interested to know some of the background to our association with Bromley Homeless. Originally a team of cooks from St Mary's provided and served meals at Bromley Baptist Church and later at Bromley Methodist Church. There were also a number of members of the team who were 'Cook Only'. We provided a choice of 3 main courses

and 3 puddings. Our guests ate communally and we enjoyed the opportunity to interact with them, before, during and after the meal.

With the onset of Covid things had to change and the guests were put into hotel accommodation and not allowed to meet communally for meals. If we wished to continue providing food it was clear we needed to have a re-think of how we could continue to serve our meals whilst following the restrictions put upon us all. For the 2020/21 and 2021/22 seasons we simplified our menu providing two main courses (one being vegetarian) and two puddings in a one-pot format and with the addition of a selection of fruit. These were delivered to Bromley United Reformed Church for guests to collect individually on the evening.

In 2022 things changed again and we began providing lunch fortnightly in individual containers which could be used on the day for the homeless people attending the Advice Centre or frozen for future use.

As things go forward, we will possibly need to again change our method of provision to meet current requirements. Thankfully our team has always proved themselves very adaptable. If anyone is interested in becoming part of the Cook Team in whatever format is agreed they would be most welcome.

**Elizabeth Barclay**



## **ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING 17 APRIL**

It was encouraging to see some 40 parishioners attending our Annual Parish Church Meeting in the Church. Rector Amanda ably presided. Unfortunately, no nominations had been received for the role of Churchwarden. It is hoped in the near future to spread the role and to appoint two Churchwardens and two Assistant Churchwardens. Stuart Spence was elected as an Assistant Churchwarden. Yvonne Pickford retired as Churchwarden and flowers and a gift to husband Jim were presented in grateful thanks on behalf of St Mary's. Mary Rowedder, as Electoral Roll Officer, presented a report that there are 150 on our Roll at present. New PCC members elected: Olivia Truelove-Dodds and Sue Powell. Mary Stannard and Rosemary Smith have agreed to stay on the PCC for a further year. They join those already elected: Kate Davies,

David James and Stuart Spence. Ed Roberts (Treasurer) and Clare Scriven (Safeguarding Officer) are co-opted members of the PCC. Yvonne Pickford (Verger) was elected on to the PCC. Thanks were expressed to Roger Rowe and Mark Willoughby who were retiring. Ed Roberts, our Honorary Treasurer, referred those present to the Accounts and to his notes, which had been available to the congregation since the beginning of April. Reports were received from Yvonne Pickford covering both Churchwarden and Fabric Review matters, PCC Secretary and Deanery Synod (Mary Whytock) and Safeguarding Report (Clare Scriven). The deaths of those whose funerals had been taken by Reverend Amanda during the last year were noted. The evening concluded with thanks being expressed to Reverend Amanda and her husband, Stuart, for their enthusiasm and hard work to bring people into St Mary's. Reverend Amanda's Review for 2024 is published here.

**Mary Whytock (PCC Secretary)**

## **ST MARY THE VIRGIN HAYES ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2024 - RECTOR'S REPORT**

Firstly, I would like to begin by saying a big thank you for the continued support that I have been shown, by so many. Stuart and I have enjoyed being part of the church family at St Mary's.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say particular thank you to Yvonne and Brenda and PCC for all their hard work, often in the background, unseen, which has enabled the work and worship of St Mary's, and seen St Mary's go from strength to strength. I would like to start with some the highlights from the past year.

It has been wonderful to welcome new people to the church, with new families and children. And for some new services and groups too. In fact, as I was thinking back it was hard to ensure that I was remembering it all. It was encouraging to continue with the Carols by the Tower service and reintroduce the Crib service and see all our children share the Nativity with the church and many from the wider community, and see both so well received. Christmas Day service was also a very joyous occasion.

It was also a privilege to take part and lead the 'When Christmas Hurts' service at Hayes Free Church.

Working again with fellow Christians, in January it was lovely to celebrate a new Christian Unity service with Churches Together in Hayes, at St Mary's. Churches Together in Hayes have continued to

collaborate, with the addition of Coney Hill Baptist Church, after Deep Water Baptists, their original church plant, returned from Hayes Village Hall after many years. Also, to have our Pancake Party that welcomed families from within and outside the church.

It has been a particular positive to have our first Churches Together Lent course at Coney Hill Baptists, where it was encouraging for so many from St Mary's to join with other Christians and share experiences about living and working in our community. Also, to focus on developing 'confidence' in sharing the Christian message through lives lived out in community in Christ, developing confidence, through conviction, community, compassion, consistency, competence and courage.

It was also great witness to Hayes to have many of the churches represented at the Good Friday Walk of Witness, a time of prayer and song, culminating in a service at Hayes Free. This service was also well attended by many of the churches and it was again wonderful to see so many from St Mary's at there, and have the privilege of leading and preaching in the first part of the service and have St Mary's participate by reading at that service.

Working with the other churches as a team at Messy Church on a second Wednesday of the month, 3.15-5pm at the village hall, has also been wonderful outreach to families and children of Hayes. It would be lovely to see some others from St Mary's sharing in this wonderful ministry of introducing families to God and the Gospels.

A big thank you for the continued faithful ministry of all those involved in the community coffee mornings, bereavement and those who live alone group, Bible Studies, Charity coffee mornings and Warm Space, all of which provide much needed support and fellowship to the congregation and the wider community alike.

But I am delighted to thank also our new groups, Twinkles for 0-4s and their families, although the numbers have been a bit alarming at times. What a problem to have but something we will need to reflect and pray on, so we do not need to turn away any who come to us. Also, our newly formed Craft Group. The team have been responsible for so much outreach and impact in the community, with the angels in Advent, hearts at Valentines and chicks for new life at Easter for St Mary's Preschool and Easter Day congregation, which welcomed many new visitors, thanks be to God!

And thanks also to other new groups that are supporting the work and outreach of St Mary's: The Prayer Group, Worship, Communications, Technology and Digital Giving Teams. It is so encouraging how many people are stepping forward, for God, developing

their spiritual vocations, taking part in the Diocesan discernment process and Hearing and Speaking God's word courses. All to ensure that the message St Mary's has to share about the risen Christ, is getting out into the community. Other ways the community have been welcomed and supported have been through a wedding blessing, many baptisms, and also through our Burial of Ashes and Funeral ministry, where many families have been supported and brought into the love of God. Thanks to Yvonne and others that have stepped up to verge and support at these services. It has been a privilege to be given these opportunities to reveal God's love and peace through the St Mary's family.

A family made up of all I have previously mentioned, as well as our Children, Young People, Home Communion, Intercessor, Mother's Union, Servers, Sides People Teams and Singing Group and Worship Group, the tea and coffee makers, the cleaners, those who polish the brass and so much more. Looking forward I hope that we will be able to work together to engage more with families and young people, building on the growing schools and family work. May we through dialogue and discernment together focus our mission here in this place; I am hoping for an opportunity for us to gather to develop a shared vision of how St Mary's can fully live out the Gospel here in Hayes.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for everything you do. If I have omitted to mention anyone, please let me know and I will thank you. There are so many who ensure the life of St Mary's provides a beacon to the community of Hayes; know that we all have a part to play in God's kingdom here in Hayes. The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few.

**The Reverend Amanada Spence**

**CHRISTIAN AID WEEK**  
**12<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> May 2024**



Gift Aid envelopes will be available in Church on **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May**, the start of Christian Aid Week this year. Please use them for your donations as this will add 25p to every £1 you donate.

**David Rowedder**

*For more on Christian Aid Week see p13.*

# Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

Thank you all once again for all your healing prayers which have enabled me to return to Mothers' Union meetings. It was lovely to be back amongst friends again and I look forward to the coming meetings.

On 18<sup>th</sup> March Allan Evison very kindly agreed to lead this meeting. He chose "Mothers and Motherhood" and started his talk by outlining three reasons why he had chosen his topic. 1. Our church is named after the mother of Jesus, thus St Mary the Virgin, Hayes. 2. As members of the Mothers' Union we are part of a world-wide organisation concerned with all aspects of motherhood and family life; and 3. It was just one week after Mothering Sunday or the modern Mothers' Day.

Allan explained that it would not be a bible study as such nor a sermon but would draw upon parts of the Gospels of Luke and of John to illustrate the significant developments in Mary's life as he sees them, and later on talking about his own dear mother and her influences in his life.

The main part of the talk concluded with a summary of Mary's special qualities as a mother: she trusted in God's word; she was strong in body and mind: unafraid to listen and to question; resilient; had love in her heart; confident; and perceived and shared joy.

Discussion then opened up, sharing our own experiences of our mothers. There was an empathy and recollection as Allan pointed out that his mother had experienced three world wars, namely born in 1914 just before the outbreak of WW1, married in 1938 as WW2 was about to restart hostilities and giving birth to his sister in the Blitz and subsequent evacuation from London in the 1940's; his arrival in post-war Britain in 1945 with rationing continuing for many years, then the fear of the Cold War. She too, like other members' mothers, was resilient and caring, and in a phrase which Allan had used at her funeral, "she was always there". Everyone very much enjoyed his talk and the opportunity to reflect on their own mothers.

Five of our members attended the Lady Day service at St Augustine's. It had been postponed due to the fact that 25<sup>th</sup> March fell in Holy Week.

In April we welcomed Glynis Carpenter - The Diocese of Rochester project manager and commissioned speaker for Social Policy. She explained her role as Social Policy Project Manager for Rochester Diocese and especially Domestic Abuse. It was an interesting and

informative talk touching on many of the things that I have written about in the last few issues of *Hayes Herald*.



Our Spring Members Meeting and AGM was on 27th April at Christ Church Milton-next-Gravesend. The new Safeguarding Policy was adopted into our regulations.

Our next meeting is a social gathering on **7th May at 11.00 am** at **'The New Inn' Hayes.**

On **20th May, 10.30am in the Meetings Room**, Janice and Humphrey Clarke will talk on **"Threads Through Time."** The story of the Creation through embroidery and applique. This was recently on display in Rochester Cathedral. Any member of the congregation is welcome to join us as it should be very interesting.

If you have any other wishes or ideas for speakers, or for a Summer outing, please let me know as I am trying to cover the rest of the year from July on.

Please consider whether you would be willing to serve on the committee for Mothers' Union. We need to have more helpers to set up the meetings room, and ideas for planning our programme.

Looking forward to seeing you all at our next meeting. Bring along a friend with you.

**Avril Ashford 0208 468 7785**

## ST. MARY'S CHURCH DIARY MAY 2024

**Morning Prayers take place daily at 9.15am Monday to Wednesday on Zoom\* and Tuesdays to Fridays in Church throughout the year (except Bank Holidays).**

<b>Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup></b>	10.30am-12.00noon	Coffee Morning for the bereaved and those living on their own**
	12.30-3.00pm	Warm Welcome Space**
	2.45pm	Hayes Men's Fellowship In OCS

### EASTER 6

<b>Saturday 4<sup>th</sup></b>	12.30pm	Churchyard Tidy Up
<b>Sunday 5<sup>th</sup></b>	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Morning Praise Sunbeams session** (age 3-6)
<b>Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup></b>	11.00am-12.15pm	Bible Study**
<b>Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup></b>	12.30-3.00pm	Warm Welcome Space**

### Ascension Day

<b>Thursday 9<sup>th</sup></b>	10.30am-12.30pm	Craft Group**
	6.30pm	Holy Communion BCP

### EASTER 7

<b>Sunday 12<sup>th</sup></b>	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Parish Communion CW Blaze session** (age 6-10)
<b>Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup></b>	12.30-3.00pm	Warm Welcome Space**
<b>Friday 17<sup>th</sup></b>	10.00-11.00am	Twinkles – singing, story, snacks**

### PENTECOST

<b>Sunday 19<sup>th</sup></b>	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	9.15am	Fresh Start



	10.30am	Morning Praise
<b>Monday 20<sup>th</sup></b>	10.30am	Mothers' Union meeting**
<b>Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup></b>	11.00am-12.15pm	Bible Study**
<b>Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	12.30-3.00pm	Warm Welcome Space**
<b>Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	10.30am-12.30pm	Craft Group**

## TRINITY

<b>Sunday 26<sup>th</sup></b>	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Parish Communion CW Blaze session** (age 6-10)

\* for Zoom link please contact the Church office

\*\* denotes Meetings Room

**The church is also open for private prayer on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10.00am to 12.00noon unless there is an event taking place. Details of these will be given in the weekly pew sheets.**



## A RECENT BAPTISM IN THE PARISH

Winifred Lila Louise Jean Start

## HAYES MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The fifth month of the year is expressive of possibilities, of what **may** happen, and even more certain are our plans during this May for our growing membership at the Hayes Men's Fellowship.

We start on the 1<sup>st</sup> with a talk by Joe Mendell who describes himself as a transplanted American, resident in the UK since 1978. His chosen subject this time is "US Presidents – Bits and Pieces". Does that express the possibility of Presidents Trump and Biden being mentioned perhaps – just maybe?

Later on, our monthly Outing takes in a visit to Biggin Hill. Then we shall continue on into Sussex to visit Nymans Gardens, expressing our hope that all may be displaying burgeoning Spring foliage and blooms. You may browse our full programme of activities on our website at [www.hayesmensfellowship.org](http://www.hayesmensfellowship.org).

We now report on our recent activities starting with our last outing which was to Chichester. In terms of enjoying the city, there was much to see:

- The Market – We were fortunate to be there on market day with dozens of stalls in the streets surrounding the impressive Chichester Cross monument. All manner of products were on sale.
- The Novium Museum – Chichester was settled by the Romans who named it Noviomagus Reginorum. The Novium Museum makes a big feature of the area's Roman connections and covers the site of a Roman bath house, the foundations of which can be seen.
- The Bishop's Palace Gardens – This large and tranquil garden is to the South of the Cathedral and largely fills the space between it and the remains of the Roman City wall. The remains of the wall provide tremendous views of the cathedral and the city.

After lunch we assembled in good time for our guided tours of the cathedral. We split into three groups each with its own guide for a 75-90-minute tour of the cathedral including its history and details of the monuments and artworks it now contains. We learnt that construction of the cathedral began in 1075 after the Norman Conquest as a seat for the Bishop who had previously been located in Selsey. The construction was described as Romanesque with round topped arches with stone from the Isle of Wight. Not long after, fires in 1114 and 1187 destroyed the cathedral's wooden roof and eastern end. After extensive fund raising, a stone-vaulted roof was built, and parts of the building were remodelled. This time some of the stone used was from Caen in Normandy. Further problems were encountered when the original spire collapsed into the building. This was replaced in around 1402 and a separate bell tower

was added (Chichester is the only cathedral in the country with such a feature). These later developments included pointed arches which were then known to be stronger than the curved variety.

A feature of the interior of the cathedral is the amount of modern artwork used in a variety of ways, e.g. cast aluminium to adorn the pulpit, a stained-glass window by Marc Chagall and a painting in one of the chapels by Graham Sutherland. On the way back we expressed our appreciation for our driver Steve and organiser Ray Lyddall for this excellent outing. Not too far to travel and a good blend of organised activity and free time. All with the bonus of the companionship of HMF members and guests - and sunshine!



Our last walk was along the Thames towpath from Kingston to Richmond, undertaken by six enthusiastic members including their volunteer leader Brian Wood. There were many interesting sights to view on the 4.78 mile route, such as: the magnificently engineered Teddington Lock which was built in 1858 and marks the boundary of the tidal Thames; the varied scenery; and many beautiful riverside and historical properties including Ham House with its royal connections to Elizabeth I. Kingston itself was the coronation site from AD838 to AD975 of 7 Saxon kings, hence its name. Kingston Bridge was originally called Clattern Bridge when it was built in Saxon times and was the first bridge upstream of London Bridge.

Four islands were passed: **Steven's Eyot** is the first small one followed by **Trowlock Island** which now has 29 bungalows; **Glover's Island** which was bought in 1900 by a wealthy local resident and gifted

to Richmond Corporation on the condition that it must never be developed; the most famous is **Eel Pie Island**. This has an interesting history stretching back to the original Inn from 1743 selling ale and pies, rebuilt in 1830 as a hotel hosting ballroom dancing during the 1920s and 30s, becoming a music venue for famous performers of jazz, R&B and rock (such as the Rolling Stones) until closure enforced on health grounds. Its most notorious occupants were the largest hippie commune in Britain until a mysterious fire in 1971 which destroyed the site. It is now a private island, jointly owned by 120 inhabitants living in 50 homes plus 3 boatyards and Twickenham Rowing Club.

Our last Meeting had a talk advertised as “50 years with London Buses” by John Wagstaff, whose working career in public transport started in 1966 at the head office of London Transport. His interest in buses had been sparked at the age of five or six as he gazed out of his front bedroom window of his parents’ house at 168 East Dulwich Grove at the bus stop opposite, serving the busy no.37 route from Peckham to Hounslow. He became expert at identifying the individual characteristic sounds from the various types of bus in use and declared in a school essay in 1966 that he wanted to join London Transport “for the good of humanity rather than financial considerations”. He applied and was accepted the same year.

His role turned out to be in “Public Relations” so he was tasked with answering public complaints by letter and telephone. The most common subject category in a card-coding system seemed to be “Bus Not Stopping” followed by “ITTA/ITTB” standing for “Insufficient Time To Alight (or) Board”. He continued in this role through various promotions on the way. Then everything changed in 1984 with the creation of London Regional Transport to oversee rather than operate buses directly, as privatisation took hold through separate operating companies, Selkent for example in this area. So Public Relations was no more and John was asked to become Principal to the Head of the newly-formed Unit for Disabled Passengers. This was in line with one of the clauses in the 1984 London Regional Transport Act that this new organisation would take into account the needs of passengers with disabilities. Research had suggested that at least one in ten existing passengers had a physical disability. One advance perhaps was to rename the unit more clearly as “Access in London”. As the years passed there was progress: so-called “kneeling” buses, followed by ramps and improved highlighting of handrails etc. accompanied by on-board visual and audible announcements of stops and route destinations.

John’s rather belated opportunity to obtain a coveted Passenger Carrying Vehicle Licence (P.C.V.) came in 1990, to enable him actually

to drive and test the relative merits of proposed “accessible” buses. But by 2000 his contribution to making London’s transport services more accessible had almost reached its natural conclusion. The bus fleet (now under TfL) was rapidly approaching full accessibility, Croydon Tramlink had been launched with full accessibility, and experts in engineering rather than him were needed for the ultimate goal of full accessibility on the Underground. So John decided on early retirement and left TfL at the age of 53 in 2001.

But a new phase was about to begin in his working life. John finally became a full-time bus driver from Norwood Garage, mainly on the “satisfactorily challenging” (his choice and description) route 176 from Penge to Tottenham Court Road until his retirement in 2017.

More next and every month.

*Allan Evison*, HMF Chairman    *Graham Marsden*, HMF Secretary

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## **CHRISTIAN AID WEEK – 12<sup>TH</sup> – 18<sup>TH</sup> MAY**

Christian Aid is urging its supporters to “push back against poverty” this Christian Aid Week by bearing in mind the coming General Election.

The charity says that “people hoping to represent us” in the next UK Parliament will soon be on our doorsteps, “vying for our vote”.

Christian Aid says that these would-be MPs will: “be in listening mode, keen to hear what makes the voters in their community tick.” And so, urges the charity, Christians can use this opportunity to “show them that your church cares about poverty, and tell them that you expect them to act on poverty too, if they are elected.”

This year the charity has launched the ‘70K Challenge for May’, encouraging its supporters to do a sponsored “Move 70km during May. Walk, run, cycle, however you move is up to you.” Details at: <https://fundraise.christianaid.org.uk>

*PP May 2024*

## **EASTER – IS NOT JUST FOR EASTER!**

The Gospel of Luke is full of journeys. It begins with a journey (Mary travelling the length of the country to visit her cousin Elizabeth), and at its heart is Jesus' walk to Jerusalem, there to face His death and resurrection. Then we read of the short walk to Emmaus by two of His disciples, when the risen Christ opens their eyes to understand why; and the gospel closes with Jesus sending out His apostles to preach the gospel to "all nations". Which of course continues today in the ongoing journey and mission of the Church.

Yet, it is so easy to walk in the company of Jesus and to misunderstand Him. That was the case with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They were close followers of Jesus and knew Him extremely well. In fact, Cleopas most likely was a near relative of Jesus according to many scholars. They had listened to His teaching, and watched him transform the lives of so many for good.

But they couldn't understand why God would allow a person so strikingly wise and good and innocent to die so tragically. Moreover, who held out so much promise for the people of Israel. How could God allow their hopes to be so cruelly dashed in this way?

At this point, as they walked, Jesus joined their conversation and gently nudged them into telling Him what it was that was so animating them.

They can barely believe that anyone in the Jerusalem area could not have heard what had happened over the previous few days.

Why, responded the disciples, the death of this beautiful and innocent man. Jesus the Rabbi from Nazareth; no.... He was more than a Rabbi, He was a prophet ....no, indeed we thought He was the Messiah the one who was coming to redeem Israel. But now.....

Their response trails off in an agony of disappointment but also confusion because just before they had set out, they had heard that some of the women had found the tomb empty. In fact, they were so wrapped in their grief and dashed hopes that they failed to ask the name of their new travelling companion.

Jesus is direct in His response to them. 'O foolish ones...' He begins and takes them through the whole of the Old Testament, including the prophets. What had been the vision of the prophets? That all nations including Israel were in rebellion against God, and because of this there would be a coming judgement. But there would be a redeemer, a saviour who would come through Israel and everyone who believing in Him would receive forgiveness of their sins through His name.

The good news, the gospel, is the coming of a Messiah for the whole world. Had not God said to Abraham that the world would be blessed through one of his descendants?

Cleopas and his companion – and indeed the other disciples - would now need to view what Jesus had accomplished on the cross, not through the eyes of the world or their cultural tradition but through the eyes of scripture. Jesus had suffered and died not just for Israel. Not just Rome. Not just the Greek world. But all nations and all generations that were to follow. Wow!

In our Church Bible Studies over the past several months we have been working through the gospel of Luke. Now, we are going back to look forward. Going back to look at the lives and teaching of Abraham, Moses, the Kings, the prophets.....and how all these pointed forward to the coming of Christ.

**David James**

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## **LONE WORKING 'IS MAKING MILLIONS OF PEOPLE ILL'**

The rise in lone working and the insecurity of increasing numbers of jobs are “making millions of us poorer and ill,” says a new report from Christian-based think tank, Theos.

In *'The Ties That Bind'* Theos looks at how better work can be created “by paying attention to the social dynamics – the love, even – in our workplaces.”

The report, written by ethical entrepreneur Tim Thorlby, looks at evidence around the social and health impacts of the rise in lone working and the growth of insecure work. It argues that a loss of ‘mutuality’ between the employed and their employers is making millions of people poorer and ill.

Theos estimate that before the pandemic, 27 per cent of workers worked alone for a substantial proportion of the time. Now, 59 per cent of the workforce works alone for at least some of the week.

While admitting that “lone working can provide real benefits to workers who enjoy a flexibility premium,” the Theos report points out that it carries risks. “These risks are highest where little attention is paid to the quality and dignity of working relationships, and where employees are treated as ‘out of sight, out of mind’.”

The report calls for action to prevent the loss of connection between workers and protect the health of those working in these environments.

The UK has one of the most flexible labour markets in the developed world, explains the report, and this can deliver benefits, both to individual workers and to the wider economy. But there are downsides. In the UK today, the Living Wage Foundation estimate that nearly one in five workers – 6.1 million people (19 per cent of all workers) – are in insecure work. Within this, they calculate that more than half (3.4 million, 11 per cent of all workers) are in work that is both insecure and low paid.

Theos calls for fair hourly pay at or above a real living wage; predictable hours and income which are changed only with fair notice; connection for workers, who should be well managed and supported and feel 'part of the team'; and healthy work, where working supports good physical and mental health.

***Rev'd Peter Crumpler***  
***former Communications Director for the Church of England***

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**The Old Church Schools, Hayes, has 3 halls – two large and one medium, and a committee room available for hire.**

**For further information please contact Julie Clark on 07538 254508 or email [ocs.hayes@hotmail.com](mailto:ocs.hayes@hotmail.com)**

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*Photo on p.11 by Graham Marsden*

**Items for the June issue by 16<sup>th</sup> May please. Copy to the Editor. May magazines will be ready for distribution on 1<sup>st</sup> June.**

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