



Open Door

July 2022

THE OCCASIONAL MAGAZINE OF ST MARY-AT-FINCHLEY

An Audience with the Pope



On June 8th, Yevgeny, Pastor of the Ukrainian Church which meets here at St Mary -at - Finchley, was granted an audience with His Holiness, Pope Francis, at the Vatican. Through the offices of his friend, Pastor Yevgeny was able to meet with the Pope and to receive his support and a blessing, as well as discussing the ongoing situation in the Ukraine.

The stark reality of this ongoing situation is described on page 4. For more news about fund raising, both for Ukraine and the NHS, please turn to page 5.

A few words from Francesco, our new Curate

Becoming an Eco Church.

At St Mary's we are aspiring to become an Eco Church. I wonder what sort of image that conjures up in your mind? Solar panels? Heat pumps? Insulation? LED lights? It could be any or all of these, but just as the Church is essentially the people rather than the building – though the building used by the people is very important too – so Eco Church whilst involving the building is more importantly about what we, the church people, do.

For a number of years we have had a Green and Fair group which has championed Fair Trade through the choices we make, as well as highlighting the importance of our environment.

To become an effective Eco Church, fulfilling God's instruction to be faithful stewards of creation, we need to live our lives in such a way as to bring about the kingdom of God, fulfilling his will.

The mantra for living sustainably is *reduce, reuse, recycle*. Of those I suspect recycle comes to mind most often but the real starting place, the bedrock of sustainable living, is reduce – everything flows from that.

In the extreme hot weather we have become even more conscious of the precious and limited resource of water – we can be careful in the water we use. With energy prices rocketing it makes ever more sense to avoid unnecessary consumption – switching off lights and electrical appliances that are not needed. These have become pressing necessities but they are habits we should adopt all the time if we are to live sustainably and enjoy the world entrusted to all of us.

We have appointed Lindsay Hettrick as our Eco Champion, look out for ideas for sustainable living in notices, displays and on our website as we develop our knowledge and insight.

We can become an Eco Church which is ultimately the Church God calls us to be – citizens of his eternal kingdom.

The Rector

Loneliness

They tell us that loneliness is one of the hazards of modern life, but you can't go further back than Adam, and in one of the creation stories in Genesis we are told that Adam was lonely. God saw that it was not good for people to live alone and created a helper, a companion, a partner for him.

Since then human beings have mostly lived in family groups but in modern times families are more mobile and more fragile and more people find that they, not of their own choice, are living on their own.

I never thought that I would admit to being lonely.



As those of you who I had the pleasure to meet last Sunday may remember, I am Francesco, and I am most happy to have joined the congregation at St Mary-at-Finchley.

In the past three years, I have been training for ordination at St. Mellitus College.

At the same time, I have been doing pastoral work and assisting worship at St. Mary-the-Virgin in East Barnet - a church very much like ours, made of ancient stone, but atop a green hill.

As a person, I am creative, like to meet new people, and I am fascinated to discern God's presence in our lives and in the world around us. In my previous roles in the lives of other parishes, I have worked to increase engagement with local communities, pursue artistic projects, and develop a life of collective prayer. Having been born on the slopes of Mount Etna in Sicily, now having lived in London for almost ten years, I have had incredible opportunity to encounter culture and diversity.

Now I look very much forward to my time with you, and getting to know you. As I do so, I hope to help St Mary's to witness the Gospel of Jesus, as we live and witness our faith together in beautiful and interesting Finchley.

Francesco Aresco

Loneliness (continued)

Being thoroughly introverted I have always been very happy with my own company. But then my husband died and I discovered just how blessed I had been throughout my life. I grew up in a large household, five children, a grand mother, and a long term lodger – a household of nine. I very rarely had a room of my own for very long and at times shared a bed with one of my sisters.

My husband and I became a couple when I was fourteen and married when I was 20. Our family grew too, with three children and various friends of theirs who moved in and stayed. Being lonely was not something that ever occurred to me. But now I am having to learn how to live on my own.

What a blessing being part of a church can be! St Mary's Pastoral group are aware that many people in our congregation are, like me, struggling a bit with this and would like to hear if we can help.

Claire Disbrey

PASTORAL CARE

In our series of Pastoral Care Articles, we visit the Practical Guide to Pastoral Care.

The Fundamentals of Being Your Neighbour's Carer.

Who is my neighbour you might ask? Now, that is an open-ended question. It might be the man next door, the residents of the state next to yours (or borough, as in the case of the United Kingdom) or, further still, the country a few hours flight from yours. The aim is to extend that healing power of Pastoral Care to those in need.

Where then do we start from?

The family is the smallest unit to start with and then, we move into the community.

Pastoral Care UK is an organisation that seeks to support individuals, churches, and Christian organisations to develop good practice in Pastoral Care. They have published their Guidelines which is available online for public consumption.

The act of sustaining each other through love, either in a formal or informal setting by: listening, encouraging and empowering, visiting, hospitality, advocacy, mentoring, befriending, celebrating, helping practically, prayer, enabling and materially providing are some identified modes.

These are Christian Pastoral Care models which are towards being more like Jesus Christ.

We should note however that this care is offered to all Faiths and those of no-Faith respectively. Examples are the practice of Pastoral care by Chaplains in Hospices and the story of the good Samaritan.

Ensuring the provision of care reaches the desired target is another practical step to achieve.

In the case of the Family - this is easy as the unit is small and manageable.

In Churches, the bigger the church, the more complex this is. All parishioners are encouraged to be each other's carer through *Bench Policing* - watching out for the congregant that sits next to you. Some designated officers in the church - wardens, safeguarding officers, Deacons and the Rector - play more specialised roles enhanced by their training.

On a wider scale there is *Churches Together*: in a community, the Diocese and indeed the Church of England. Please also note Pastoral Care extends to Governments and international bodies.

Paying attention to your spouse, your children, your relatives would enable you to know when they are happy, sad, perturbed and needing befriending that encourages catharsis. A problem shared is a problem half solved.

With Parishioners, a change in demeanour or absence should send alarms ringing.

With larger communities, it is often staring you in the face. Knife crimes and delinquency in our youths in the UK is an example which we should have acted on earlier since the increasing reports of antisocial behaviours are an early warning sign.

Inclusiveness and diversity have been identified as alarm bells in churches and the church in general and it is worth noting this is being addressed at local and national levels.

Awareness training and guidance is considered Pastoral Care and should be part of each Parish's Mission Action Plan as advised by the Diocese of London.

You are advised to visit the Pastoral Care UK Guidelines online for better understanding and awareness.

You are also encouraged to watch out for training sessions locally or otherwise for further practical skill development in Pastoral care.

Awareness is the key.

'Deji Makanjuola

THE REALITY OF SUFFERING IN UKRAINE

We have seen on TV and read about the suffering in Ukraine, and we are all praying for Ukrainians in this situation. But below I print a message I received in mid July from a friend of a friend of my Ukrainian guest. This to me brings home the terrible reality of it all.

Please keep considering whether you can ask anyone to host people like this family.

"On 24/02/2022 I received a message from work that my family and I had to stay at home because the war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine had begun. From that moment a massive mortar artillery shelling began, as well as the shelling of the city of Mariupol from the air and the sea.

The situation got worse day by day. The infrastructure of our city has now been destroyed by 90%.

My family and I had to stay day and night in the basement of my parents' private house. Food was not prepared in advance, so we had to cook on a fire - from leftovers of leftovers. We had little food left. We ate once a day in small portions because of the lack of food.

It was very cold in the house: daytime temperatures were 3 °C, and once it reached 0 ° C. Each of us was wearing a winter hat, three sweaters, two trousers and several pairs of socks just to prevent freezing to death in that basement. Electricity, water supply, heat supply networks in the city were disconnected.

We had to endure being hit by bombs. I can remember they hit our yard five times; unable to bear it, we urgently ran to the city's air raid shelter in the Palace

of Culture Chaika. There was no food in the bomb shelter, we ate only jam and drank it down with industrial water. There could be no talk about observing the simplest hygiene measures. The next day, when I came home, I saw that my parents' house had completely burned down and could not be restored.

On 10/03/2022, when we were in the air raid shelter of Palace of Culture, Chaika, the building was shelled by various weapons. As a result a fire started and we had to leave the bomb shelter at one in the morning and run towards the country road. Along the way our column was stopped by machine gun fire. A Russian serviceman forbade us to go through. In the morning at our request they let us through.

For some time we had to live in a half-ruined house of my friends. At that time, we decided to leave the city of Mariupol through the Russian Federation and make our way to Poland. There was no exit to the territory of Ukraine. The Russian military do not allow civilians to go to the territory of Ukraine; moreover, they often simply shoot civilians. But it was the only way to get out.

At the Russian border, we went through passport control and filtration, this procedure took 12 hours. We went through it on the street. It was very humiliating. And finally - after yet more travel we made our way and arrived in Warsaw. Now, I don't even know how to continue to live, where to live and where to send my children to study, where to work. I have only briefly described the situation. It was very scary for my family, because I saw a lot of deaths around everywhere. Dead bodies were common

Fundraising News

A message of thanks from Pastor Yevgeny

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you at St Mary's Church for your support and generous contribution to help my fellow Ukrainians.

My special thanks to Nigel, Emmanuel, Paul and the Barnet Ukraine Assistance Group (Cllr Alison Cornelius, Amy, Angela, Danusia, Dorina and Vikky) .

I have accepted the fact that "my Mother is gone" but not forgotten.

God Bless You All
Yevgeny

Letter of thanks from Royal Free Hospital



How the fundraising event of the 23rd April 2022 helped to support Ukrainian families

As well as Pastor Yevgeny's journeys to Ukraine to deliver supplies to his country, some toys and supplies are delivered to families who have made their way to Rumania camps and orphanage.

Amy Matthews, one of the founders of airxfoundation.org, emailed, "They (*the families*) had travelled without a single toy so they were so happy to have something other than food to make them smile." A big thanks to St Mary's church for their donation of £663.67. It would not have been possible to help these families without your generous funds. We are very grateful." The photos on this page (printed with permission of the families), show how simple things bring such pleasure.

Amy also stated that they have weekly trucks going to Ukraine and the surrounding area, bringing aid and that they still require more donations.

For full list of items needed please visit:

www.airxfoundation.org

Thank you

Manny Hammond



The Glory of the Universe

More than 40 years ago I developed an interest in astronomy. I enrolled on a course at the UCL observatory in Mill Hill where they were working on some of the fundamental findings of the astronomer Edwin Hubble.

The Mill Hill observatory is poorly sited, lots of interference from adjacent street lighting on the A41 and vibration from traffic. Nevertheless, they had old but high quality telescopes and on clear nights one could escape the surly bonds of the atmosphere and view the magnificence of God's creation.

Hubble maintained that the universe is not confined to our galaxy as previously thought, but is infinitely bigger and it is expanding. Hubble calculated the rate of expansion by the 'red shift', the change in frequency of the light from distant stars and galaxies as they move rapidly away from us.

These views were controversial from the outset and have subsequently been proved to be in many ways an oversimplification, but the basic premise is correct. I had access at work to an early super-computer which I could run overnight. My observations were to prove inconclusive, other than that the expansion was real but the rate was significantly different to the Hubble figures.

Thus Hubble is immortalised by the space telescope named after him and once the optical 'squint' in the mirror was corrected in orbit, by some very brave astronauts, it gave us the ability to see much further in both distance and time. We could see the most dramatic and detailed views of far distant nebulae and gas clouds where new stars are forming.

In the past few days we have seen the first images from the James Webb space telescope, a far more sophisticated and complex craft. James Webb was the man who ran NASA from 1961 through to the Apollo moon program. His skill was to strike a balance between human space flight and science within NASA. He was instrumental in the development of a space telescope, eventually resulting in Hubble.

The data from the new telescope demonstrates that we can now look back more than 13 billion years, almost to the dawn of God's creation. We will now see more and more of the magnificence of God's universe.

Iain Lyall



Doubting Student

“Hmm, interesting: but I don’t want to go into town one evening a week for two years. I taught evening classes for twenty-five years and that’s enough.”

That was my reaction when Philip suggested I do the diocesan Christian Studies Course. But then came Covid, and an online version of the course came with it.

I signed up in March 2020 just as lockdown began. The content was the same as the in-person course, but it was presented through a web-based system called Moodle. This presented the sessions through texts, film clips, and sound track. It also allowed me to contribute to discussions, submit course work, and interact with tutors and other course members. Whereas in a classroom you need to respond quickly or the moment passes, in Moodle-time speed is not of the essence. I could consider my response, write it out, send it in, and return later to see what others thought. I liked that, and I think I learned more that way. All from home with no riding the Northern line.

The course came in twelve sections. Some added to what I knew, with units on the Old Testament, the Gospels, Paul’s letters, the creed, baptism and eucharist. Other sections focussed on Christian living - how we relate to one another in church, how we behave with others outside; how we live distinctively; and how we pray. One week we spent time each day praying in a way we don’t usually do. We tried to apply what we were learning to our own situation and our own local church. For an assignment on church history, I wrote about changes at St Mary’s since the 1940s, based on people’s stories from our 2010 Oral History Project. Looking at the role of the parish priest, I sought out views from people in our congregation to feed into discussion. They gave me very thoughtful replies, and one of them, Jane Lee, became so interested that she signed up for a one-year Bible and Theology course. A final unit on Mission and Vocation looked at what the Good News is, and how we can share it. We were then sent away to play our own part in God’s work.

I am glad Philip and events nudged me along, and I can vouch for the course. Both the online and in-person versions are running again. If you are interested, do have a word with either Jane or me.

Clare Fletcher



Music News

Evensong Choir Sunday 3rd July 2022



On Sunday 3rd July 2022, Evensong was sung by the adult choir of St Mary-at-Finchley with singers from All Saints, Highgate and Finchley Methodist church.

In the photograph on the left, standing front right is John Richards, son of Ivor Richards (former organist of St Mary at Finchley) whose hymn tune we sang to the words of the famous evening hymn 'The day Thou gavest, Lord, is ended'. Tim Hooper was the organist, Alison Fisher directed, Deji Makanjuola preached and Reverend Philip Davison presided (also singing the responses most expertly)

Alison Fisher

Thoughts of Our Outgoing Organ Scholar

During the past two years as organ scholar at St Mary's, I have gained experience playing the organ in a liturgical setting and have been greatly supported and helped by Alison, Philip and the whole choir. In particular, Alison's musical advice has been invaluable and I have valued the time that we have spent together preparing the music before each service.

The highlight of my organ scholarship has been participation in the two Evensongs which included Wood in D and Stanford in B flat (evening canticles).

I was also fortunate enough to conduct the choir and appreciated the assistance of the superb singers. Next year I will be playing the organ in the Magnificat Institute in Jerusalem whilst I spend my gap year before university in Israel, and I am sure that my training at St Mary's will help me tremendously not only next year but in all my future playing opportunities.

Emanuel Bor

Alison Fisher writes: Our next organ scholar will be Lamgie Yip. She will be with us while studying her 3rd year of an undergraduate music degree at Royal Holloway College. We look forward to welcoming her.

Do you enjoy listening to music? The benefits include lowered pulse, increased awareness, emotional connection. If you **sing in the choir** you get those benefits plus the new friendships made in your voice section (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and across the choir. Learn new skills, develop your singing voice. Why not give it a try?

St Mary-at-Finchley choir rehearses each Thursday evening 8-9.30pm and sings at the 10am Eucharist on average 3 Sundays a month, plus the occasional mid-week evening service. We also try to include 2-3 choral evensongs per year - as we did on Sunday 10th July. On that occasion we were joined by singers from All Saints, Highgate, and Finchley Methodist Church.

You can try us out for a few weeks to see if you like it!
From Alison Fisher, Director of Music.

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Reflections from Bury St Edmunds

Recently moving home from North London to Bury St Edmunds in West Suffolk coincides with the millennial celebrations currently underway to mark the founding of the historic mediaeval Abbey of Bury St Edmunds, regarded for many centuries as one of the richest Benedictine monasteries in England until the 16th century Reformation and the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII in 1539.

For a thousand years the site of Suffolk's cathedral has been one of worship and pilgrimage. The death of Edmund, King of the East Angles, at the hands of the Viking Danes in 869, leads to the building of an Abbey to house the remains of the martyred monarch, who soon afterwards becomes canonised as a saint, resulting in the Abbey becoming a major mediaeval pilgrimage centre.

The abbey's mediaeval site already possesses a history of nearly 300 years of religious use by the 10th century when the remains of St Edmund are relocated some 25 miles from Hoxne to a shrine in Beodricesworth (the modern Bury St Edmunds), though his relics are temporarily moved to London for safe keeping in 1010. The upgrading of the early mediaeval monastery to the status of an Abbey occurs in 1020 when King Canute grants extensive surrounding lands to the small household of Benedictine monks guarding the shrine. The pilgrimage cult of St Edmund continues to flourish during the early and high Middle Ages when he and Edward the Confessor share a role as the patron saints of England until their eventual replacement by St. George during the 15th century.

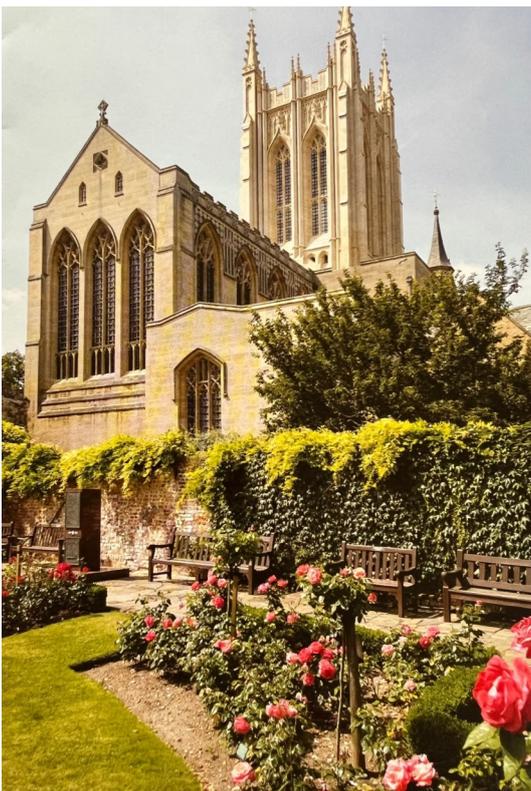
The abbey Church of St Edmund is built in the 11th and 12th centuries on a cruciform plan, with the shrine of St Edmund behind the high altar. The imposing 16th century ruins of the abbey church remained prominently visible today in the colourful and popular Abbey Gardens alongside two very large mediaeval gate houses, which still survive, together with two secondary mediaeval churches within the Abbey precinct which have long functioned as the oldest parish churches serving the town of Bury St Edmunds, originally built on a grid pattern by Abbot Baldwin around 1080.

The two mediaeval churches within the Abbey precinct are (1) the Church of St Denis, rebuilt in 1135 by Abbot Anselm as the Church of St. James, and accorded cathedral status in 1914 as St Edmundsbury Cathedral or more fully the Cathedral Church of the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, created out of the dioceses of Norwich and Ely to minister directly to the historic county of Suffolk as a deliberate move on the part of the Church of England, and Suffolk's only cathedral and (2) the Church of St. Mary, originally built around 1125 and then rebuilt in the Perpendicular style between 1425 and 1435.

Pilgrims and worshippers at St Edmundsbury Cathedral are able to draw upon the faith and inspiration reflected in the St Edmund prayer:

" Christ Jesus. With the life and martyrdom of Saint Edmund, King of East Anglia, you inspired generations of pilgrims in the way of love and hope. Enfold your church in the mystery of your life, that we, in our pilgrimage, may be apostles of your wounded and risen glory, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit are present eternally. Amen"

John Larkin





LUNCHTIME CONCERT -Thursday 6th October at 1pm (save the date!)

Our concert series will resume in early October with a lunchtime recital given by our very own Alison

Fisher (soprano) with pianist Giles Ridley (son of Revd Michael Ridley, former Rector of St Mary-at-Finchley), Alan Maries (Clarinet) and Ruth Ridley (Cello). The programme will last c. 50 mins and includes the Rachmaninov Vocalise, Mozart's famous aria 'Parto, Parto' from 'La Clemenza di Tito' and Brahms' Clarinet sonata (first movement).

All welcome. Seating unreserved. Doors from 12.30pm. Entry is free with retiring collection for the St Mary-at-Finchley Church and Churchyard Fund

For more information please contact Alison Fisher alisonsmartfisher@gmail.com

Please contact Alison if you'd like to help in any way with running the concert series

To read more about the course Clare writes about on page 7, visit The Diocese of London website link below:

https://www.london.anglican.org/articles/eight-students-complete-the-st-edmunds-christian-studies-course/?utm_source=Full+Diocese+list+2021&utm_campaign=db488d79d2-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_06_25_09_32_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_33ff8205dc-db488d79d2-453578561

John Larkin, whose article can be read on page 9, has kindly agreed that his new contact details can be shared with us all. We look forward to receiving further contributions from John in the coming months.



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**ROYAL FREE
CHARITY**

The next concert to support the Royal Free Charity will be held on Saturday 17th September at St Mary-at-Finchley church. More details to follow nearer the time, but for information in the meantime please speak to Manny Hammond.

NB I would like to have interviewed Paul Simpson but he was in disguise and could not be found, so Manny offered instead!!

Interview with Manny Hammond

Manny, as your dear friend, Paul, is in disguise I am very happy that you have agreed to be interviewed in person. Since coming here in 2016 you have made a great impact on the life of the church and are a well-known and valued figure in the community.

I was given the name Emmanuel Edmund Martey Dowuona-Hammond and I was raised in a village located at the outskirts of a town called Jumapo in the Eastern Region of the Gold Coast, now known as Ghana. I lived with my grandparents, my mother and siblings in an amazing colonial style house in the middle of a forest. My grandfather was an army officer who made his living as a cocoa farmer. My mother passed away when I was two years old and I was brought up by my grandmother, half-sister and several carers and was very spoilt!

My grandparents were devout Christians and we attended the Methodist church each Sunday and I went to the Methodist school in Jumapo. The Methodist church had no organ and not enough hymn books to go round so everything was learned by rote. The first hymn I learned was 'The Lord's my Shepherd' and that has stayed with me ever since as a comfort.

I learned and played the traditional drums in Ghana and they are an important means of communication with different tunes for different situations. Our ancestors sent messages by drums as the sound travels for miles.

My father had come to England to study and become a lawyer. When my grandfather died, followed shortly afterwards by my grandmother, my father sent for me, my brother and half brother to join him in England. We travelled by a luxury ship from Accra, full of ex-pats and had great fun playing games with the white children. This was the first time I had seen white people and it helped me to adjust to the different culture I was to encounter when we docked at Liverpool in November 1957.

One of my early memories of life in England was the first time I saw snow. I felt it, I walked on it, slipped on it and tasted it - ha!!

In his role as a diplomat and a trade commissioner for Ghana my father would take us to many important events. However, settling in England as a young boy I was more interested in football and pop culture as this was the era of rock and roll music.

My early education was rather unsettled. At times

we had a private tutor at home and I was sent to a boarding school in Tiverton in Somerset for two terms. Often, I was seen as a curiosity as I was the only black boy there. Eventually we moved to Alperton where I attended the local secondary school. I was liked as I proved to be quite an athlete and footballer. I was offered a trial period with West Ham football club by their manager, Ron Greenwood, and I also had an offer to join Arsenal, but my father felt that my education should come first...

I was able to go to Lugano in Switzerland on a school trip in the term after completing my O levels. Once again, I was the only black person in the party, so I was the main attraction! I loved the place so much that I have returned twice. It holds wonderful memories for me.

It had been my ambition to study agricultural engineering but I needed better public exam grades. I was not able to finish my A levels at Kilburn Polytechnic because my father had to return to Ghana and we went with him. Father soon realised that I couldn't settle down in Ghana and he sent me back to England. However, as a Ghanaian citizen I could not get funding as a student and I was left in limbo.

I was advised by my father that I should make myself available to any opportunities and I joined the Post Office at Kensington Computer Centre as a machine operator. I accepted all the challenges that came my way. I became interested in computers and how they worked. After many years as a section manager, I eventually took early retirement from BT at Osterley. I then set up a catering business which I ran from my home in Hendon where I lived for 40 years.

I married a European Finnish woman in 1975 but after 15 years of marriage we parted, and I took care of the children. I have two wonderful daughters, Niina and Emma and a delightful granddaughter, Nur, who live in Spain. It gave me great pleasure when Emma and her daughter Nur recently came to see me after a three-year absence because of the pandemic. Niina is coming to see me shortly.

I have been a church goer all my life. I learned the importance of being an active Christian from my grandparents and I feel that my grandmother and mother are always watching over and guiding me. I was brought up on the precept 'do to others as you would have them do to you'.

I was confirmed in St James Church, Alperton. When I moved to Finchley, I was curious to see what St Mary's Church was like. I was given a warm welcome by June Bell and Polly Harman and soon

met Paul Simpson in the hall. I began to help him and met Gill and Iain Lyall. Philip took time to explain to me how the church worked, and I joined the hall committee. Since then, I have become a member of the PCC and belong to the Estates committee, as well as the Green and Fair and the social committee and I help with the flower arranging. I have found a ready-made community of people who are like a family to me.

Daily worship is very important to me. I enjoy attending morning prayer during the week as I like the chance to thank God for another day.

I have always loved meeting people from all over the world because I feel we must accept each other. I am fortunate to have time to help raise money for charity. I am an enthusiast of the NHS which is a wonderful gift this country has. In Ghana no money means no treatment and no medicine, so the poorest people suffer twice. My way of raising funds is from music. My mother, who knew she was not going to live to see me grow up, sang a lot to me and I feel my love of music is her legacy to me.

My favourite hymn is 'Abide with me' which always gives me goose pimples when I sing it.

I am always pleased to see new faces in church and enjoy welcoming people at the door. I am most happy in church which I feel is a comfortable and safe place.

I am distressed by so much unfairness in the world especially when I look at the Palestinian/Israeli situation and of course, what is happening in Ukraine. Too many people are being persecuted because of their religion.

I am a bit of a hoarder but my most treasured possession is a guitar I bought in 1972 after my visit to a student centre in Denmark. It has travelled to many places with me, but sadly it is now unplayable!

This article is based on the weekly back page of the Church Times. The final question is always 'who would you choose to be locked in church with?' Manny said he'd like more than one person – Nigel Wildish because he would enjoy talking with him, Polly and June because they are always caring and compassionate and Paul Simpson, my partner in crime, because we share so many interests, enjoy the same sort of music and can have a jolly good laugh together'.

Gladys Vendy



Clockwise from top left: the house Manny grew up in, Manny's father, Manny as a baby, Manny and his brother, Manny and his football team and, finally, his two daughters and his granddaughter