

[www.stgilescamberwell.org](http://www.stgilescamberwell.org)

## Christmas and New Year Thanks and News

*(a message to members of our Congregation, supporters, friends and local community.....)*

### Dear Friends

***Thank you for your prayers and support during 2020.....***

It has been a very tough year for you and everyone who you know.

As we have come to terms with what has been happening to us, and to our world, our economic systems, our governments, it is clear that some have been able to cope with less difficulty than most others.

The Covid-19 pandemic has shown in stark contrast what has been hidden for many decades – the inequality of opportunity, the lack of understanding of how difficult many peoples lives are, the extreme poverty which exists in our world, and material need 'hidden in plain sight' in our neighbours lives.

As we pray for the agencies in our parish who have worked to the limit (and beyond) of their strengths and abilities, many have become the victims of Covid-19 in burnout, ill health, mental and emotional stress.

***I want to thank (as we all try to do) those who have served the needs of others alongside the needs of their own family and friends.***

St Giles' Church remains present as a sign of possibility, of renewal, of strength, of Faith, Hope and Love as it has done for many centuries.

We are here, and remain here, sharing our lives, giving thanks to God, celebrating, mourning, laughing and crying, and we walk alongside others who need our companionship.

I particularly want to highlight the work of:

- [The Central Southwark Community Hub](#) – its Foodbank and associated services of friendship and support – under the leadership of Felicia Boshorin this Charity was in exactly the right place (in our Parish hall in Benhill Road) when the Pandemic struck. It has enlarged its work (with local councillors, Southwark Council, and with the help of its dozens of local volunteers). They moved into the building in Wilson Road to share work with:
- [St Giles' Trust](#): Food parcels have been made up and distributed to their clients (many young people) all over London.

From our Parish Hall the [Camberwell Choir School](#) our St Giles' Charity has been continuing to reach out to local children and families who need the continued contact and fun that music brings - alongside the proven health benefits for youngsters (and all of us!) [www.camberwellchoirschool.org.uk](http://www.camberwellchoirschool.org.uk)

In our St Giles' Centre we host the work of two other Charities

- [The Southwark Refugee Community Forum](#) which has been in the St Giles' Centre since it was founded around 15 years ago. Providing contact, support and material benefits to Refugees in Southwark Borough. [www.srcforum.wordpress.com](http://www.srcforum.wordpress.com)
- [Home and Dry](#) who organise and carry out repairs and refurbishment of properties with vulnerable residents – accredited and working with NHS and health charities to ensure safe, and reliable repairs (and avoiding cowboy builders) [www.homeanddry-maintenance.co.uk](http://www.homeanddry-maintenance.co.uk)

Also we enable other groups to meet, notably [Camberwell Community Choir](#) who also have been reaching out whilst not being able to meet physically.

[www.camberwellcommunitychoir.org](http://www.camberwellcommunitychoir.org)

***All these Charities and organisations were in place before Covid-19 struck and have been hosted happily (and proudly) by St Giles' Church. We will continue to support their work in material ways, and with our encouragement, and through our prayers.***

I wanted to list those organisations, and to give them a 'shout out' as the work they do should, will, and does encourage us to know that many local people are using their talents, energy, and experience to reach out to, and support others. And in doing that many will say their own lives have been enriched by sharing the human stories of hardship, need, and human resilience.

***And of course this is the story of just ONE parish – the same has been happening all over the land (and over the world) as faith groups have been working with others to serve local need as appropriate and timely.***

Please continue to support us, as we need to keep maintaining our buildings to support our own needs, and the needs of our partners. Alongside their work we hope to continue to make application for grants to enable their work (and us to hire out the buildings).

Big shout outs also to:

- [Jazz Live](#) at the Crypt [www.jazzlive.co.uk](http://www.jazzlive.co.uk) who have secured live performance recovery grants from the Government Cultural Recovery Fund.

- **Music at St Giles'** [www.musicatstgiles.com](http://www.musicatstgiles.com) a focussed initiative by the **Friends of St Giles** ready and planning to re-open live musical events in St Giles Church – we can't wait....

**During 2021 we have some essential safety and maintenance work (approx.. £15,000 - £20,000) which will be carried out in the St Giles' Centre and St Giles' Parish Hall (in Benhill Road) we will be specifically reaching out to others to help fund this work which is a strain on our usual regular income and expenditure needs.**

Please continue to support us, with your prayers, your presence, and your financial contributions through regular stewardship and occasional *Thanksgiving* Donations (at times of birthdays or anniversaries) – or tell others about us and how important and vital this work is (do you know any Millionaires ?) 😊

**This Christmas and New Year message will be shared widely... and if you are use such means – on our website is the link to a pdf of this message....please help us to spread this word.....**

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**Thank you, may God bless you, and may we all live through a better year.**

*Fr. Nicholas.*

Fr Nicholas George, Vicar

On behalf of Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Giles' Camberwell