



A year in the life of Christ Church Gipsy Hill



Registered Charity Number: 1133804

Welcome to our annual report for 2015 which will be presented to the Annual Parochial Church meeting in April 2016. We aim to capture a sense of the life of our church, our worship and our community and hope you enjoy reading it!

Our Mission Action Plan 2014-2016

Our purpose



The Mission Action Plan begins with a statement of purpose, and a vision for the future.

We are here to...

- ♦ build up a worshipping community of faith in God that is welcoming to all;
- ♦ equip and encourage one another to live our daily lives as disciples of Jesus Christ,
- ♦ serve God, in the power of the Holy Spirit, in our church, our communities and our world.

Our Mission Action Plan 2014-2016

Our vision

We want Christ Church Gipsy Hill to be a community of faith that, in its welcome and worship, is open and accessible to people of all ages and backgrounds. In the life of the church, its worship and activities, we want to share the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ and grow together in faith and in understanding as we seek God's will in every area of life.

We are committed through accessible and relevant bible based teaching and prayerful worship to equip one another as disciples of Jesus Christ as we serve him in our diverse daily lives. We want to provide space to ask difficult questions, share our doubts and deepen our faith. Through energetic ministry with children and young people we hope to nurture new generations of believers to their own active faith.

We celebrate the love of God for all of creation and recognise our calling to respond to God's love by proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ and by loving and serving our community and one another.

We want to engage prayerfully with the needs and challenges in our local community, our nation and the world, encouraging one another, nurtured and

empowered by the Holy Spirit, to respond individually and collectively to God's call to seek justice and love mercy.



Foreword to the annual report by the vicar

Build. Equip. Serve. Those are the dominant verbs in the statement of purpose we developed in 2014 as the basis of our Mission Action Plan for the next three years.

It has certainly been a year of 'building'. After many years of anticipation, work began upstairs in the Goodliffe Hall at the beginning of the year. Ancient electrics and plumbing were torn out, along with the wonderful but asbestos laden dumb waiter that in earlier generations had enabled food to be transported from the lower kitchen to the upper hall (I wonder if anyone remembers that actually happening!). Over the next seven months up to and including the Summer Holiday our friendly builders gradually transformed the upper and lower halls – new toilets, kitchens, floor coverings and decorations with some great new furniture to make it all modern and comfortable. It is just a building - but we have had an overwhelmingly positive response from the congregation and the local community, not least from our children and young people who now have a really great place to meet for Sunday church and other activities like Legacy. With new accessible facilities for the disabled we have been able to provide a proper welcome for all – which was particularly noticeable when, at the end of the year, we welcomed 60 visitors from the Lunham Road Daycare Centre, over half of which came in wheelchairs. With new furniture and seat coverings in the church to com-

plete the redecoration undertaken in 2013, our worship space also feels much brighter and more comfortable as a place to be. More than anything else, it feels good to have it done!

As you will see from the articles that follow, it has been an exciting year for the church community as our investment in discipleship and community engagement has begun to bear fruit.

Open Door, now in its second year of operation regularly attracts over 25 visitors; Playpen has expanded to accommodate up to 45 children on each of its two days of operation; Inspire, our new evening service has taken on a new format; we are offering twice monthly communion services at the Daycare Centre and we have new home groups, meeting at the weekend and the daytime; and we began our Foundations Course for those wanting to spend time reflecting on some of the core elements of the Christian faith. We have been joined by a great new curate, Sam Whittington, and have seen a steady stream of new people visiting and staying with us.



"Everyone both new and regular does feel that sense of belonging in a very friendly environment."

New member of the congregation

In all of this I am very conscious of the huge amount of effort and commitment shown by many in the congregation to run our services, maintain the church buildings, pastoral visiting, baptism preparation, flower arranging, tea coffee and cake (wonderfully and endlessly!), to develop new and sustain existing community work and to take a lead in our teaching and discipleship ministries.

I am grateful to all who share in ministry in this place, who support one another as fellow disciples and who join in the hard work of living and building the kingdom wherever we find ourselves.

I hope you enjoy reading more about the life of our church this year and will, as I am, be excited to carry on the good work, the Lord being our helper.

Jonathan

Ministry and Worship

Services at Christ Church



We have continued to offer three morning services in the parish – at Christ Church with a small reflective service at 9am followed by our main service at 10.30am. At Berridge

Road we meet at 11.30am for an informal service.

We have seen many newcomers, some passing through, some staying with us for the longer haul. We have also started taking communion services to the Daycare Centre in Lunham Road, just around the corner from Christ Church. It has been a wonderful experience meeting a community of older folk from across the Borough, many of whom have spent a lifetime attending church but are unable to get to their home churches now due to mobility issues or lack of transport. With the support of the wonderful Viola, a volunteer who leads worship and study at the centre each week, those of us who attend have been welcomed wonderfully. It is a real privilege to serve in this

way and it was a great treat to welcome many of our regulars into Christ Church itself for two special carol services at Christmas.

We are so grateful to the many people who ensure Sunday services run smoothly – wardens, stewards, musicians and singers, readers and intercessors, flower arrangers, sound engineers, coffee makers, leaders of our crèche, junior church and youth group.

Christmas saw record numbers at the nativity, carol service and Christmas Morning Family Communion, with lots of visitors responding to the cards delivered around the parish, along with others who were brought along by visiting parents and friends. It was a great time: both the nativity and Christingle saw many people who had never been to Christ Church before.

“What I enjoy most about the services is the worship, particularly the songs and hymns. I think that whoever is responsible for picking them should be promoted.”

A member of the congregation

Ministry and Worship

Services at Berridge Road



The congregation at Berridge Road, led faithfully by Dave Scroby with support from Nenetia Nelson and Richard Winborn, has also seen new people coming in from the estate and we have been developing our

relationships with other Christians in the area. Up to Easter 2015 we completed our studies on the whole of Romans, and for the rest of the year we followed the Christ Church series fairly closely, with the Beatitudes and John's Gospel. Many of the talks have been in Bible study format rather than sermon, and the congregation appreciate the greater involvement and opportunity for discussion. Our usual services are interspersed from time to time with 'Service of Thanksgiv-

ing' when everyone has the opportunity to bring their own thanks to God and testimony, and 'Wholeness and Healing' when there is an emphasis on prayer for healing.

In May 2015 we had a speaker who had been working in one of the difficult areas of the world and continues (but now remotely over the internet) to do Bible translation for the people there. In January 2016 we had a speaker from 'Grace and Light', which is working in Nigeria and other African countries, encouraging church members to take an HIV/Aids test and to be open about the result so that if they test positive they can join a small supportive group.

“I enjoy the Bible verses and passages that are talked about. I find the thought and message from it stays with me the entire week.”

Member of the congregation

Ministry and Worship

Confirmations 2015



'We were delighted to host the deanery confirmation service at Christ Church on June 2015. Bishop Richard, the Bishop of Kingston, presided and our 7 candidates were joined by others from Emmanuel Dulwich and Holy Trinity Tulse Hill as well as a group from Emanuel School in Wandsworth. It was a wonderful evening, with many from the churches represented coming to support their candidates. Christ church provided a veritable banquet for our guests after the service which was greatly appreciated by all who came along.

Ministry and Worship

Raise the Praise

'I don't quite know how you manage to tell these bible stories in a way that keeps 5 and 50 year olds happy at the same time!' So said a visitor to Jonathan after one particularly exuberant Raise the Praise evening. We have a lot of fun every second Sunday with 40 minutes of songs, drama, storytelling, activity, prayer and sharing. The kids love it – almost as much as they love the tea afterwards. It is a great space to bring your children, certain that they will engage completely with the bible stories and come away thinking church is a great place to be with your mates. Come and try it if you haven't already!



Ministry and Worship

Inspire



Inspire is our newest service – a monthly informal service of musical worship, prayer and teaching at 6.30pm on a Sunday evening. Our aim has been to offer a service in a less formal setting with an opportunity to relax into more modern worship. Sam Whittington has done a great job developing this service in his first few months with us and we have seen a steady growth in numbers over 20 adults. The new year begins with a fascinating series of teaching on what it means to be a disciple of Christ in the City of London.

"I liked the series of testimonies we did last year of hearing what members of our congregation are doing this time tomorrow – very inspiring. Also groups of people stood up in that role to be prayed for – it makes you realise how our ministry is within the people we are surrounded by"

Member of the congregation

Ministry and Worship

Christ Church youth group



The high point of 2015 for the youth group was undoubtedly the 'Slum Survivor' project at the end of the summer term. 19 of our young people were involved – building temporary 'slum' shelters in the vicarage garden made from assorted items of scrap wood and tarpaulins in order to 'live for a weekend the way billions live for a lifetime'. The weekend brought the fiercest storm imaginable on the first night followed by blistering sun on the Saturday. Living on lentils and rice and completing a series of tasks over the weekend to earn water and 'treats' the young people really entered into the spirit of it, ending with a presentation of their achievements at the 10.30 service. The success of 'Slum Survivor' reflected the growth in our work with young people over the past year.

Legacy, the Friday night youth drop in, which started in late 2015 regularly attracted around 20 youngsters, several of whom were friends of church members and who have now joined in with the Sunday morning programme. The evenings are a mix of 'chilling', movie nights and sports – especially over the Summer months the vicarage lawn was devastated by football and cricket.

We have tried out a couple of different activities for the older teens – mainly around a Sunday night meeting wonderfully hosted by Sarah Griffiths but we have begun 2016 taking it back to Sunday mornings and our new group 'Breakaway' for the 15-18 age group now meets fortnightly in the vicarage, providing a slightly more mellow approach to the larger group of 11-15s.

We are incredibly grateful to Ruth Munday our youth intern and to Yvette, Sarah, Sally, Tanja, Jonathan and Rachel who lead this work, along with several others who help across the groups as required.

"Involving the congregation in practical bits is great! Love the humour with the children."

Member of the congregation

Ministry and Worship

Berridge Road youth group

The 'Young and Determined' (YAD) Youth Group, led by Shinead Prescod, had been working with a small number of highly motivated girls on the Berridge Road estate for a number of years. As the girls were getting older and some had gone to university, they decided to bring that project to an end in Spring 2015. In the summer holidays, with funding from Lambeth Living and Greggs, YAD ran a very successful scheme with a total of 80 to 90 young people turning up for activities and outings on Tuesdays and Thursdays over five weeks. XLP are now working in the borough of Lambeth and will be bringing the XLP bus regularly to the Berridge Road estate to engage with the young people. Ruth Munday, who works both for Christ Church and for

XLP, will join Jerome Hughes, the XLP Lambeth coordinator, on this project.



Pastoral Care

Prayer



Our monthly prayer meeting continues on the first Wednesday of the month at 8 pm as we pray for the church, local community and wider world. Attendance has grown during the year though we would, as always, welcome more people to join us for this vital area of church

"Hearing answers to prayers is always so inspiring"

Member of the congregation

life.

On Good Friday we have a prayer walk around the parish which begins at Berridge Road and journeys round different streets in the parish before stopping at Christ Church and then on to the Churches Together Act of Witness up at Sainsbury's. It is a reminder of our witness and our calling to be people of prayer for our community and our world.

Pastoral Care

Home Groups

"Prayer groups do help with a prayerful life"

Member of the Congregation

Home groups are a key part of Christ Church's mission action plan. We have four evening home groups, meeting on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, and three day-time home groups, meeting on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. The Saturday home group which started on a trial basis is now a permanent part of our home group strategy. Most home groups meet fortnightly; the Tuesday day-time group meets every week and the Tuesday evening home group meets weekly, except for the first Tuesday each month.

The home groups are led by Hugh & Juliet Bain, Jonathan Croucher, Eric Hamilton, Anthony & Pam Merifield, Pete & Esther Moorey, Sam Whittington, Yvette Croucher and Richard & Rhos Roberts. The groups have generally studied the same book of the Bible, though not in a prescriptive way. For most of the year the home groups have followed the theme or book of the Sunday sermons. Home groups have organised

coffee mornings in the church garden and have led morning services from time to time. Some groups also have regular meals together or arrange social events with the aim of encouraging friendships and support within the group.

Home group leaders meet once a term to discuss the theme for the following months, to identify future leaders and pray about the groups as a whole. All leaders attended a study session on the Psalms in advance of the groups studying a number of the Psalms in the spring term.



Outreach and Community

Open Door

“There’s a real sense of belonging and feeling part of the church family. The church also has a higher profile in the community. Well done!”

Member of the congregation

‘Open Door’ takes place every Tuesday when we literally open our doors to anyone in need of a place where they can meet others, chat, pray, enjoy tea, coffee and cakes, have lunch and seek advice in our advice clinic.

During the last year, we have welcomed an increasing number of people to ‘Open Door’ and have seen good relationships develop between those who come regularly. As it is a drop in, we never know who, or how many, will come and the numbers can vary from week

to week. However, we usually have in the region of 20 people for lunch and about 3 or 4 people for advice in the afternoon. There tend to be more of us in the morning when we are

joined for refreshments by those who attend the Bible study group. Other activities have included ‘Knit and Natter’, thanks to Mary Westrop, and board games.

We cooked Christmas lunch for nearly 50 people which was a very successful and happy event. Thank you to the army of people who helped on the day to make it such a success.

Our normal weekly meals have been cooked by ‘We Love’, a local community group, on a voluntary basis, though we provide the funds to buy the food. However, they are soon to move onto new ventures and so we are making plans to continue this valuable service. We are grateful for ‘We Love’s’ support for the last year or so.

We are very grateful to our faithful team of volunteers who give their time to serve tea and coffee, to welcome and chat to our clients and also to bake cakes and biscuits. The advice clinic is facilitated by Centre 70, an advice centre in West Norwood, (funded by us) and, on alternate weeks, Janet Boyce.

If you think you can support this important work, we would love to hear from you; please speak to Cath Mitchenall.

“This place feels really alive. We’ve just got to sustain it!”

A member of the congregation



Outreach and Community

Engaging with the Berridge Road community

The Berridge Road Christian Partnership held three joint services in 2015. The first was held in March and hosted by Berridge Road Church, and the second was in September and hosted by Brenda Harris, who runs the church that uses the premises on Sunday afternoons. Fliers were delivered on the estate and although few came as a result of the invitations we were encouraged by the reception that we had on the doors, with some good conversations and only a few negative reactions. The third joint service was a joint Service of Thanksgiving, hosted by Berridge Road Church in November. We have begun to meet with members of Brenda’s church

for prayer. Christine Banton has been running a drop-in on some Mondays for a few folk and several have asked for prayer.



Outreach and community

Pastoral prayer and visiting

A small group of members meets every six weeks or so to pray for individuals within, or closely associated with, the church fellowship who are facing difficult personal challenges. Many of the issues involve serious or long-standing ill health, including mental health problems; others can be the result of relationship breakdown, financial hardship, old age or immigration status. The prayer group operates on a strictly confidential basis with matters only being referred to the group with an individual's consent and not being discussed outside of the group.



The Christian message is about the whole person and a separate pastoral visiting team meets monthly to identify and address practical problems faced by church members and attendees. Trena Dickinson organises a small team of women (male chefs very welcome!) who prepare meals, on request, for elderly, needy or sick members and for families following the birth of a child. Members of the team visit housebound members, as appropriate, and arrange lifts to and from church for those unable to use public transport.

Outreach and community

Christ Church Children and Young Families



The highlights of the year included our lovely Easter activity morning, using our newly refurbished upper hall, where children could make craft items, plant bulbs and seeds, decorate cakes to take home and help to make our Easter Garden for church. We had a great Join in Nativity service again this year and a lively Christingle service with crafts and storytelling. On 31st October we enjoyed a party with variety of activities based on light, fun and food. Besides all this we have groups each Sunday morning for children to have fun learning about Jesus. We are fortunate to have a wonderful team of volunteers for all these activities to whom we owe our thanks.

"I love how the children have become integrated and addressed at the start of the service – they listen so well and feel part of the church family. Every now and again, I feel as a Sunday school teacher, it would be lovely for the children to come back in and tell everyone (briefly) or show everyone what they have been doing or learning."

Member of the congregation

Outreach and community

XLP



In 2013 Jonathan began a conversation with XLP, the London based youth charity working with hard to reach young people in five London boroughs. Its founder, Patrick Regan, had begun his youth worker life on the Berridge Road Estate in the early 90s and was already considering a possible move into Lambeth as the next stage of XLP's growth. Coinciding with approaches from one or two other churches and Christian organisations in Lambeth, a working group was set up with representation from two churches, including ours, a community project in Tulse Hill and the Lambeth Schools Sergeant from the Lambeth Police. Over the following two years, after much thinking, prayer and reflection, the decision was made by XLP to begin working in Lambeth.

In July, Jerome Hughes, who by good fortune grew up in our parish, was appointed the new borough youth worker for Lambeth. We offered Ruth Munday, our youth intern, to work with XLP during the week to support Jerome and in September 2015 XLP officially launched in Lambeth. The prayer that had gone in over the previous 24 months, seemed to pay off and doors almost flew open. The plan that Jerome would spend the first four months developing contacts before starting any actual youth work was rapidly revised as the Park Campus Pupil Referral Unit down the road from Christ Church immediately accepted the offer of support from XLP, and doors opened quickly to work on the Angell Town estate and Evelyn Grace School in Brixton. From a standing start, Ruth and Jerome now provide a lunchtime club and classroom assistance at the PRU, a fortnightly stop on the Angell Town estate and a day working with children with special needs at Evelyn Grace. February 2016 has seen them starting a weekly bus project on the Berridge Road Estate in

our parish and in September they will start work in St Martin's Academy in Tulse Hill. It has been a wonderful start, blessed richly by God in answered prayer and a great encouragement to all of us involved in it.

Our links with XLP also led to us being invited to host a royal visit in March 2015 – the very last public visit made by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge together before the birth of their second child. The church was full of invited guests, hosted wonderfully by a home team from Christ Church. Croucher cupcakes were served to the royal couple as they enjoyed a light working lunch before the main event when some of XLP's talent showcase finalists performed for their royal highnesses before they went off (after appropriate handshaking with the crowds opposite the church) to visit one of the XLP bus projects in Sydenham. A great and memorable day!



Outreach and community

Playpen



Playpen is our church run 'Stay and Play' Baby and Toddler Group for 0-4 year olds and their parents / carers. Helen Williams manages Playpen with a great team of volunteers from the church and local community. Over the past year, it has been a bit of a struggle with a lack of volunteers. However special thanks to Tim Eveleigh (previously a member of Christ Church) who has helped for over 10 years on a Thursday and to Glenys Wood, Trena Dickinson, Eliza, Jon and Tracey (all members of Christ Church) who help in the kitchen. Thank you also to members of the local community who have helped for many years at Playpen now, and who without, we would struggle to run Playpen - Caroline Taylor, Christine Woolard, Sue Chalcroft and Sharon Rob-

inson Walder.

For parents and carers, Playpen is a place to come and meet and forge new relationships with other people. For the children, Playpen provides a fun play environment with a variety of toys and activities set out each week. We lead a group song time about 11am, which is followed by 'snack time' when we provide water and fruit. There is also a craft activity each week after snack time.

Playpen currently has numbers between 30-50 toddlers come through the doors on a Wednesday and Thursday morning and continues to have a great reputation in the area, with lots of regulars who have been coming for many years.

We are always in need of more help, as the more volunteers we have, the more we are able to engage with new and old faces to the group and keep Playpen running smoothly! There is also always plenty of tidying up to do.

Outreach and community

3rd Gipsy Hill Brownies

2015 was another good year for the pack, which remains full at 24 girls, unless another adult leader volunteers. The average age has gone down as some of our older girls moved on and we welcomed some new 7 year old Brownies. We welcomed back Eve and Lola, ex-Brownies who have finished Guides and are now Young Leaders and a great help. Robin (Chantelle) returned from holiday in April with a sparkly new engagement ring, so we are currently planning a surprise for her wedding in May 2016.

In the Spring we planted flower and salad veg seeds in peat pots and the girls nurtured them at home until they were strong enough to plant out into two planters. Although one planter sadly went missing we har-

vested lettuce and carrots and saw morning glory and cornflower blooms from the remaining garden. The girls achieved the gardener badge.



We had an excellent day with other Brownies on a glorious Saturday in early July. We made sandcastles, played on the beach and ate ice cream!

In October we celebrated the Queen as longest reigning monarch by learning about 4 Queens (Victoria, Anne, Elizabeths I and II) and trying games from their time and also making food from their

time. The Christmas season began with the District Christingle service, followed by a visit to the pantomime Aladdin in Bromley, and ended with a reindeer themed party where we all had fun.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support.

Outreach and community

Mothers' Union Gipsy Hill Branch



The past year was a good year for our small branch. We were delighted to welcome into our 'fold', MU members from All Saints, West Dulwich and share an evening meal with them and with Sheran Harper, a MU central trustee from Guyana. Sheran had much to share with us about her work in remote parts of the world, carrying the message of Jesus Christ through the MU parenting and family life programmes.

Other highlights included:

- two presentations by Sarah Griffiths, a teacher at Dulwich College and one of our members, on 'Understanding the Teen-Age Mind' and on 'Social Media', emphasising its impact on young people,
- a presentation on 'Mental Health Awareness' led jointly by our vicar, Jonathan Croucher, the vicar of All Saints, David Stephenson and his assistant priest, Cathy Wiles

- a Mothering Sunday Bake Sale and participation (runners and cheerers included) in the 'Richmond Park Run' to raise money for Mothers' Union funds,
- praying together by candlelight for our children as they returned to school,
- a game of 'Rounders in the Park, and
- the annual wreath making event.

As a group (and alongside others from Christ Church), we are supporting a refugee family with friendship, prayer, clothing including school uniforms, household and educational essentials, Christmas gifts and finance. We are not alone for MU is a 'network of activists'. Our contact and fellow supporters in Leeds, the location of the refugee family, are the vicar and MU branch of her church.

I wish to give my heartfelt thanks to the many friends of Mothers' Union at Christ Church and to our members, each of whom have shown wonderful enthusiasm, teamwork and support for the work of the organisation, for each other and to me.

Outreach and community

Churches together in Upper Norwood

Churches together in Upper Norwood, have enjoyed a good year of working closely together. The joint act of witness on Good Friday is now an integral part of the Christ Church Easter calendar. It is a moving event that brings together a large number of people from the churches in the area. The event begins with gathering on the green outside Sainsbury's on Good Friday followed by a walk of witness around the Triangle, and hot cross buns and coffee at the Salvation Army. Another key event this year was a bring-and-share supper with an international team to raise funds for Christian Aid. In the run-up to Christmas there was a joint carol service.

As well as the key events around the church year, there are regular events such as a regular film night with a fish and chip supper at the Methodist Church Hall along with the regular table tennis

sessions each Thursday evening, also held at the Methodist Church.



Outreach and community

Norwood and Brixton Foodbank

As we have faced many challenges, some unexpected, the Foodbank has continued serve the local community and in some areas expand its work. We will have fed approx. 7,000 people in last year.

These are just 2 examples of the very varied clients we see and very difficult cases we deal with.

A dad; a victim of domestic violence whose wife left with all money and papers leaving him with 4 children including a 3 month old.

Story of a Foodbank customer

A grandma whose daughter died of heart attack in her late 30's leaving a primary age son. Grandma used all her savings for the funeral and, although working, spent many days, weeks and months sorting out the affairs.

Story of a Foodbank customer

who give their time weekly, monthly and during holidays. Finally the amazing response on Christmas Eve when 30 people from Christ Church joined the team to ensure we had the enough volunteers to meet the needs of all the clients we served on that day.

Just some stats from that day:

Volunteers from Christ Church

- 7 young people under 18
- 1 young person aged just 8
- At least 5 whole families
- 2 clergy
- 1 doctor ensuring no one went without food and drink



Other statistics

- £1,000 of fresh fruit and veg donated
- 100 loaves bread
- 100 x half dozen eggs
- 85 vouchers
- 297 people fed
- Over 1.5 tonnes food given out

So a huge thank you for all your support and my challenge to you this year - is Foodbank something you care about, how could you support us in year ahead?



As we have faced the challenges we have been grateful to the congregation at Christchurch who have stepped up with us to meet these, including unexpected collections that have proved essential cash to help resource the Foodbank, a permanent donation basket that many people give to regularly, praying for us and those

Community use of church buildings

Goodliffe Hall



The newly refurbished Goodliffe Hall is now even busier than ever. 2015 saw the launch of the ever popular 'Slimmers World' – with its first meeting on the first day of the year attracting over 20 people, it now meets from 4 until 10pm every Thursday and Sophia has over 100 people coming along each week. Team Dance has also now increased its regular usage of the hall to run

dance classes in Tap, Ballet, Modern and Jazz for children – (they have over 100 children on their books!) and began some new classes for adults in the Autumn term.

The Brownies meet on Monday evenings and on Tuesday evenings the Crystal Palace Community Choir meets in the upstairs hall; the Choir has also performed at some Christ Church events.

Playpen takes place on Wednesday and Thursday mornings.

We also have language lessons in French, Spanish and German running in the hall on a Saturday morning. Christ Victory Church still uses the hall for their church services on a Sunday afternoon and during the week for

Bible study and to offer prayer counselling.

Aside from these regular bookings we also have local residents, police and safer neighbourhood team meetings held in the hall a few times a year and have hosted meetings for the leadership teams of Foodbank, XLP and Centre 70.

Community use of church buildings

Berridge Road

We currently have few users of the Berridge Road premises. Apart from ourselves, the 'Pearly Gates Ministries' church, led by Brenda Harris, meets on the premises on Sunday afternoons and the 'Young and Determined' (YAD) Youth Group, led by Shinead Prescod, met regularly over the year on Monday evenings with a hugely successful Summer club for teenagers in August. Shinead has stepped back from YAD since then and we are looking forward to XLP beginning their work on the estate in February 2016. The hall benefitted from the replacement of the flooring throughout which has made a huge difference to the overall feel and appearance and we are awaiting the opening of a nursery in the hall which will, if it goes ahead, mean the hall is in use nearly 12 hours a day during the week.



Overseas Mission

Our approach

Our relationships with organisations with an international focus are overseen by the Mission Group. Two members of the group are responsible for each of the three projects which Christ Church supports financially and with regular prayer. Engagement is proactive and the relevant members of the group update the congregation about the organisation regularly during the year, providing matters for prayer and notifying the church of any urgent needs or developments in the project or organisation

The Mission Group works with each organisation on a rolling three year basis. This gives certainty for each group about the provision of funds for a particular period, and ensures we formally review the relationship (without pressure to continue) at the end of each period.

"It would be good to have more opportunities for groups we support such as Spinnaker to talk about their work and outreach, to encourage prayer."

Member of the congregation

We focus on these organisations in the Sunday morning services with short updates from those who are responsible for liaising with each project. Information is also posted on the missions' notice board and every four months the Wednesday prayer meeting focuses primarily on our mission organisations.

Locally, we continue to support Spinnaker and will continue (without financial support) our excellent relationships with the Norwood and Brixton Foodbank.

Overseas Mission

Tearfund



Our main focus is on the Cambodia Hope Organisation (CHO) based in North Western Cambodia, near the Thai border. CHO tackles human trafficking, working principally through local churches. CHO provides education about human trafficking in schools, skills training, vocational training and micro-loans to help poorer families support themselves.

Overseas Mission

Christian Solidarity Worldwide

Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), which works for religious freedom throughout the world through advocacy and human rights, in the pursuit of justice.



Overseas Mission

Church Mission Society



We continue to support the Clouston family who are based in Bangalore, India. Eric and Rhena, with their two children Kitty and Sam, spent part of the year back in the UK, on furlough. They returned to India in December 2015.



India is a vast country and developing fast, and its churches are growing, but still only one in about 30 Indians are Christian. Eric and Rhena love to see God using his word to transform people's lives and so they are involved in encouraging and equipping all sorts of Christians to serve Jesus in all sorts of ways – "sharing Jesus, changing lives".

CMS Website

Overseas Mission

Gloria Byakatonda

The parish has been paying the university fees and support for Gloria Byakatonda as she undertakes a degree course in business administration in Uganda. Gloria is the orphaned niece of Peninnah Nalwanga, a member of the Berridge Road congregation, and she has no family to support her. Gloria is now in her final year and due to graduate in October. Her big challenge will be to find a job in a country with 80% unemployment.



In the first, she notes that the course work in the final year is difficult. In addition she has to do a dissertation in the period January to April, which is otherwise a 'holiday' period (though in that period in 2014 she was doing her internship); and she will need to stay in a student hostel near the university.

In the second, she expresses disappointment with her results for the second semester of the second year (May to July 2015) which came out in October. Her results were affected when her laptop broke (she now has a new laptop). But she notes that in spite of that she did pass in all her subjects, while many students are having to retake some.

Summary of recent emails from Gloria

Social Activities



Social activities are an integral part of the life of the parish and congregation. Over the years a wide ranging programme of activities has developed, aiming to cater for all tastes and ages and making the church more accessible to outsiders and newcomers. Food invariably plays a key role, ranging from a Passover supper to entertaining each other at home.

Social activities

Annual quiz night

In January we enjoyed another quiz night. Stuart Mitchenall reprised his role as Quiz Master Extraordinaire with another challenging quiz. As always the questions spanned a wide range of topic; there was sports, music, Europeans as well as such opaque topics like 'Today's Anniversaries' and 'Pot Luck'. Success in the round 'A night with the Stars' didn't depend on having read the gossip magazines at the hairdressers but knowing one's Hubble space telescope from one's International Space Station.

In the interval we enjoyed a selection of curries, which like the questions catered to all tastes. A good time was had by all, as ever there were a few disputes along the way and the losing team was aptly named 'top end'.



Social activities

'Come dine with me'



By popular demand 'Come dine with me' was back for its third outing. Over 70 members of the congregation met for dinner at 15 homes. A lot of planning went into allocating guests and hosts; bringing people together who didn't know each other well. For the hosts it was an opportunity to show off their culinary skills, whether it was to cook tried and tested favourites or try out something new.

Everybody enjoyed getting together over good food, meeting people we had worshiped with for years in a social setting and making new friends. Not only was the evening an all-round success but it was the talking point after the service the following Sunday and for weeks to come.

Social activities

Church barbeque



In July we celebrated the completion of the Goodliffe Hall refurbishment with a barbeque in the vicarage gardens. Even though the weather was hardly conducive to al fresco dining, three large grills were set up in the gardens and a band of willing volunteers braved

the rain to grill burgers, sausages, vegetarian kebabs and variety of meats.

Inside, the newly refurbished upper hall offered an enticing buffet of salads, dips and breads, as well as a dry place to eat. Even though it rained on and off it was a lovely family occasion and the children enjoyed their burgers and hot dogs.

And the new coffee bar upstairs made washing up so much easier as well; so all in all it was a worthy inauguration of the new facilities.



Social activities

Creative Artistry Group

"There are more activities that bring the congregation together e.g. Advent Fair."

A member of the Congregation

The creative artistry group had another successful year. We usually meet once a month and over the year we have engaged in a number of craft activities. We usually begin the evening with tea and some home-made biscuits and showing off various craft projects. But we also have learnt some new skills; for instance making a monkey out of a pair of socks and turning old T-shirts into yarn for knitting. Sadly we didn't have enough T-shirts to make a rug for the crèche.

During the autumn term we focussed on the preparation for the craft fair. We looked at making suitable decorations for Christmas and small gifts to make and sell. As well as the crafts, we also planned the events, the stalls and children's activities that we could offer on the day. The refurbished space meant that we could set up the space differently with food and eating in the Goodliffe Hall and the stands in the church.

The Community Choir sang a few carols and we had a tombola and raffle as well as the craft stands, bric-a-brac, home-made jams and chutneys and a stand for International China Concern. The attendance was up on the previous year and better use of space meant that parents could leave their children to do their activities and still keep an eye on them. All the hard work paid off and the fair raised over £ 2,300 towards a new sound system.



Buildings and fabric

Christ Church and Goodliffe Hall



In the spring of 2015 the refurbishment of the church and hall were completed. Following from the major work on the church building in the previous year, investment in new chair seats and additional chairs and a new space for the sound system have completed the upgrade.

Access from the church into the kitchen has made after church coffee much easier to serve and it also provides for more flexible use of the church and hall space. The upgrade to the kitchens and toilets has made a huge difference to the users and the rooms in the Goodliffe Hall are almost unrecognisable compared with two years ago. The new facilities mean

that the buildings are far more flexible for the use of a church in the 21st century.

The refurbishment has made a great difference to the hall users as well. It has made the space more attractive to potential users from the community and the church buildings continue to be used as community assets by a wide range of groups and individuals.



Buildings and fabric

Berridge Road



New flooring in the main hall and in the foyer has made the building much more attractive. A work party at the end of May, including 12 hard-working volunteers from Christ Church, cleared a huge amount of rubbish from behind the garden fence, reduced the hedge height, and put together some flat-pack storage units. Work is needed on the roof, especially to the soffit (eaves) boards.

Resources

Finance

We have much to be thankful for to do with the Church's finances in 2015.

We are thankful to God for meeting so many of our needs and to the members of the congregation who have generously given their love, time and talents as well as money.

Here are some key measures of progress during the year:

- Unrestricted income increased by approximately £ 10,000 (5.5%) on the previous year
- Expenditure for the day-to-day running of the buildings, its activities and work in the community increased by approximately £21,000 (12.8%) on the previous year

The increase is mainly due to:

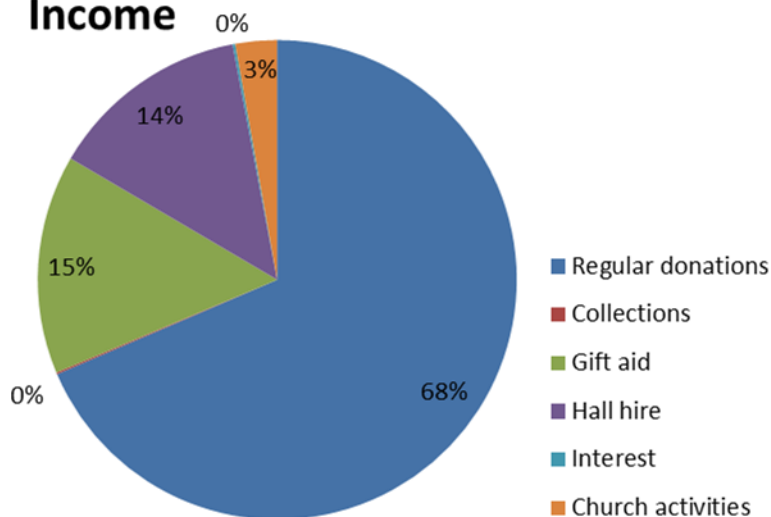
- Rent costs for curate housing
- Increase in Diocesan Support
- General increase in costs across other areas of ministry and buildings

The restricted income and expenditure relates to the Goodliffe Hall redevelopment. The overall cost of the Goodliffe Hall project was ca £ 140,000 over two years. During 2014 and 2015 a total of £ 136,349 was donated. This was made up of donations from church members and, to a lesser extent, grants received.

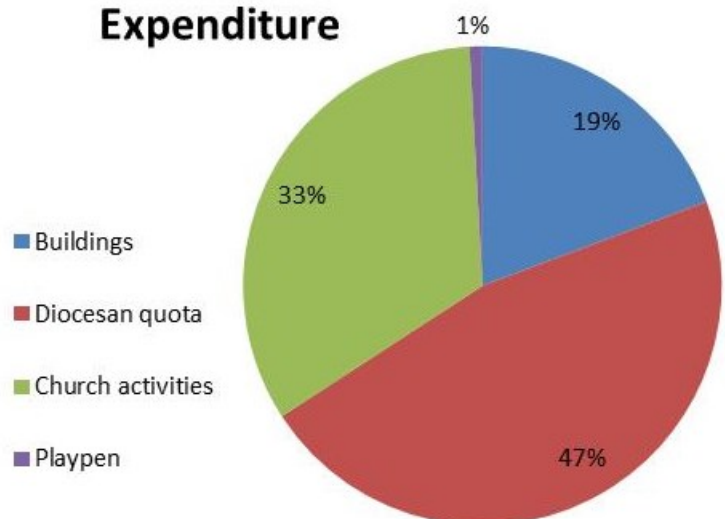
Other restricted expenditure relates to XLP, Open Door and children and youth related work.

The charts below show the breakdown of the unrestricted income and expenditure.

Income



Expenditure



People

Electoral roll

Christ Church and Berridge Road congregations only continue by the grace of God and with the support of all our people. Thank you to all those who week by week serve the church in many different ways – setting up, arranging flowers, operating the sound system, producing service sheets, stewarding, making tea and coffee, leading our music and sung worship, taking part in different working parties and committees, the list is endless.



We have been delighted to welcome new people in both our congregations and hope that we will continue to see our congregations grow in faith, in service and in number.



Governance

Parochial Church Council (PCC)

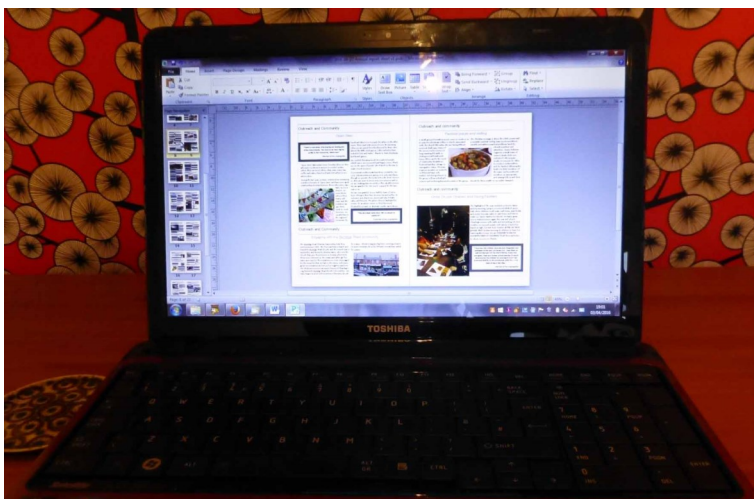
The governing body of the parish is the PCC which met 6 times during the year. Standing agenda items were finance, building work, safeguarding and health and safety. Updates on these areas are covered substantively in this report. The standing committee supports the PCC through regular meetings and has delegated powers to make decisions about expenditure.

Beyond the standard agenda items, the PCC considered the diocese's new system for parishes to support the work of the diocese. The new parish support fund is based on the concept of generosity and an underlying consideration is that churches should move towards being self-sufficient. Unlike other dioceses, Southwark

is primarily relying on parish contributions to fund its ministry. The new system will enable us to reassess our pledge every year and take account of changes in our income and expenditure for instance the costs associated with a curate. The PCC agreed an affordable sum to pledge, which was accepted by the diocese. Another financial question the PCC considered was staff salaries, where it was agreed that all staff employed by the PCC would be paid the minimum wage.

One meeting was dedicated to review the Mission Action Plan, looking at what worked well and areas where we could do more. Areas for further consideration were space to ask difficult questions outside of home groups; the area of prayer; engaging with new people; accessibility teaching and physical accessibility. One aspect of accessibility the PCC is taking forward is a new audio visual system, which is expected to be implemented in the next year.

Christ Church has been approached by Alphabet Lane Nursery and Pre-School to use the Berridge Road building for a new branch of their nursery. Deliberations and negotiations began in July and a final contract is likely to be agreed in Spring 2016; in due course the nursery is likely to generate an annual income of £ 26,000.



Governance

Deanery Synod



The Lambeth South Deanery consists of 15 churches situated from Clapham in the North to Streatham Vale in the South.

Our parish is represented on the Lambeth South Deanery Synod by our clergy and 4 lay representatives, Hugh Bain, Colin Hart, Anthony Merifield and Richard Winborn. Members of the Deanery Synod attend 3 Synod meetings a year and are the electors of deanery representatives to the Southwark Diocesan Synod and diocesan representatives to the General Synod of the Church of England.

One of the main purposes of the deanery is to enable parishes with different styles of churchmanship to work together and to understand one another better. The deanery is headed by the Area Dean, Revd David Stephenson from All Saints West Dulwich while Revd Kit Gunasekera from St. James Clapham has a role to co-ordinate the mission activities of deanery churches. As part of the churches working together, deanery clergy attend clergy chapter meetings, two Confirmation Services are organized each year and occasional training days take place. A regular Deanery Prayer Diary is circulated and church members

are encouraged to look up the deanery website – www.lambethsouthdeanery.org where details of all deanery activities may be found. There is also a small Deanery Mission and Pastoral Working Group to consider any re-organising of parishes in the deanery. Since the last report to the APCM, there have been two meetings of the deanery synod.

In November 2015, the meeting was addressed by Revd Canon Leanne Roberts the Diocesan Director of Ordinations. She spoke about vocations, both to lay work and to the ordained ministry. She gave details of the process to be followed by those considering a call to the ordained ministry, to being a Southwark Pastoral Assistant or Lay Reader. She organized members to discuss their own vocations, to think about how and whom God calls and how to encourage vocations in both parish and deanery.

In February 2016, synod was addressed by Ruth Martin who was appointed Diocesan Secretary a year ago. She spoke about steps being taken to re-organise 42 committees who make diocesan decisions into fewer and more efficient groups and about how communication between the General Synod, the Diocesan Synod and the Deanery Synod and parishes could be improved. She ended by challenging all of us to think how we can make a difference to those who do not know God.

Full minutes of both meetings may be read on the deanery website on the 'Synod' tab or on paper by request to Hugh Bain.

