

Christ Church GIPSY HILL

Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council 2016



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Registered Charity Number: 1133804

Introduction



Welcome to our annual report for 2016 which will be presented to the Annual Parochial Church meeting in April 2017, as we celebrate our 150th anniversary year. Do enjoy reading it – giving thanks for all God is doing in and through his church.

Our purpose

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 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.

Welcome from the vicar



As you will see from this report, we have enjoyed another busy year! In many ways it has been a year of consolidation, building on all that has gone before. But we have also seen plenty of new life - the Berridge Road congregation has taken on a new form as a 'Missional Community', we created a new role of 'Ministry Assistant' to enable us to continue to sustain and develop our different ministries, and we have worked hard to plan our celebrations in 2017 for our 150th anniversary as a church on this site. Those anniversary celebrations themselves reflect our desire to celebrate all that God has done among us, both recently and throughout the history of this church, whilst always looking to his work among us today and praying for his guiding of our work for the future.

I am, as ever, enormously grateful to all those who share in our life together, and particularly to those who day by day and week by week sustain the life of our church in prayer.

I hope you enjoy reading more about the life of our church this year and will, as I am, be encouraged and inspired!

Jonathan



Section 1: Ministry and Discipleship

❖ Services



After twenty years offering public worship in our building on Berridge Road, and after a long period of prayerful deliberation, we decided to re-focus this part of our work in the parish. The team at Berridge Road have been commissioned by the Archdeacon in September as a 'Missional Community', with the joint purposes of serving, praying for and witnessing to the estate and working with others to achieve those ends. Sunday morning meetings, although open to visitors, are no longer advertised as public worship but operate in a similar way to home groups, with sung worship, bible study and prayer. There is more detail about Berridge Road

later in this report.

Our service format at Christ Church continues, with a small quiet service at 9am and our main Sunday service at 10.30am where we offer children and young people's work during the service. That service has continued to attract newcomers and we are reaching a stage where we need to think about how that service develops - with the potential to think about a further Sunday service, either by developing the 9am service or offering a full service later in the day.

Our work at the Daycare Centre in Lunham Road, just around the corner from Christ Church has also continued, though the future of the centre is now in question and their numbers are falling as Lambeth Council change arrangements for day care in the Borough. It remains a real joy to share in worship with those reaching the end of their lives but who bring such energy to their worship.



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, Sunday school and youth group.



Christmas saw bumper 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. The carol service is worthy of particular mention - using a theme of 'Open Door', the community choir from our Open Door drop in sang two songs, really bringing home the work of Open Door to be a place for anybody and everybody, and powerfully reminding us of the open offer from God to all people. What a joy!

❖ Raise the praise



Raise the Praise continues as a very special element of our service provision every second Sunday with 40 minutes of songs, drama, storytelling, activity, prayer and sharing. We have been blessed with a number of new families this year and it is a great place to 'start' at church with small children. 'I love it!' (says Jonathan) So thank you to all who come and make it such an exciting and fun way to be church – special thanks to the team who provide a delicious party tea every month.



❖ Inspire

Inspire is our monthly evening service held on the third Sunday of the month from 6.15pm onwards. The service includes informal, contemporary worship as well as more interactive teaching, with attendance holding steady at around twenty adults. After completing our series on the challenges and opportunities of Christian discipleship in a big city like London, we have enjoyed looking at the Lord's Prayer to challenge and deepen our understanding of these very familiar words.

❖ Sunday School

We have four Sunday school groups for children which take place during the main service – crèche (0 – 2 year olds), Scramblers (2 years– school year 1), Climbers (school year 1 – 2) and Explorers (school year 3 – 6). Crèche and Scramblers share the hall downstairs and often merge as the little ones are drawn into the Scramblers activities. Meanwhile Climbers and Explorers meet in rooms upstairs where there is a bit more space for the older ones to expend their energy without disrupting church too much! We have been using the Urban Saints resources, covering topics such as bible characters and the life of Jesus. Sessions include games, singing, bible studies, bible based activities and crafts. Thank you so much to our team of volunteers who give up their time to prepare and run the sessions in order to provide age-appropriate teaching and worship for our children.

❖ Christ Church youth group

It has been another happy and encouraging year for our young people at Christ Church. We continued with the two youth group meetings on Sunday mornings, the 11 to 14 year olds gathering in the upstairs youth room for games, study and prayer and the 'breakaway' group, 15 to 18 years, meeting on alternate Sunday's in the Vicarage for a more informal time of study and reflection over a cup of tea! The groups combine from time to time for outings and in total number about 18 - 20 young people. Termly social events included a trip to Madame

Tussaud's, Laser Quest and an evening of outside wide games and marshmallows at the Scout Hut in Dulwich. As well as termly socials, the youth enjoyed presenting dramatic sketches to the church once a term, and reading lessons and prayers in services which we hope to continue.

In March 2016 we had our first youth residential to the Urban Saints site on the Isle of Wight. There was high excitement as we travelled by train and ferry to the venue and the weekend was packed with activities and teaching sessions, ably led by Ruth Munday (including archery, swimming, craft, drama, bushcraft and a walk to town for some shopping and ice-cream). The mantra established by the young people after they were denied a frolic in the sand and sea was 'has it been risk assessed, no, no' and the joke has lived on - they will be delighted to explain it if asked! We had 16 young people away on the weekend and the constant theme on Sunday mornings since has been the numerous requests to go again! One we are looking into for 2018 but in the meantime we gave them an alternative in the overnight sleep out in the church halls in December when a group of young people participated in the Urban Fund Sleep Out with other members and families from the congregation. Songs around the camp fire (courtesy of Johnny Crawford) and a cooked breakfast made it all worth while (even if phones were eventually confiscated so everyone could get some sleep!).

We were joined in 2016 by Hannah Miles (our XLP intern) and Ali Seal (our Ministry Assistant), both of whom have committed a lot of time to our youth work and developed some good relationships. The constancy and commitment of our regular volunteers has again been wonderful and we are blessed by their contributions to both our Sunday groups and Friday night Legacy.

❖ 20s and 30s group



opportunities to spend time together.

Much has been made in research on church attendance of the 'absence' of the 20's and 30's from church. Many don't go to church, others, in a city like London travel up to the big city centre churches. We are keen to provide a warm welcome and positive church home for this age group within our wonderfully diverse church family.

Since summer 2016 we have run a series of events for 20s and 30s to build community and fellowship amongst that age group. Following our inaugural Sunday lunch at the Vicarage we have had great fun walking in the Surrey countryside, watching films, playing board games, ice skating and trampolining. Events in the pipeline for the spring and summer include a Thames Walk and outside cinema. It has been really positive to have more

❖ Home Groups

Home groups are a key part of Christ Church's mission action plan. We have six evening home groups, meeting on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, and three day-time home groups, meeting on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Some home groups meet

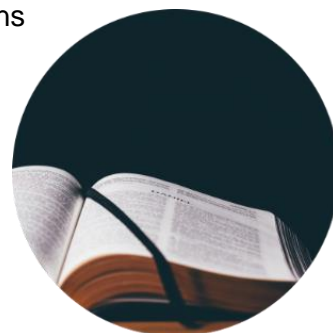
fortnightly while others meet three weeks out of four each month. The Tuesday and Friday daytime groups meet every week.

The home groups are led by Hugh & Juliet Bain, Liz Maytom & Jodie Lomax, Eric Hamilton, Anthony & Pam Merifield, Pete & Esther Moorey, Ali & Rob Seal, Yvette Croucher and Richard & Rhos Roberts. The groups have generally studied the same book of the bible, and 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.

❖ Foundation Course

From September to November 2016 we ran our Christian Foundations Course for the second time, using the Church of England's Emmaus material. The course was led by Sam Whittington, hosted by Sarah and David Griffiths, and was attended by four participants. During the six sessions we looked at evidence for the existence of God, humanity's need for God, the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus, and the work of the Holy Spirit, which enabled some really great conversations as the group shared and developed in their understanding and experience of the Christian faith together.



❖ Advent in Art



This advent we enjoyed a slightly different approach to Advent, with a series of 'Advent in Art' reflections. The idea behind these was to provide for those who did not or could not commit to a regular home group programme and provide a slightly different focus than a standard bible study. As an initial trial, we ran four evening sessions looking at aspects of the Advent and Christmas Story through art. Ali Seal's mother Hilary, who is an art historian, selected images through the ages depicting the annunciation to Mary, the journey to Bethlehem, the Holy Family and the annunciation to the

shepherds. We considered artwork spanning almost two millennia, from Roman mosaics, through to the 20th century with pictures by Dali among others.

Each evening was a journey of discovery of the unknown. Hilary talked about the style of the images, the awe and excitement the artists must have felt trying to express those amazing happenings, the symbols the artists had used and the historical context. Breughel for instance used his picture of the Holy Family travelling to Bethlehem to highlight the political situation in the Netherlands at the time and the discontent with Spanish taxation.

Each picture session was followed by a reflection, bringing together the images and the story. We considered how the artists represented the Holy Spirit at the annunciation, how the Christmas story fits into history and how the advent story foreshadows so many events in Jesus' ministry. Each evening ended with a brief discussion followed by Compline.

People really enjoyed the concept and by popular demand we put on an extra event at Epiphany and the team is exploring ideas for future occasional events.

❖ Weekend Away

Every two to three years all Christ Church members are invited to join together to spend a weekend away from central London in order to study some aspect of the Christian life, pray and have fun and fellowship together.

In June 2016 the weekend away took place at Pilgrim Hall, a beautiful conference centre set in lovely surroundings in East Sussex. The theme of the weekend was prayer and the speaker was Rev Sandy Christie from St Michael and all Angels, Blackheath. 61 adults and 25 teenagers and children attended the weekend away (with a further seven adults and three children attending as day visitors on the Saturday) which began with an evening meal on the Friday night. The main teaching sessions took place on Saturday with separate activities for teenagers led by Imogen Mules from St Barnabas Church, Dulwich, and for children, led by members of Spinnaker. There was also a crèche for babies and toddlers. Saturday afternoon was a time for relaxation, a swim in the outdoor pool or a session on the bouncy castle! On Sunday morning there was the opportunity to experience different types of prayer in small groups, before a family communion service led by Jonathan and members of the congregation. The weekend finished with Sunday lunch after which everyone left to travel home.

The weekend was a very positive experience when we were able to learn more about prayer and get to know each other better.



Pastoral Care

❖ Prayer

Our monthly prayer meeting continues on the first Wednesday of the month at 8 pm where 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 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. This year we again hosted for a week, the 24/7 Prayer for Lambeth prayer room, offering space in the chapel with a selection of creative prayer resources to focus on God and offer prayer for our local communities and churches.



❖ Pastoral prayer team and pastoral visiting team



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. A small team prepares 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/Community

❖ Open Door



Open Door continues to serve the community each Tuesday as we provide tea, coffee, cakes and chat during the morning, a hot nutritious lunchtime meal and an advice clinic in the afternoon. New people often come having heard of us by word of mouth and we would love to welcome more to Open Door. Those who attend regularly say it is the highlight of their week.

This year, thanks to funding from the Lambeth Flagship Food Programme, we have been able to employ Sepidieh Black to cook the meals and she has been a welcome addition to our team of volunteers. Our

numbers for lunch vary between 20 and 30.

We have also introduced other activities: games, table tennis and a community choir, which has proved very popular. Open Door relies on our faithful volunteers to run and we are grateful to all who bake cakes, make drinks and provide advice and a welcome each week.



❖ Engaging with the Berridge Road community

As part of the Mission Action planning process, we reviewed how our small but committed congregation on the Berridge Road Estate might develop. After much prayer and consultation, the PCC agreed that instead of operating as a separate 'congregation' offering public worship on a Sunday morning, our work and presence on the estate should become a 'missional community' – a group still focussed on being a Christian presence on the estate, with the core purposes of witness and service on and prayer for the estate, whilst working with other Christians and churches to achieve those aims.



To that end we developed a new format for Sunday mornings which is similar in format to our home groups. Dave Scroby continues as Berridge Road leader, with support from Nenetia Nelson and Richard Winborn. Members at Berridge Road have been appreciating the bible study format rather than sermons as this gives everyone the opportunity for questions and

comments on the passage. We tend to follow the passages that are covered at Christ Church and in the other home groups.

To mark the change, Simon Gates, our archdeacon, led a service of commissioning of the missional community on 2 October 2016.

We recognise that with our small numbers we cannot reach out to the estate on our own, and we have been strengthening our links with the Berridge Road Partnership (mainly the church that meets on the Berridge Road premises on Sunday afternoons). We now have monthly joint prayer meetings to pray for the people on the estate.

XLP continue to bring the XLP bus to the Berridge Road Estate on Thursday evenings. They have around 18 young people coming to the bus.

❖ Christ Church Children and Young Families

Last year we again had a great year with lots of fun at our Night Light Party, Crafts and Christingle Service, Nativity Service and Easter Baking and Crafts Morning. Not to mention the monthly Raise the Praise Service and weekly Children's Church sessions. We have a wonderful team of volunteers who give up their time and energy to help our children to know Jesus and to reach out to children in the community. It is a privilege to see children growing in faith within our church.



❖ Legacy

Our Legacy group has continued to meet weekly on Friday evenings in the upper halls and we have tried to develop a combination of free time, football, games and a chill zone alongside a more structured part of the evening with leaders introducing a weekly activity involving all the young people for some group fun. Numbers are a little erratic but on average 12 teenagers attend (predominantly the 11 - 14 year olds).

❖ XLP



Our partnership with XLP has continued to bear fruit and the second year of their work in Lambeth has continued to be favoured and blessed by God. The work at the Pupil Referral Unit on Gipsy Road has grown and the bus project on Berridge Road is now a much appreciated resource on the estate. Jerome Hughes, the borough leader, now has three team members including the wonderful Hannah Miles who joined Christ Church as an XLP intern in September, full of godly joy and passion for the work. XLP operate in Brixton and Tulse Hill and are looking for more volunteers to support their work.

❖ Playpen

Playpen is our church run 'Stay and Play' Baby and Toddler Group for 0-4 year olds and their parents / carers.

It is a really friendly playgroup, and a great place for people living in the community to make friends, or to meet up for a chat and a cuppa, while their children can enjoy a whole host of activities. Each week we have a variety of different activities set out from threading beads, craft activities, play dough, small world toys, a home corner, book corner, wheelie cars, slides, tunnels and tents!

We have recently been purchasing new toys and equipment and changing the layout more frequently, this has seemed to please those coming, who have commented on the lovely new toys and different layouts. Special thanks to Sharon, who has been keeping an eye out for bargains on selling sites for us and for her love of 'moving things round'.



This year we have also moved our song time to slightly later in the morning, so after singing the children can enjoy a fruit snack and water, and then make their way home.

We see between 30 and 45 toddlers come through the doors every Wednesday and Thursday morning during term-time. With a lot of the adults commenting that we are the best playgroup for miles – which is always lovely to hear!

Helen Williams has been managing Playpen for about five years, along with a great team of volunteers from the local community and

more recently Ali Seal our Ministry Assistant.

Thank you to Glenys Wood and Beth Peters, both from church, who have volunteered at Playpen over the past year.

A big thank you to the Wednesday Volunteers: Christine Woollard, Sue Chalcroft and Sharon Robinson Walder who all work as childminders in the area. They have been coming to playpen for many, many years and are an amazing help! They come early each week to finish setting up, help to prepare fruit, drinks and crafts. Christine also leads our song time. Sue and Sharon have taken to coming up with craft ideas and cutting out lots at home, ready for playpen. Along with purchasing toys and coming up with new suggestions - I honestly don't know what I would do without the help of these 3! Thanks also to Katie Wrigley, who used to attend with her children who are now all at school, for the excellent job she does in the kitchen, serving drinks, washing up, being a friendly and welcoming presence and more!

Also to the Thursday Volunteers; Tim Eveleigh (previously a member of Christ Church) who has helped for over 10 years on a Thursday, his wonderful guitar playing and song leading. Jon Caddell and Tracey Fuery for helping with anything and everything, for Jon's



amazing ability to get everything done at super speed and always leaving the kitchen pristine! To Sarah Milner who also helped for a short while and will be back to help from next week!

To all of the Thursday team for helping to put everything away, getting everything washed up and dried up and always staying with me helping until absolutely everything has been done.

Finally last, but not least thanks to Ayon for coming to set up the slide, tables and large equipment on a Wednesday morning and getting all the toys out of the cupboard, and returning on a Thursday to put them all away again!

❖ 3rd Gipsy Hill Brownies

2016 was another good year for the pack. We enjoyed a day at the seaside in July when Frankie made her Brownie Promise, although it was a little cooler than hoped. Christmas was celebrated with a Christingle Service and a performance of Aladdin for parents and friends.

Chantelle (Robin) got married in May, and Kezia joined us as a new Unit Helper.

We are all looking forward to our day out in London including a visit to the Houses of Parliament, thanks to the kindness of Helen Hayes MP.



We are saying goodbye to a bunch of our older Brownies at the end of term, but five new Brownies made their promise last week so the pack is still quite full, although there are currently vacancies for 7-9 year old girls.

❖ Mothers' Union Gipsy Hill Branch



The Mothers' Union branch at Christ Church was at work in 2016 in subtle ways through its members. Members participated in the life of the church as Sunday School teachers and supporters of the youth programme. Others were active in the Baptism Support programme, visiting parents in anticipation of their child's baptism and sharing ideas about raising children in the faith. As a group, the Mothers' Union contributed to the celebration of Mothering Sunday by making tags with a bible verse to put on the posies given to all ladies in church on the

Sunday and with the provision of floral decorations in the church.

Together with the Mothers' Union members of All Saints', West Dulwich and friends, we shared an evening meal and viewed a programme about Alzheimer's. The presenter was a Christian doctor who, as a sufferer herself, gave sharp insights into the condition. The session was, surprisingly, upbeat; we left understanding much more about how to approach and work with sufferers.

In August, we had a picnic in Regent's Park and saw "Jesus Christ Superstar" at the Outdoor Theatre.

In more personal ways, members and friends met at the start of the school year to pray by candlelight for their children and for each other, drawing on themes such as 'Seeking Wisdom and Discernment' and 'Developing a Hunger for the Things of God'. Over the years, we have seen answers to our prayers and have been much encouraged by this.

Over the year, we are asked to participate in Government consultations that affect family life. An autumn consultation concerned charges levied on claimants of child maintenance. At issue was the need to have a provision to make clear to the victims of gender violence that they have exemption from such charges.

Our last event in the year is our annual wreath making – a very enjoyable fixture in our calendar.



❖ Community use of church buildings



The newly refurbished Goodliffe Hall is now even busier than ever. Team Dance continues to be our most frequent regular user, running dance classes in Tap, Ballet, Modern and Jazz for children (they have over 100 children on their books!) and one or two classes for adults in the evening. 'Slimmers' World' has continued with a new coordinator after Sophia, who opened the Goodliffe Hall branch of SW in 2015, was promoted to a regional coordinating role.

The Brownies continue to meet on Monday evenings and on Tuesday evenings the Crystal

Palace Community Choir meets in the upstairs hall, following straight on from the new Zumba class in the lower hall.

Playpen takes place on Wednesday and Thursday mornings and the National Childbirth Trust continue to run occasional classes for expectant parents throughout the year.

We also have language lessons in French, Spanish and German running in the hall on a Saturday morning. Christ Victory Church 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 deanery, the Diocesan Evangelical Union and for the leadership teams of Foodbank, XLP and Centre 70.

Following its renovation in 2015, we also now have a nursery running down in our Berridge Road Buildings. Alphabet Lanes nursery, with its original nursery full to capacity in West Norwood, approached us at the end of 2015 to use the hall as a day nursery and after much expectation opened its doors to its first children in Summer 2016. After anticipated teething troubles – it's hard sharing a building! - the nursery seems to have settled down well and is beginning to grow its numbers. We hope this will continue successfully both as an important community provision in this area and a reliable source of funding for our mission as a church. The newly refurbished Goodliffe Hall is now even busier than ever. Team Dance continues to be our most frequent regular user, running dance classes in Tap, Ballet, Modern and Jazz for children – (they have over 100 children on their books!) and one or two classes for adults in the evening. 'Slimmers' World' has continued with a new coordinator after Sophia, who opened the Goodliffe Hall branch of SW in 2015, was promoted to a regional coordinating role.

The Brownies continue to meet on Monday evenings and on Tuesday evenings the Crystal Palace Community Choir meets in the upstairs hall, following straight on from the new Zumba class in the lower hall.

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❖ Norwood and Brixton Foodbank

During 2016 Norwood and Brixton Foodbank celebrated five years of serving the local



community. This is a statistic I had not imagined when we first opened, but, as changes continue to take place which directly affect those in poverty, the need for foodbanks continues. As we finish the year it looks as though our numbers of clients may well be up after remaining static for two years.

In our first five years we have fed in excess of 2,065 people in the Gipsy Hill area of which 743 were children, feeding over 33,000 people in total and giving away in excess of 230 tonnes food.

This Christmas week saw our busiest time to date. On 23 Dec we fed 600 people and gave away five tonnes food helped by over 80 volunteers. It was a truly staggering experience.



As we move into a new period we are looking at how we can further support those we see. Our collaborations with Centre 70 and Brixton Advice have enabled us to ensure they get all the advice they need around benefits and more. Our work with Duncan Lewis the legal team and Tomorrows People ensure we can provide referrals for support around job searches and a range of legal issues. For a short time during 2016 we had a support worker from Mosaic Clubhouse to provide signposting on mental health issues, something which was really helpful and if funding permitted we would look to restart.

We had two small grants which enabled us to run 'Eat Well, Spend Less' courses (part of our 'More Than Food' work) teaching local people to cook healthy meals on a budget. These have been very successful and we hope funding will permit us to deliver more of these courses during 2017.

So, what are our challenges and areas for prayer?

1. To look at our structures and ensure we work as efficiently as possible to enable us to deliver the best service we can and look to extend our work of 'More Than Food'.
2. To seek funding for our advice workers, we currently need over £3,000 a month to cover all sessions.
3. To seek funding to enable us to continue and expand our 'More Than Food' work.
4. To continue to provide a safe, warm space where people can find help and where the message of hope through Jesus can be shared with those open to hearing it.
5. To work collaboratively with others to enable us to provide additional support to those in crisis.

❖ Churches together in Upper Norwood

Churches Together in Upper Norwood (CTUN) is a local fellowship of some 15 churches on both sides of the Lambeth / Croydon border.

Many of us are in some way 'ecumenical', we might be involved with XLP or with the Women's World Day of Prayer, and we are free to receive communion in non-Anglican churches if we wish to.

CTUN organises a few of its own events; regular features include "Ecumenical Prayers" on the first Wednesday of the month at 10.30 am and a very popular table-tennis club which happens every Thursday evening.

Additional highlights of the past year have included:

- Good Friday Act of Witness outside Sainsbury's – to be repeated on April 14 in 2017
- Songs of Praise chosen by members of local congregations and accompanied by the full Salvation Army band
- An evening with Tom Elliott, Christian comedian, early in March 2017.

Overseas Mission



❖ Mission Group

Our relationships with organisations with an international focus are overseen by the Mission Group. The Mission Group works with each organisation on a rolling three year basis. This gives certainty for each charity 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. We currently support three organisations; Tearfund, the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW).

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. During the year, three of the Missions Team visited the headquarters of CHO in



Poipet, NW Cambodia and saw first-hand the wide range of activities organised and supported by CHO and its leader, Chomno In. They were able to visit local villages and take part in the efforts to combat the severe drought which was affecting Cambodia at that time, as well as taking two lessons at 'Schools on a Mat' and participating in Sunday worship in a local village church and at the main CHO school. The team reported back to the church at a Sunday service in the autumn.

- The Church Mission Society (CMS): we continue to support the Clouston family: Eric and Rhena, with their two children Kitty and Sam, who are based in Bangalore, India.
- Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW): works for religious freedom throughout the world through advocacy and human rights, in the pursuit of justice.

We want our engagement with these organisations to be proactive. The group are responsible for providing regular updates about the work of the organisations to the congregation throughout the year, providing matters for prayer and notifying the church of any urgent needs or developments in the project or organisation

Information is also posted on the missions' notice board and every four months the Wednesday prayer meeting focuses primarily on our mission organisations.

❖ Lent toilet appeal

Last year I was inspired by the work of Tearfund and their toilet twinning scheme. Toilet twinning provides people with the most basic sanitary right; a clean, safe toilet. Tearfund train locals in building and maintaining them so education on sanitation is also transferred. Churches, businesses schools and individuals can give £60 and twin their shiny white toilet with another in the developing world.



During Lent last year I challenged the church to twin all nine toilets in the church. That required raising at least £540. We set up a decorated (cleaned) toilet which people could donate in, throughout the four weeks of Lent. In that time we completely smashed our target and raised enough money to twin 12 toilets. From suggestions from the congregation we twinned the toilets with ones in Cambodia, India, Guatemala and various other countries. Go round the church and see if you can find all the plaques dedicated to those new toilets we helped to build.



This appeal also had another lasting impact; it inspired others to also twin toilets. The colourful toilet went on tour and was taken to Susan and Anthony Dalton's school where they continued the toilet twinning mission by raising money to twin their school toilets. If anyone else is interested in twinning their school or home toilet, get involved! There's a map at the back of church, and we want to cover it with twinned toilets!

❖ Trip to China for International China Concern

In August 2016 the Croucher family (Jonathan, Yvette, Bethany, Ben, Natty and Isaac), the Gates family (Simon, Helen, Charis, Anna and Sam) and Rachel Skeath went to China to volunteer at a children's care centre run by International China Concern (ICC). Two young people from St Thomas and St Stephens church and one from St Simons in North London, together with a school party of 8 teenagers and their teacher from Sheffield were also part of the group. The team went via Hong Kong to acclimatise and whilst there ran a three day English holiday camp for two local Christian schools associated with Holy Trinity cathedral.



It was then on to China, 500km by high speed 'bullet' train to the children's centre in Hengyang, Hunan Province. The children's centre is home to 140 children and young adults with a range of disabilities who for many different reasons have been abandoned and left without anyone to look after them. The children's home is a remarkable place. The residents live in groups of six to eight, living as a family with two caregivers. The centre has recently

moved into a new basic, but by comparison to the previous building, spacious and airy building. The new building has many excellent facilities including class rooms, therapy rooms, a lovely play area and a swimming pool. However, resources for staff are very limited and there are not enough staff to be able to safely take full advantage of all that is available, particularly the swimming pool and play area. Our volunteer role was simply to play with the children and young adults giving them as much one to one attention as we could muster!



The trip created memories that will never be forgotten, particularly seeing happiness in all guises; from outbursts of laughter, to just a flicker of the eye or a nod of the head. All credit to the dedicated staff and volunteers that work there.

The team held several different fund-raising events to raise money to support the trip including a 24 hour football match, two pop-up restaurants, cycling and running events.

ICC is a Christian development organisation whose vision is to change lives by bringing love, hope and opportunity to

China's abandoned and disabled. It was founded in 1993 and exists to help the disadvantaged live life to the full. Chinese nationals predominantly manage their projects in China with support from dedicated international volunteers, both in China and abroad (www.chinaconcern.org).



國際關心中國慈善協會
International China Concern
Creating full lives for China's abandoned and disabled

❖ Gloria Byakatonda



The parish has been paying the university fees and support for Gloria Byakatonda as she took a degree course in business administration at the Uganda Christian University. Gloria is the orphaned niece of Peninnah Nalwanga, a member at Berridge Road, and she has no family to support her. We are so grateful for the support and prayers of members at Christ Church and Berridge Road.

We were delighted when Gloria graduated in October with an upper second class honours degree. Given the high level of youth unemployment in Uganda we thought she would have to wait months for a job, but the Ugandan army were recruiting and she grasped the opportunity and applied.

Richard Winborn visited Uganda with Peninnah in October and attended the graduation ceremony. Gloria had already begun her army training, and army rules mean that once the training (which lasts for nine months) had started, the recruits are not allowed to leave the training even for a graduation ceremony, and they are not allowed visitors. We did however meet Lieutenant Colonel Robert Ngabirano, who had interviewed Gloria and was impressed with her. He said, "She has a heart to serve." He said that with a degree Gloria could become an officer in due time, and her degree in business administration would be very useful in a lot of areas of army work. He invited us to attend the commissioning of the recruits at the end of the nine months.

Here are a few words of appreciation taken from Gloria's e-mails before she joined the army: "I thank the church for the fees, I really appreciate it. May God bless the church. I love all the church members. Thank you for asking people interested in my progress to pray for me. God bless them."



Church Community

❖ Sleepout in church

In December 2016 Christ Church took part in the Church Urban fund's Sleep out to raise funds for helping marginalised people in England transform their lives.

Thirty members of the congregation took part in the event with many more sponsoring their efforts. The evening started with a 'bangers and mash' supper followed by a very atmospheric camp fire in the vicarage garden, including singing led by Johnny Crawford on guitar. The actual sleep out took place upstairs in the Goodliffe Hall with people bedding down on airbeds with their sleeping bags or duvets - some people even got some sleep, well, at least the person snoring did! We raised a staggering amount – over £1,500 was sent to CUF in the new year to support their work.



❖ Social Activities

As in previous years, Christ Church has organised a range of social activities. The newly refurbished Goodliffe Hall has made these events much easier to arrange and provides a pleasanter setting for events.

The church quiz has become a firm favourite in people's calendar and this year the next generation of Mitchenalls got involved in the entertainment. Stuart managed to find a good mix of topics, with the usual sprinkling of little known facts and, while he counted up the scores, his grandson stepped on the podium to entertain us with some impromptu jokes, delivered with impeccable timing. The whole evening was rounded up with a traditional fish 'n' chips supper.



Another favourite event was the 'Come dine with me' evening, ably organised by Yvette and Trena. The event was well attended and gave us an opportunity to meet members of the congregation we didn't know well; as well as sampling some fantastic home cooking.



On the food theme, we also had another church BBQ with slightly better weather than the previous year. Again there were generous donations of salads and puddings and a wide choice of grilled meat and vegetarian options. Beyond the food, the opportunity to chat to people at leisure was what the event was really about. Chatting with new and old friends is something that we as a congregation excel at; after all, coffee after the service can take a long time and is an opportunity to catch up with people on their news or provide encouragement for those facing difficult situations.

❖ Creative Artistry Group

On the last Monday of each month in the evening, 10-15 people can be found in the vicarage sharing craft ideas, making things, drinking coffee and chatting making for a most enjoyable evening.

In the spring and summer of 2016 we made items to sell on a craft stall held alongside the plant sale in May. The main activity at that time, though, was to make finger puppets and sensory mats to be taken to



China by the group who in

August visited a children's centre run by International China Concern. People made six-inch squares, each different, for the children who have significant disabilities to feel and see. The squares were sewn together to make two mats.

We then met again after Christmas to think of ideas for the upcoming Vintage Fair. Members keep their eyes open for new ideas found on the internet or seen at bazaars visited.

All are welcome to join this group, expert or non-expert in craft. Come and try it out!



Financial Report Summary

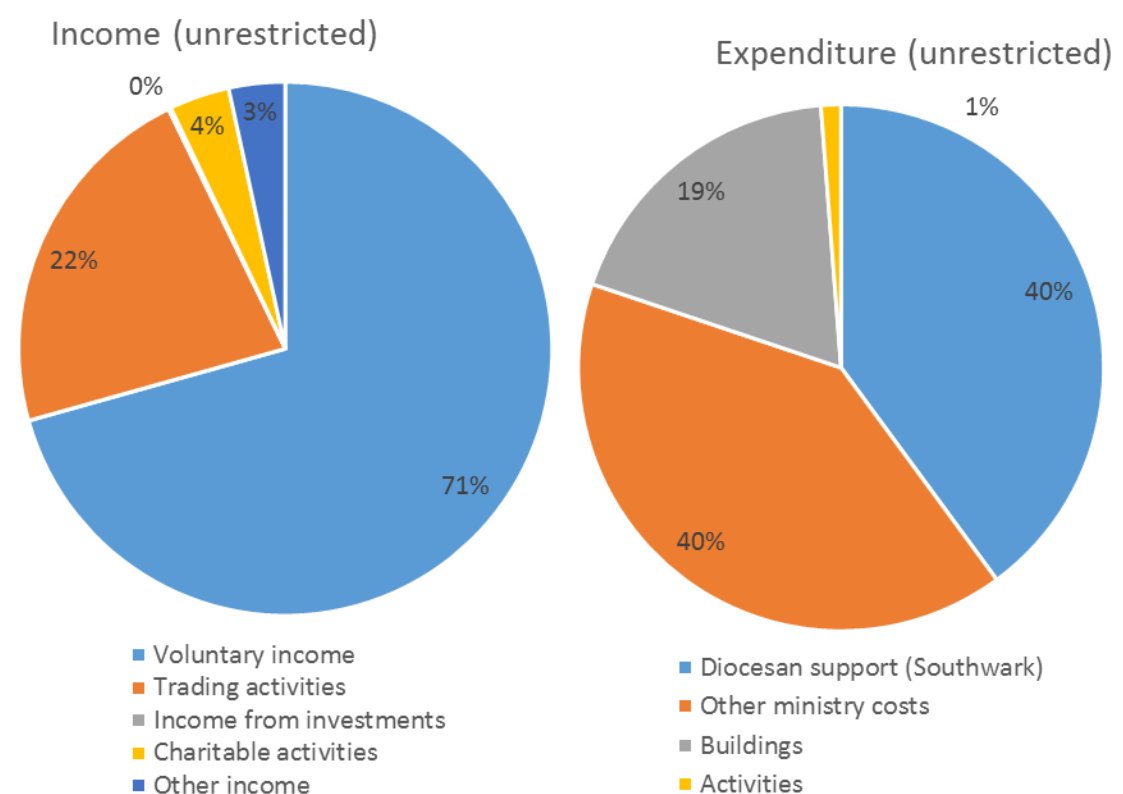
We have much to be thankful for to do with the Church's finances in 2016.

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.

Unrestricted Funds

The income of £233,161 (an increase of 38,057 (20%)) exceeded expenditure of £213,055 (an increase of £32,181 (18%)), giving a surplus for the year of £20,106. The charts below show the breakdown of income and expenditure.

Details of the income and expenditure are provided below:



- The majority of this increase is due to higher Hall Lettings Income (£21,581 increase) and an insurance premiums refund (£7,975)
- The voluntary income (regular giving from the congregation) increased by 1% to £164,732. The Increase is due to higher Gift Aid income (which includes tax recovered from Weekend Away payments).
- Activities from generating funds (mainly hall hire) increased by 95% to £51,572. There has been a £21,581 increase in Lettings Income due to 'Alphabet Lanes' (£12,000), increase in 'Team Dance' income (approx. £5,000) and other general increase in usage.
- Income from charitable activities was £8,507, an increase of £3,038 from the previous year due to higher Playpen income and an increase in service fees.
- Other income of £7,975 relates to a refund of insurance premiums. We were notified in January 2017 by Ecclesiastical Insurance that we have been wrongly assessed over the last seven years and were therefore due a refund for this amount.
- Increase in Southwark Diocese support (£5,000).

- Other Ministry costs have increased from £57,626 to £85,773 in the previous year. The increase is due to
 - Ministry Assistant salary (ca £7,000). Note that this has been presented in the accounts as being funded from our Contingency Fund (i.e. savings) as agreed with the PCC.
 - Increase in Curate property rental costs (ca £9,000).
 - New AV system (ca £8,000)
- Buildings: Total cost of £39,664, compared to £41,222 in the previous year. This includes £7,170 for installing a toilet in the Vicarage annex and associated works.

Restricted Funds

The restricted income of £35,454 exceeded restricted expenditure of £25,877. The surplus relates to Grant Income and Legacies which remained unspent at the year-end. Details of the income and expenditure are provided below:

- Voluntary Income of £11,711: Includes legacy received of £5,000 and £6,711 relating to China Mission Trip, Toilet Appeal, and other specified donations.
- Income from Investments of £4,756: Relates to dividends received from the Goodliffe Endowment Fund, which funds our youth work.
- Charitable Activities of £18,987: Weekend Away payments and donations of £11,087 and Grants received of £7,900 (£2,900 for Open Door and £5,000 for Counselling Support)
- Other Ministry costs of £13,520: Spend of Open Door grant of £2,900, youth intern costs of £2,420, and special collections expenditure of £8,200 (include China Mission Trip, other specified donations etc).
- Activities of £12,357: Weekend Away costs of £11,822 (largely covered by payments and donations) and youth expenditure of £535.