



Christ Church Gipsy Hill Hill Annual Report 2017



Christ Church Gipsy Hill

Introduction

Welcome to our annual report for 2017 which will be presented to the Annual Parochial Church meeting in April 2018. It has been a wonderful 150th anniversary year, full of excitement and special events.

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

2017 has been a wonderful year of celebration and thanksgiving for the life of our church as we celebrated the 150th anniversary of the church being built on the Highland Road site. With an ambition to reflect on the past as we celebrate the present and look to the future, we enjoyed a number of great events that brought our history to life and welcomed the community in to our celebrations. The Vintage Fayre in May was a suitably rousing start to the anniversary events, with over 500 people joining in the festivities, not least in the unforgettable Maypole dancing. With garden parties, jazz night and a wonderful barbecue in July where we welcomed back former members and clergy the joint themes of music and food have provided a solid foundation for much of our celebration. In September the excellent London Mozart Players brought the history of our church and community to life in music and the year of celebration culminated in a banquet in November followed by a beautiful anniversary service at which Bishop Christopher confirmed eight of our members.



Throughout all of the special events and activities - for which much gratitude is due to all in the congregation who researched, planned, cooked, served, tidied, supported and attended - there has been a strong emphasis on the community that we serve and on looking forward to all God has in store for us in the future.

In the midst of it all, we have of course also been continuing to focus on what it means to be God's people in this corner of London at this moment in time. The sermon and home group series in the Spring using the 'Fruitfulness on the Front Line' material from the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity, called us to reflect more deeply on what it means to be kingdom people in our daily lives and invited us to think about what God might be calling us to in those places where we spend the majority of our time.

We have also begun two very significant collaborations - with St Christopher's Hospice and the dementia charity Hope for Home - that we hope will enable us to continue to play our part in serving our local community. The 'Compassionate Neighbours' launch in October spoke to the opportunities we have, working with others, to reach different sections of our community. The new dementia hub, which formally opened at the beginning of February 2018, sits alongside Open Door and our other ministries as a practical way in which we can together demonstrate the love of God for all people here in Gipsy Hill.

This new year has begun with planning for our Mission Action Plan, as we look forward to the next three years of ministry and mission. Already core themes are developing around building confidence in our faith and equipping one another to share that faith with others - complementing our particular focus on serving our community over the past three years.

As I wrote this summary at the end of February 2018, I received news of the death of Eric Hamilton, a much loved and respected member of our congregation. Eric worshipped at Christ Church for over 50 of its 150 years, serving as warden for 20 years and prayerfully leading home and study groups for many more. His strong personal faith, humility and commitment to serve stands as an inspiration to many of us as we seek to build up our community of faith, equip one another as disciples of Christ, and serve our local communities.

As we give thanks to God for this year of celebration, so we also give thanks for Eric, and for all who have served the Lord in and from this church over the past 150 years.

Jonathan

Sunday morning services (9am & 10.30am)

We have continued to welcome newcomers to both our 9am and 10.30am Sunday morning services, and the question of how we might develop our services in order to encourage and accommodate more growth, continues to be a live one. Having had an overhaul of the audio system and the installation of two TV screens at the front of church, 2017 has seen us regularly use the screens at the 10.30am Sunday service to display lyrics or responses. Feedback has been good, and as well as enabling our worship we hope to see a significant reduction in paper use. We have also enjoyed being able to boost the visual content of sermons, with video appearances from The West Wing and The Muppet Christmas Carol being top hits! We are now developing a team to ensure that we can use projection every Sunday and make the most of this technology. It has also been exciting to see a number of our young people get involved in helping on Sundays, both singing with the worship team and helping with the technology. As always, we are tremendously grateful for all who contribute to the running of our Sunday morning services, including the work we do with children and youth.

This year, the Berridge team prayerfully decided to bring their Sunday meetings to a close, and to start worshipping with the wider Christ Church family. Although not an easy decision, it has been wonderful to welcome members of the Berridge community to worship at Christ Church on Sunday mornings. You can read more about the Berridge team later in this report.

As part of our 150th Anniversary celebrations we were also able to hold a number of special services – welcoming on different occasions our Diocesan Bishop, Christopher Chessun, and our Area Bishop, Richard Cheetham, as well former clergy and members of the congregation. For our final Anniversary celebration, we were delighted that Bishop Christopher was able to confirm eight members of the church, as well as preaching and presiding at Holy Communion.

Study Series

We have aimed to more consistently provide resources that enable our home groups to follow the Sunday morning sermon series during their Bible studies together. This year, that has prompted us to produce studies on 1 Peter, Amos and Micah, as well as a six-part series that followed LICC's "Fruitfulness on the Frontline" series. The goal is to enable our home groups to engage in more depth with the passages and topics explored on Sundays, providing resources that can be adapted to the needs of each group. During our home group leaders meetings it has been encouraging to hear from many of our leaders that these resources provide a helpful way to study and engage with the Bible together.

Inspire

Our informal service, Inspire, has continued in to its third year. Held in the evening on the first Sunday of every month, we have worked through a number of different topics, including finishing studying the Lord's Prayer, a three-part summer series on worship, and then starting a year-long exploration of Jesus' parables. Like our main Sunday morning service, we have had a number of different preachers over the months to help unpack the content. The service draws around 20 people, allowing for open discussion and interactive teaching. Inspire also offers an opportunity to worship more informally, with extended periods of singing led by a band, meeting in the Narthex in a coffee shop style layout.

Berridge Road

The Berridge Road Community Church was set up as a church plant by Christ Church in the early 1990s and offered public worship on Sunday mornings, led by Dave Scroby. In 2016, the PCC

agreed that, instead of operating as a separate congregation, our work and presence on the estate should become a 'missional community', meeting for Bible study on Sunday mornings and working with other Christians and churches to pray for and engage with those who live on the Berridge Road Estate.

In 2017, we realised that, with low numbers, it was no longer viable to continue to meet at Berridge Road on Sunday mornings. From October the Berridge Road community joined the main congregation at Christ Church on Sunday mornings but continues to keep in touch with the church that uses the premises on Sunday afternoons, and to meet them monthly to pray for people who live on the Estate.

Despite our move from Berridge Road on Sunday mornings, the premises are well used, with the Alphabet Lanes nursery there five days a week, as well as the Sunday afternoon church and another Christian group that meets there on Friday evenings. The XLP team bring their double decker bus to the Estate on Thursday evenings and engage with the young people who live on the Estate.

Bible in a Year

As part of our 150th Anniversary celebrations, the whole church was encouraged to take on the challenge of reading through the Bible in one year, using resources provided by The Bible Project, including a reading plan, an app, and animated videos that provide helpful introductions to every book of the Bible.

The reading plan was complemented with monthly meetings to provide an opportunity for people to reflect on their reading together, to share encouragement, to ask questions and explore the aspects of the Bible that have proved challenging or difficult. Over the course of these meetings we looked at a variety of issues, including difficult aspects of the Old Testament, the Davidic kingdom, the Psalms, Proverbs, and the role and experience of women in the Bible. We were able to welcome a number of guest speakers to help lead these sessions, including members of staff from Spurgeon's College, Dr Meg Warner (University of Exeter) and Nathan Godleman, who is a Rabbi in training from the South London Liberal Synagogue.

The meetings have attracted around 20 attendees each month, but many others also followed the reading plan. It has been a huge encouragement to see a significant number of the church take on the challenge of reading through the entire Bible and engaging more deeply with their faith as a result.

Prayer

Our monthly prayer meeting continues on the first Wednesday of each month at 8pm when we pray for the church, local community and wider world. Attendance is relatively small, though those who come appreciate the opportunity to meet with God together.

On Good Friday we have a prayer walk around the parish which begins at Berridge Road and journeys round different streets in the parish, stopping at various strategic points to sing a hymn, read from the bible, and pray together for some aspect of parish life, before joining the Churches Together Act of Witness outside Sainsbury's. Some also join the prayer walk after that around the Crystal Palace triangle. It is a reminder of our witness and our calling to be people of prayer for our community and our world.



During Lent of 2017, we again hosted Lambeth's 24/7 Prayer room for half a week. This offered space in the chapel with a selection of creative

prayer resources to focus on God, and offer prayer for our local communities and churches. A number of people, mostly from our congregation, came to pray on their own or in groups; those who did really valued the quiet time with God.

Every Tuesday and Thursday mornings we have Morning Prayer in the chapel, which as well as using the liturgy for that service, gives us an opportunity to pray together for the needs of the world, local community, church and individuals. Prayer is a vital part of our church life, and we welcome everyone to these occasions.

Home groups - *Richard and Rhos Roberts*

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, Elizabeth Maytom & Jodie Lomax, Dave Scroby, Anthony & Pam Merifield, Pete & Esther Moorey, Ali & Rob Seal, Pippa Evans, Yvette Croucher and Richard & Rhos Roberts. 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 once or twice a term lead a morning service. 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.

Pastoral Care - *Richard and Rhos Roberts*

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 bi-monthly to identify and address practical problems faced by church members and attendees. A small team prepares meals on request for the elderly, the needy, sick members of the congregation, 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.

Children and Young People's Ministry

Sunday School - *Esther Moorey*



Christ Church is blessed with a large, lively, group of children who come to church each week with their families. We run three Sunday school groups for pre and primary school aged children; Scramblers for the 3-5s, Climbers for the 5-7s, and Explorers for the 7-11s. We also have a crèche for our youngest members. Each group has a committed team of volunteers who teach each week. Crafts, games and activities bring Bible themes and stories to life and help our children learn about God and develop their own understanding of how to be a follower of Jesus. Special occasions and events have seen lots of children and their families welcomed in to church - Easter crafts; the Christingle service and Christmas craft afternoon and also the popular Christmas Eve nativity service.

One of the most valuable things about our children's activities, from Sunday school, to Raise the Praise and Shine is that our children make lasting friendships, making Christ Church a safe, fun and welcoming place that they want to be a part of.

Raise the Praise

Our monthly service for children aged 8 and under has continued to surprise and excite! Sometimes small, sometimes overflowing, we gather on the second Sunday of the month to sing, pray, read the Bible and explore what we know about God and Jesus. It continues to give the children a space for worship which is truly their own, and with the wonderful tea and general mêlée at the end, an opportunity for the children and their parents to get to know one another better.



Shine - *Beth Peters*



Shine is the monthly event for our 8-11 year olds. Bible stories are explored through a variety of fun activities, crafts and games, with times for worship and prayer. Whilst those who came enjoyed it, it was felt that the timing was wrong as so few could attend. As such, we stopped Shine in the autumn and relaunched in January 2018, aiming to coincide with Raise the Praise. Hopefully this will be a better slot but with the same great activities and attended with enthusiasm.

Light night - *Beth Peters*

We were really excited that on the 31st October we held another amazing Light Night party. The children enjoyed a number of activities including parachute games, fun in the dark, and then shared some food. They explored what it means for Jesus to be the light and the young people took home objects to do with light and booklets about Jesus. It was lovely to see so many families that we don't see at church as part of our mission to children in the parish. Thanks to everyone who spared their time to make this happen!

Holiday Club - Ali Seal



In July we ran a sports-themed holiday club for 50 local primary school children. Over three mornings we explored the idea of being on Jesus' team through games, craft, singing and drama. We began, being led by Jonathan, with time together in the hall, where the Bible story was told, and we sang together (very energetically). The children then split into their age-groups and had a choice of playing sport, being on the bouncy castle or doing crafts. Highlights of the three days included Isaac Croucher's performance as Svetlana, and of custard pies... We had a wonderful team of teen and adult volunteers from Christ Church who came up with excellent activities and made sure the children had a super time. One parent wrote "my daughter had such a great time, she just wished it could have gone on longer!"



Youth group - Pippa Evans



The youth group continues to meet on Sunday mornings, with the 11-14 age group gathering in the Blue Room upstairs, and the 15+ group heading over to the vicarage. The groups tend to leave the service shortly after the gospel reading and return either for communion or at the end of the service. The groups have generally followed the same focus as the main service, recently also studying Amos and Micah, for example.

There have been some changes to Legacy, our youth group, this term. We have moved from meeting every Friday to once a fortnight, in order to encourage greater turn-out on these evenings - we believe that it might help to make Legacy more significant in the diary of our young people if they are less frequent, hopefully enticing more young people along. Legacy will also now be predominantly aimed at our 11-15 year olds, though those 15+ are still welcome. There are a variety of activities on offer, including football or hockey (indoor in the colder, wetter months and outside in the summer), board games, group games like empires, wii, popcorn machine, a craft like clay work, and the tuck shop.



We have also introduced 'Breakaway', a new youth group that meets once a month for all those 15+. It will meet straight after Inspire, our monthly informal service, and simply be a space to relax, chat and socialise.

On two occasions this year, our youth group has attended a service called Ignite - an event specially aimed at bringing young people together from the local and surrounding areas of south London. The evening offers an informal event to excite and entertain youth groups.

Once a term, all the youth group together have met up to enjoy a social event. Over the year this has included visits to the local pizza restaurant and Flipout Wandsworth. These have been great occasions where our young people have been able to socialise, develop friendships and relax together.

150 years - Anniversary Celebrations

Vintage Fayre

In May we held a Vintage Fayre at Christ Church, with the aim of celebrating our anniversary with the community.

Church members and lots of our neighbours ran stalls selling home-made or vintage items; plants, jewellery, clothes, homewares, delicious cakes and fascinating artistic prints were all on offer. A fabulous team from Christ Church put on lunches



and afternoon teas, and we

were entertained by the Open Door Choir, the Crystal Palace Community Choir and Fiona-Jane Weston.

We also had great fun learning how to dance around a maypole in the afternoon. Many attendees seemed to enjoy taking the opportunity to read the exhibition on the history of the church and the parish. We were thrilled to welcome 500 people over the course of the day and that we managed to raise just over £2200 for Open Door.

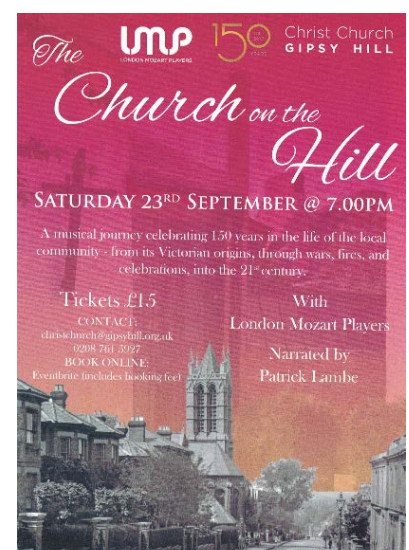


BBQ

In June we invited all members of Christ Church, past and present, to attend a special service followed by a BBQ in the vicarage garden. Over 200 people joined us for the morning and it was wonderful to have two of our previous clergy with us – Cyril Tennant and Patrick Whitworth. We showed a short video of the poignant (and sometimes humorous) recollections of several Christ Church members who have been at the church for the longest. We also held a series of garden parties over the summer months including one that coincided with the Crystal Palace Festival and the Great Get Together in honour of Jo Cox. The events were a great opportunity to welcome our neighbours and to chat with them about life in the area, our church, its history and our faith over delicious home-made cakes.

London Mozart Players

In September we held a night of music and history as we explored the story of 'the Church on the Hill', from its birth to the present day, with the help of the London Mozart Players. Patrick Lambe narrated, and the London Mozart Players played pieces to mark significant dates in the life of our church and community. It was an evening of fabulous music and fascinating facts.



Feast

To draw the 150th anniversary celebrations to a close, our events team pulled off a fabulous evening. At the end of November, Christ Church was turned into a banqueting hall, our young people transformed into waiters and waitresses, and we were fed a wonderful three course meal. It was a very special time to celebrate with friends and to muse over the highlights of the year.

The next day was our closing anniversary service, complete with confirmations. It was a fitting way to celebrate the history of the church, the fun of the anniversary year and to look forward to our continued communal journey of faith.



Quilt

A team of Christ Church creatives set about making a special anniversary quilt. Over the year they worked together to design and make the squares for the quilt and then to bring them together to form a beautiful and colourful design. On the back members of Christ Church were invited to sign their names - the quilt is now a very special time capsule of the 2017 Christ Church community.



Anniversary Services

The anniversary celebrations were marked at their beginning and end by special services led by our two Bishops. The first, at the beginning of May saw the Bishop of Kingston, the Right Rev. Richard Cheetham, our 'area bishop' preach and preside on a wonderful Spring day following the Vintage Fayre (at which Bishop Christopher had also made a guest appearance). And at the culmination of the celebrations in November, our diocesan Bishop, the Right Rev. Christopher Chessun, the Bishop of Southwark, joined us both for our anniversary meal on the Saturday night and presided at our final anniversary service which included confirmations. Both these services reminded us of our church's place in the wider church. During the anniversary year, as has been recorded earlier, we also invited former clergy and members back to join us – Cyril Tennant, vicar from 1969 to 1982 and Patrick Whitworth, vicar from 1984 to 1995, were guests at our anniversary barbecue in July and Andrew Rumsey, vicar from 2000 to 2011 preached at a special service in September.

Declarations of Faith

Baptism - *Nia Coppin*

In my years of being at Christ Church, I have seen many other members of the youth be baptised, and having learnt about my faith and God I decided it was something that I would like to do too. I thought that by being baptised I would take another step in my great adventure to become closer with God. Furthermore, last year I volunteered at the holiday club in church and it taught me a lot about being a part of a family and being a member of a unified team. I realised that I wanted to become baptised as I would become a member of a greater family, such as the people in my congregation, and be a member of God's team. Finally, I saw baptism as a rebirth or a cleansing; I felt that being baptised would allow me to begin a new life in which I became the best possible version of myself. When researching baptism, I found something that read, "You are sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked as Christ's own forever", and it really touched me.

In the weeks approaching my baptism, my younger sister (who was getting baptised with me) and I met with our vicar Jonathan who talked us through how the service would take place on the day. He also talked through different Bible passages that were linked to, or mentioned, baptism. This was so important as I had a deeper biblical understanding of why I was being baptised and I felt as if I had support from everyone in the church. I felt that I had a great teacher and excellent guidance in the journey towards my baptism.

On the day, I felt very prepared and extremely excited. I was surrounded by my family, my supportive congregation and my closest friends. It was amazing to have the people that I cared about with me on my special day. I spoke about why I wanted to be baptised and found it comforting to share it with my family and congregation. I shared that it was time for me to officially acknowledge my Godmothers as they had supported me through so much and I wanted to express to them my gratitude and thanks for their kind, caring and loving efforts.



When I entered the water, I was supported by my mother and Jonathan; I felt so supported and loved. The water completely covered me and I felt, in that moment, that I was surrounded by a loving spirit and I felt wholesome, renewed and at peace. My baptism has had a lasting impact on me as I feel like I'm living my life as my best self and as if I have journeyed closer to God. Being baptised at 16 meant that I made the decision myself and is a memory that I will always remember and cherish.

Confirmation – *Isaac Croucher*

In November 2017, along with a group of young people (and adults) from Christ Church Gipsy Hill, I made a public and personal commitment to God when I was confirmed by the Bishop of Southwark. This took place at our church anniversary service and for me it was a very special occasion. I was surrounded by my close family, friends from church, members of our youth group and the wider church family. The service also took place in my home church which made it even more memorable.

Growing up in a Christian family means that church life, Jesus' teaching and Sunday worship are familiar and comfortable but I wanted to demonstrate that Jesus is also special to me personally,



which is why I felt ready to take a step of faith and get confirmed. Bishop Christopher was very kind on the day and encouraged us all in our walk with God. I also enjoyed the preparatory sessions that we did at church with the other candidates in the weeks leading up to the confirmation service. Thank you to my church family for being there on the day and for supporting me in this decision and in my faith journey.

Ordination – Heather Peters

Heather was a longstanding reader in our parish, taking a particular lead on children's work. In 2015 she began training for ordination and was ordained in July 2017 before being licensed as a curate to a church in Brixton. Heather writes of her training:



My two-year Ordination training with St Augustine's was completed during the year. I spent many hours a week studying for weekly teaching sessions at Southwark Cathedral and assignments which I found really interesting and thought provoking. I had a weekend away every six weeks in some lovely venues and some not quite so lovely. These weekends provided more opportunities for teaching but also to engage with others and share our experiences. At Easter, we had an amazing week at Canterbury where we lived in community in a boarding school and worshipped in the Cathedral. At the time, it felt as though I was on a rollercoaster of emotions and activity but it was great and needless to say I miss it now that I have moved on to the next stage of my training.

Individuals in 2017

Music Therapy in Palestine – *Sophie Williams*

Last summer I accepted a 10-week post to work as a music therapist in the Occupied Palestinian Territories on behalf of Action around Bethlehem Children with Disability (ABCD)

<http://www.abcdbethlehem.org/>. I undertook music therapy work as part of the psycho-social team attached to an NGO hospital just outside Bethlehem - The Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation (<http://www.basr.org/en/>). This work felt like a wonderful opportunity for me to give thanks to God for the new phase of life which I was entering into, and of course to gain valuable music therapy experience in schools and hospitals.

Work was varied, inspiring and quite challenging at times. I worked with children with special needs in two local schools, which were linked to the hospital, and in the hospital with in and out patients. I also had the opportunity to work with a group of teenage boys near Hebron who had all been detained by the Israeli Defence Forces and in two local orphanages. In the schools, I ran music therapy groups, mainly addressing the needs of children with a diagnosis of autism. We used music to encourage and support general educational goals, social interaction, communication, creativity and give the children an increased sense of self and autonomy. In the hospital, I ran a group for in-patient children and their parents with the aim of giving them all a chance to interact as children and parents rather than patients and carers, thus helping them to maintain their normal (home) relationship and make the hospital experience less traumatic. I also worked with a child with profound neurological damage on a one to one basis, and with a large group of children who were referred to a recreational group via the psycho-social team. I was blessed in having a supportive and enthusiastic translator and co-therapist, Sawsan, who usually works as the Education officer for the Psycho-Social team.



Weekends gave me the chance to see some of the beautiful countryside and sites, as well as to socialise with my new friends. I spent Sundays in Jerusalem, basing myself at St George's Cathedral for my spiritual life. There I met a great group of folk, both living and visiting the area, and found support when life or work became overwhelming. I grew to know the Old City well, and of course Bethlehem was another regular haunt (it was about a 30 minute walk to the Old Town from my apartment) and I often went to the souk for fresh fruit and veg. Other highlights were visiting the River Jordan (where a friend and I 'baptised' each other - a profoundly moving experience), the Dead Sea and Hebron. I was lucky enough to be invited to stay with local friends a few times and came to learn a bit more about real life in Palestine - with the hopes and fears of people living in what are very difficult circumstances.

The political situation in the area (which I had known so little about) made a deep impression on me. While I saw the trauma and fear for both Palestinians and Israelis, the profound imbalance of power and rights in favour of the Israeli population, and the daily indignities and dangers faced by my Palestinian friends and colleagues was impossible to deny.

That being said, I had a wonderful time in Palestine, learning so much and hopefully improving the lives of some children at the same time. Before leaving, I was involved in training staff so that they can continue to use music in their work with children, and I am in regular touch as a mentor regarding this work with the team in Palestine. I look forward to having future opportunities to return to this beautiful land and in the meantime pray for the peace of the Holy Land.

Amnesty International – David Griffiths

I work as the Head of the Secretary General's Office at Amnesty International's headquarters. Amnesty, which was founded in 1961 and won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1977, is today a global movement of more than 7 million people in 90 countries around the world who campaign for human rights. We work on a huge range of issues, from protecting civilians in conflict to ending the death penalty, from releasing prisoners of conscience to protecting refugees' rights, from tackling discrimination against women to ensuring that human equality and dignity are core design principles in the development of new technology.



The Secretary General is the global head of Amnesty, and my job is to set up and manage his mostly external-facing work on the biggest human rights issues in the world. That includes high-level advocacy meetings (for which he needs briefing), delivering speeches and lectures (which I often draft), and plenty of media work. In the past year, he travelled on more than 30 missions across the world - he held meetings with Myanmar's leader Aung San Suu Kyi on the plight of Rohingya, French President Emmanuel Macron on counter-terrorism measures in France, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on the global refugee crisis, and many other world leaders. He gave talks in Davos, Indonesia, Lebanon, Ethiopia, Hungary and more. He launched reports on disappearances in Sri Lanka, on contaminated water for indigenous people in Peru, and on challenges to the peace deal in Colombia. He

took messages of solidarity from 700,000 Amnesty members to Edward Snowden in Russia, and launched an Amnesty hub in Silicon Valley. Our work is rarely the same from one week to the next.

The world can sometimes seem a dark place when we focus on injustices all the time. But Amnesty's motto is to take injustice personally, a being part of a huge global community which does that together is a very powerful thing, and a huge privilege.

Gloria Byakatonda

Christ Church paid the university fees and gave support for Gloria Byakatonda as she took a degree course in business administration at the Uganda Christian University, where she graduated in 2016. Gloria is the orphaned niece of Peninnah Nalwanga, a member at Christ Church, and she has no family to support her. 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. She successfully completed a very tough nine months' basic military training, trusting in the Lord to see her through while others were dropping out of the training. In the autumn of 2017 she was assigned



to the Ugandan air force. We have been encouraged to hear that there are other Christians in the barracks and that pastors come to speak to them from time to time.

Gloria has now been accepted for pilot training and has begun the theory examinations. She begins the practicals in 2018. Each stage will be challenging as the trainees have to achieve marks of 75% or 80% to be allowed to continue.

Gloria is most appreciative of the support and prayers of members of Christ Church.

Our Other Activities

Mother's Union – *Jodie Lomax*

With five core objectives -

1. the promotion of Christian marriage
2. bringing up children in the faith and life of the church
3. promotion of conditions in society favourable to stable family life
4. helping those whose family life has met with adversity
5. maintaining a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer and service, and a small group of busy members and friends,

it can prove difficult to find time to organise and run events that cover each and on a scale other than small. In 2017, we did manage, however, to fit in the following as there is an 'esprit de corps' that values those objectives and the need to underpin what we do with prayer. We do this individually and collectively.

For Mothering Sunday, we made tags with an appropriate verse from Scripture to attach to the posies given out to the ladies of the church. Prior to this, we promoted the "Make a Mother's Day" scheme, whereby in return for a donation to support a specific MU project, the donor received a Mother's Day card to give, which explained the project where the donation was given, such as travel costs for a trained literacy teacher, or materials for small community businesses. On the day, we had a bake sale, with all proceeds going to the Mothers' Union.

Mindful of the need to pray for ourselves and those dear to us, we met at the start of the school year for Prayers by Candlelight. These have become an inspirational fixture for us as we reflect on the past year, pray for the future and draw close to the Lord, acknowledging our trust in Him and His grace and mercy for us.

We were asked to organise a Prayer Station for a large Messy Church event at Southwark Cathedral and did so by making two "Prayer Trees" with hanging fruits, on which children wrote their prayers. During National Marriage Week, we had special prayers on the MU Notice Board.

At our annual Wreath Making, we were joined by others across the generations as we prepared for Christmas with the kind assistance of Jo Watson, our greenery provider and tutor! Also, in preparation for Christmas, we made tags with a Bible verse that offers hope to those in difficult circumstances to accompany food parcels given out by our local Foodbank.

Over the summer, Helen Williams, our Church Administrator, and I ran a Parenting Group (with considerable support from others at Christ Church and two crèche helpers). The feedback was very positive – not only from the parents but also from the children who looked forward to "going to crèche"!



Art at Easter - *Hilary Gaster*

A three-part Art and Meditation course during Lent 2017 followed on from the successful and well-attended Advent series in 2016. Hilary Gaster and Bettina von Hornhardt led on exploring the paintings and the meditation, with Ali Seal then leading Compline. There was one evening

dedicated to unpacking Holy Week, one evening for the Crucifixion and finally another for the Resurrection.

We began each evening with the relevant Bible reading. The paintings of Holy Week included Christ's Entry into Jerusalem by Fra Angelico, The Upsetting of the Money-lenders Tables by El Greco and The Anointing at Bethany as seen in a German stained-glass window. Many artists' depictions of The Last Supper followed, ranging from Leonardo to Salvador Dali, Cranach to Stanley Spencer. We discussed different viewpoints and lighting, as well as depictions of Judas as halo-less and sometimes with treacherous red hair!

Scenes to do with the Crucifixion included The Procession to Calvary by Raphael from the National Gallery, The Raising of the Cross by various Flemish painters and The Dividing of the Garments from the wonderful Daddi Polyptych at The Courtauld. Pictures of Jesus on the cross varied from Rembrandt to Caspar David Friedrich, from The Isenheim Altarpiece with its shocking violence, to Gauguin's Yellow Christ, decorous and colourful. We then looked at an image of Christ reigning from the Cross, from Lucca in Italy; the Holy Face or Volto Santo carved in cedar wood. Who knew that King William II of England even referenced this piece ('by the holy face of Lucca') in his favourite oath of allegiance?

Our third evening was devoted to the Resurrection and images of angels rolling away stones from the sepulchre, of the saintly women visiting the tomb, of Jesus stepping out of his burial place with varying degrees of energy but always the same awesome effect. We thought about realism versus the supernatural or Godly, and looked at modern portrayals that seem to emphasise Jesus' humanity.

It was an enjoyable series with which to be involved, and Bettina's meditations were relevant and thought provoking. Compline was a peaceful, powerful way to end evenings considering such emotional subjects.

20-30s - *Pippa Evans*

We are often told that the 20-30s age group is a demographic missing from the Church of England, or at least heavily clustered in city churches. The last eighteen months has seen Christ Church run a number of varied 20-30s events to build up and cement the friendships in this age group. These have included dinner parties, walks in the countryside, indoor mini golf, a visit to Flipout Wandsworth and film nights. We began the academic year with a home cooked meal at Sam Whittington's, attended by about twenty people. We hope and pray that this ministry will continue and have plans for the coming months that include a games evening and a wine and cheese night.

Creative Artistry - *Yvette Croucher*

The Creative Artistry Group (or "Craft") has now been running for a couple of years and was set up to bring people together who share an interest in craft, art, creative activities and chatting! We have had a pretty consistent group of participants (averaging around 10-12) and meet once a month, enjoying coffee and biscuits/cake and then an hour or so of activity.

In 2016, one of our projects was to make sensory mats for the ICC orphanage in China, visited by families from the church that summer. With 2017 being our 150th anniversary



year, we were delighted to help with creating the quilt for the back of church, with several members assisting Esther Moorey to create the final masterpiece. From cutting, ironing and stitching, many hands were at work and it was fun to create something so special for the church in this special year.



Other sessions included a 'bring & tell' evening, where people shared their craft ideas or creations so that others could consider doing something similar, a Christmas craft night with Christmas tree decorations and crafts for children, and stone painting. We have big plans for 2018, with an Advent Fair at the end of the year and preparation for the Croucher family's visit to Tanzania in the summer when we hope to provide some handmade items for children in Musoma.

Website - *Rob Seal*

April 2017 saw the launch of the new church website. As well as a more modern look, the ability to browse the site on phones, tablets and computers has been a huge benefit. The church calendar plays a key role on the front page of the site and provides an easy-view focus to see what's going on. We have also used the site to publicise community events and events in the life of the church, such as the 150th Anniversary. In all, the project has gone well, with over 400 people visiting the website every month.

Churches Together and Rogation Sunday - *Jonathan Croucher*

Christ Church is one of 17 member churches of the local Churches Together group which unites churches in the 'Upper Norwood' postal code. At its heart is a group of lay people who meet monthly for ecumenical prayers, weekly for table tennis and occasionally for social events including regular film nights and this last year a Comedy Night at the Living Waters café. Our main collective worship is the Act of Witness on Good Friday outside Sainsbury's where we are led by the Salvation Army band and by representatives of different churches who lead the readings, singing, prayer and a short talk. This year, led by Christ Church, Churches Together took a stand at the Crystal Palace Festival. As well as offering prayer for those at the festival, we felt it was important for the churches in the area to be visibly part of the largest community event in the area. At the annual forum in January 2018, it was agreed to change our name to 'Churches



Together in Crystal Palace', acknowledging the focus of our work around the Triangle.

This year we also worked with other local churches and a lottery funded 'Boundaries' project to 'beat the bounds' of the parish. Led by a small brass band, and clergy from Christ Church and St John's, we processed up from Christ Church on a sunny Spring afternoon, along Westow Street and into Crystal Palace Park, where a steel band greeted us along

with the traditional 'cheese and ale' and other local community groups. The photo of the massed attendees was intended to recreate the scene from 1906 - a year when the beating of parish

boundaries led to a rather unpleasant incident of fisticuffs between neighbouring parishes. Fortunately, this time we were all able to enjoy the music and sunshine together!

Lambeth Country Show - *Ali Seal*

In July we partnered with other churches from the two Lambeth Deaneries to be a visible sign of prayer and presence at the Lambeth Country Show - London's biggest free festival, which this year attracted 150,000 people. We had a stall which aimed to communicate the presence of the Church of England through the borough, and God's love and concern for every community. With snazzily designed banners declaring 'God ♥ Lambeth', helpers at the stall offered prayer, free bags (with the God ♥ Lambeth logo), water bottles, copies of the New Testament and information on all the churches in the borough. We had communion both days (with Bishop Karowei preaching on the Sunday), Messy Church and Ginger Beer and Hymns. Members of Christ Church were part of the outreach team at the stall and helped with the organisation. The planning has already got under way for 2018 - join us at Brockwell Park on 21-22 July.

Church Hall Use - *Helen Williams*

The hall and narthex continue to be well used by various groups, including Slimming World, Crystal Palace Community Choir, Zumba, language lessons for children, and most regularly by Team Dance (who offer dance classes in tap, ballet, jazz and more, for both adults and children). Christ Victory Church also continue to meet at Christ Church on a Sunday, as well as for prayer meetings and counselling a couple of times during the week. All of these groups bring in a good source of income for the church. In addition, we also often let out the hall to members of the community for children's birthday parties.

Aside from the revenue that the hall brings, it also allows us to offer a space for outreach within the community, through groups such as Playpen, Open Door and, more recently, our Dementia Hub 'Magnolia Club'.

Playpen - *Helen Williams*

Playpen is our Church-run 'Stay and Play' baby and toddler group for 0-4 year olds and their parents / carers. We see between 30-45 toddlers come through the doors every Wednesday and Thursday morning during term-time.

Helen Williams has been managing Playpen for about 7 years, along with a great team of volunteers from the local community and more recently Pippa Evans our Ministry Assistant.

We are a 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, whilst their children can enjoy playing. We put out a wide range of toys and activities each week, from dinosaurs, a farm, threading beads, craft activities, play-dough, small world toys, a home corner, book corner, wheelie cars, slides, tunnels, tents and more!

Last year we changed the layout of playpen, and purchased lots of new toys, including soft mats for the baby areas, a lovely new book case for the book corner and even a mini sofa! Helen has received lots of positive feedback about the changes that we've made and the new additions to our equipment have been well received.

Our Christmas party was a great success, with 55 children attending! Father Christmas happily sat in his Grotto (the Goodliffe Hall lobby) for the whole morning, spending lots of time chatting to all the children and giving them each a present. We had lots of beautiful Christmas crafts for the children to make and lots of party food! Helen received many comments of thanks and praise after

the party, but it wouldn't have been such a success without all the volunteers! This year, Helen even had help the night before, with Katie and Sarah helping to make hundreds of sandwiches, turn the lobby into a grotto and decorate the hall until almost 9pm!

In addition to our regular volunteers, we also had Steph Turner (who works in the church office for St Christopher's hospice), Stuart Mitchenall, Katie Wrigley and Jonathan Croucher (who led our Christmas sing-song so well that he now has an annual job). Steph donned her amazing Christmas pudding outfit, and Helen hopes to buy some of these for all the volunteers next year! As always, massive thanks go to our regular volunteers; Christine Woolard, Sharon Robinson, Sue Chalcroft, Tracy Fuery, Sarah Milner, Tim Eveleigh (more commonly known as guitar man at Playpen) and Jon Caddell. Playpen really wouldn't be the playgroup that it is without all the volunteers. Special thanks to Katie Wrigley who now has a teaching assistant job at Rockmount School so can no longer regularly help, but still came to help me prepare and to clear away the Christmas party! And to Ayon for coming to set up the slide, tables and large equipment and toys out on a Wednesday morning, and returning on a Thursday to put them all away again!

3rd Gipsy Hill Brownies 2017 - Chris Woolley

As well as working on the Brownie Journey programme, we had fun trying out for our science investigator badge in the spring term; we grew beans, made balloon-powered carts and found out about healthy eating, thanks to a very interesting talk from Rachel Skeath (a member of Christ Church who works in nutrition), and also had an Easter egg hunt in Dulwich Upper Woods. Thanks to Helen Hayes, Christ Church member and local MP, we enjoyed a tour of the Houses of Parliament in April, followed by a walk through St. James Park, a visit to Guide HQ and finishing with a Pizza lunch.



The summer term ended with a group of Brownies attending the 'Totally Tropical' District camp at the South London Scout Centre in July (see photo). The weather was mainly dry, although not as tropical as the end of June! At the end of term, we said goodbye to a group of older Brownies who have moved on to new things. We spent some time in the autumn term doing crafts, making rag wreaths, Christmas cards and friendship bracelets.

Sadly, in November we learned of the death of Sheila Woollacott, who was leader of the pack from approximately 1960 until her retirement in 1995. Golden Owl was always very interested in how the pack were doing and liked to keep in touch.

Open Door - Pauline Simpson

Open Door continues to provide a warm welcome every Tuesday to members of the community and of the church. We begin with tea, coffee and delicious homemade cakes made by members of the congregation. The Tuesday Bible study meets alongside Open Door and attracts one or two



"At Open Door we are passionate about food no matter whether it is a meat dish or a vegetarian dish. Vegetarian dishes can be as diverse and exciting as meat dishes, As a matter of fact, one of these dishes is vegetarian but which one?"
- Sepi Black

visitors as well as church members. A tasty and nutritious hot meal is provided at lunchtime thanks to Sepideh Black who cooks for us each week, usually serving between 25 and 30 people and providing a take-away for those who need them. We remain open for the afternoon during which advice on debt, benefits and other issues is offered by Janet Boyce.



Alongside the refreshments and chat, people enjoy playing scrabble, cards and sometimes table tennis. The community choir, which has run for part of the year, has proved popular and hugely enjoyable thanks to the enthusiasm and encouragement of Harriet Eaves. They have sung at the vintage fayre in May, at the jazz concert given by Harriet in June, and to the rest of the

Open Door community in December. We have also had a talk about ways to save energy and an art workshop where people painted signs for the Crystal Palace festival. One of the highlights of the year was the Christmas lunch which was attended by nearly 40 people.



We were delighted to be one of several organisations to win an award in November from the 3 Faiths Forum for our inclusive community work. We are also very grateful to the volunteers who regularly give up their Tuesdays to serve coffee, set up and clear away, and chat to the variety of people who come through our doors each week.

Norwood and Brixton Foodbank – *Elizabeth Maytom*

As 2017 began we were aware that Universal Credit would be introduced into Lambeth but were not quite sure how that and other changes to benefits would impact on the foodbank. By our year end, March 31st, we realised that our figures showed that we had seen an additional 1000 people, and it looked as though figures were creeping up further.



Holiday hunger during school summer holidays loomed, and we looked at ways we could support those in crisis; although we were not geared up to run a full holiday club we ran a number of craft activities within the foodbank sessions. The 3 months, June, July and August, saw an increase of 1000 as we aimed to feed families struggling to eat during the holidays.

These months also saw us struggle to keep our shelves full but so many stepped up to help.

Harvest arrived to help fill up the shelves, although growing numbers did deplete them fairly quickly.

So to Christmas, and we geared up for what we expected to be a period that was busier than ever. Donations began to roll in and exceeded expectations, which was a huge blessing. On 23rd December we fed 700 people to add to the 200-



plus parcels that had already gone out beforehand – meaning that more than seven tonnes of food was given out to ensure those in crisis had a better Christmas.



Over 120 volunteers have been involved during 2017 but we did say a sad farewell to a staunch supporter who had done so much for us. Our numbers during December 2017 were boosted by many from Christ Church who rolled up their sleeves to help in many ways and we are so grateful.



As we look back, we do give thanks for the many times when stock has seemed so low but God has delivered - when things are difficult he helped open doors and we feel his presence with us at all times. So only God knows what 2018 will bring but through trusting in him and following his guiding hand, we know the foodbank will cope with all that is thrown at us.

XLP – Grace Hancock

In September 2017 I began my gap year with the London based Christian charity XLP. XLP's main priority is working with young people who are struggling socially, emotionally or behaviourally, and are either on the verge of expulsion from school or have already been and are as a result vulnerable to joining gang crime.

My average week with the charity includes working within three different secondary schools across Lambeth and Southwark and on three to four different bus sessions as well. XLP has two double decker buses kitted out with facilities (nail bar, playstation, etc.) that enable them to operate as mobile youth centres.

Through my enrolment with XLP's gap year programme I was placed at Christ Church, where I am involved in the youth projects unfolding there; I spend Friday nights and Sunday mornings assisting the leaders of the youth group. Mondays are spent at the XLP office where all the students meet together to undergo training (the topics can be anything, ranging from youth work training to discussions regarding SEN).

It's fair to say that the work has been unlike anything I've ever experienced before, which makes it challenging, and the hours are often long but the relationships with the young people that sprout as a result are worth every moment.

End Hunger UK - Ali Seal



Recognising that across the UK, millions of people struggle to put food on the table, we joined the Big Conversation to #EndHungerUK by hosting an event at Christ Church. We had a panel of speakers with expertise in food poverty and a passion to see change - Helen Hayes, MP for Dulwich and West Norwood, Elizabeth Maytom from



Brixton and Norwood Foodbank, Clara Widdison from the Gipsy Hill community shop and Berni Excell, community worker at St John's Upper Norwood. There was a lively discussion about the causes of food poverty and at the end of the night everyone was encouraged to complete the message on a (paper) plate: **"To #EndHungerUK our government needs to..."** and share a picture of their plate on social media. The messages were sent to Helen Hayes to inform her campaigning work on this issue.

Hope for Home - *Jonathan Croucher*

Two years ago we were approached by the dementia charity Hope for Home, which seeks to support people with dementia who are living at home, and their carers. That in turn began a three-way conversation involving St Christopher's Hospice about the possibility of a collaborative community project around Crystal Palace. Those conversations finally bore fruit in the course of 2017 with Christ Church, St Christopher's and Hope for Home launching two distinct but highly collaborative initiatives to serve the local community around Crystal Palace and Gipsy Hill.



The first to be launched was 'Compassionate Neighbours' - a social movement being developed across London hospices designed to connect those reaching the end of life with others in their community, in mutually supportive relationships. Steph Turner was appointed as Project lead, employed by the hospice but working out of Christ Church. The launch took place in July at Christ Church, drawing on our relationships with other community organisations including the London Mozart Players and Katie Rose, a local community choir leader.

The second, funded by Hope for Home, was the launch of a 'dementia hub' at Christ Church. We have employed Nicky Rothwell as Dementia Hub Coordinator and in February 2018, Nicky launched the 'Magnolia Club' - a drop in for those with dementia and their carers. She works with Steph to develop the Compassionate Neighbours programme for those with dementia.

We know that dementia is going to affect an ever-increasing number of people and Nicky's role, drawing on volunteers from church and the wider community, is designed to ensure that we can respond effectively to the growing need for support within our local area, as well as hopefully developing a model that other churches might readily be able to take up.

Compassionate Neighbours and St Christopher's Hospice - *Steph Turner*

Christ Church is working in partnership with St Christopher's Hospice to grow a network of Compassionate Neighbours offering their time, companionship and support to those around them living with a chronic or terminal illness or experiencing loneliness or social isolation, including people living with dementia. The project aims to support people, known as 'community members' who are likely to be in last years of their life in the Crystal Palace area.

Through training and regular social events, Compassionate Neighbours hopes to empower people living in Crystal Palace to grow their own support networks of people who embrace the process of dying as part of life, to claim the social nature of this process and to maintain the social life of people nearing the end of life and those caring for them.

Steph Turner, Community Participation Lead at St Christopher's Hospice, started in July and is based in the office at Christ Church, working together with Jonathan Croucher and the newly appointed Dementia Hub coordinator, Nicky Rothwell to grow the project. She has been building links across the community, including forming partnerships with Paxton Green Time Bank and the

Upper Norwood Library Hub to raise awareness of the project, recruit Compassionate Neighbour volunteers and potential 'community members', along with identifying opportunities to share assets and work together to reduce social isolation in the area.



Compassionate Neighbours was launched in Crystal Palace on October 21st, marked through a day time event at Christ Church and an evening concert in partnership with the London Mozart Players at St John's Church in Crystal Palace. Nearly 100 people attended the free, drop-in event at Christ Church, which featured an art exhibition of work created by local residents of Central Hill Estate together with community artist, Marcelo Camus, an interactive performance by London Mozart Players Horn Duo and a participatory sing along, led by local choir leader Katie Rose. The Christ Church congregation generously provided and served afternoon tea to guests. We also welcomed a group of Compassionate Neighbours from St Joseph's Hospice in Hackney, where the project

started. The event also marked the graduation of the first cohort of Compassionate Neighbours in Crystal Palace. Both events gathered interest for those wanting to volunteer and those wanting to explore working in partnership, including Lewisham Carers and Alzheimer's Society.

Steph has recruited and trained 18 Compassionate Neighbours living in Crystal Palace and the surrounding areas, including 3 members of the Christ Church congregation, and is aware of another fifteen people who have expressed an interest. There will be further work in the New Year to promote Compassionate Neighbours in Crystal Palace.

Compassionate Neighbour coffee mornings have now started at the Upper Norwood Library Hub on Fridays between 10-11am. This is a space for people to meet others locally and find out how they can get involved in Compassionate Neighbours, often with activities or talks.

Nominations for 'community members' who might like to be matched with a Compassionate Neighbour are now being accepted and can be made by contacting Steph Turner CN@stchristophers.org.uk or 07867 556472.

2018 has seen monthly training sessions for Compassionate Neighbours, with additional training for those matched with people with dementia (designed and delivered by Hope for Home). A Community Choir Festival took place on Saturday 17th February 2018 at Christ Church, showcasing some of South London's community choirs and raising awareness of Compassionate Neighbours. Nearly 300 people attended, with 140 in the combined choirs, and funds were raised for St Christopher's Hospice.



Lunham Road Daycare Centre - *Jonathan Croucher*

We continue to visit the daycare centre in Lunham Road twice a month to lead a communion service for the day visitors there. 2017 was a year of change for the centre as they were merged with another centre from Clapham which was then closed. Some of our regular friends left as the focus of the centre is now on those with more severe dementia - though a good number have faced down the changes and continue to come to enjoy the company and care of a really

committed group of staff. We sing a good number of traditional hymns, use some shortened liturgy and are working on interactive and visual talks that can engage all those present. It is a real privilege to break bread and share wine (or at least grape juice!) with many who, having attended church for most of their lives, are often unable to do so any longer.

Mission - *Richard and Rhos Roberts*

Our relationships with organisations that have an international focus are overseen by the Missions Group. Individual members of the group are responsible for each of the three projects which Christ Church supports both financially and with regular prayer. Engagement is pro-active 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 Missions 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. The three organisations are:

- Tearfund, where our main focus is 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. 50% of our 2017 Christmas collections were used to support a CHO project to feed 1,000 local children over the Christmas period.
- The Church Mission Society (CMS), where we continue to support the Clouston family (Eric and Rhena and their two children Kitty (now studying in the UK) and Sam) who are based in Bangalore, India. Rhena, Kitty and Sam were able to visit and speak at Christ Church during the year.
- Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), which works for religious freedom throughout the world through advocacy and human rights, in the pursuit of justice.

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.

Local Mission Support - *Jonathan Croucher*

Locally, we continue to support:

- Norwood and Brixton Foodbank

Norwood and Brixton Foodbank is run in partnership with local churches, led by St Luke's Church, West Norwood, to meet the need for emergency food within the local community. Food is donated by schools, churches, businesses and individuals and prepared into food parcels ready to be given to people in need. Care professionals identify people in crisis and issue them with a foodbank voucher which can then be redeemed for three days emergency food. To find out more, donate or volunteer please visit www.norwoodbrixton.foodbank.org.uk.

- Spinnaker Trust

Spinnaker Trust is a Christian Charity supporting primary schools with assemblies and RE lessons, establishing a warm and professional relationship with the headteacher and staff in each school.

Spinnaker has grown steadily since it was established in 1986 and now provides a programme that supports Religious Education and collective worship in assemblies with links with around 90 primary schools in South London and the South East. For more see www.spinnaker.org.uk.

- XLP

XLP is about creating positive futures for young people growing up on deprived inner city estates, struggling daily with issues such as family breakdown, poverty, unemployment and educational failure, and living in areas that experience high levels of anti-social behaviour, criminality and gang activity. Every year XLP helps thousands of them recognise their full potential. In 2015, Christ Church supported XLP as they began working in Lambeth and the team is now working with young people at a number of schools and estates in the Borough. For more see www.xlp.org.uk.

A footnote from the Vicar...

If you have made it this far through this report, you will have a good idea of all that God is doing in and through the 'church on the hill' - though I am conscious too of what is not included here, and particularly that largest part of our life, work and ministry as disciples of Jesus that goes on in our homes, workplaces, schools, and communities.

All we do together as church, by the grace of God, is made possible by the committed involvement of so many people whose time, energy and resources are made available so generously. It would be remiss of me though not to mention in particular and give thanks for our staff team - Sam Whittington our curate and Helen Williams administrator, and Ali Seal and Pippa Evans our consecutive ministry assistants.

Personally I am hugely indebted to the tireless work of our church wardens, Cath Mitchenall and Cynthia Krywczyk, and to Pauline Simpson and Richard and Rhos Roberts, all of whom minister in their different roles with such compassion, care and faithful obedience (to Jesus not me!) and provide so generously their wise counsel, support and encouragement.

Lambeth South Deanery Synod

The members of the Lambeth South Deanery Synod met on four occasions in 2017.

The first was at Christ Church on 22nd February and was chaired by Jonathan Croucher in the absence of the Area Dean, the Rev. David Stephenson. The main item was “Youth Work with the 11+ age group”, and was led by Jerome Hughes and Chris Henriette of XLP. They described the work XLP does with three local schools (the Pupil Referral Unit at Park Campus in Gipsy Road, Evelyn Grace Academy in Brixton and St. Martin-in-the-Fields Girls High School in Tulse Hill) and on local Lambeth estates with the XLP bus and XLP's mobile studio recording van. A primary aim was to build or repair inter-personal relationships which, as later explained in comments by the Rev. Sam Baker, Youth Minister at St Thomas with St Stephen, could then lead on to talks about Jesus and the Gospel.

On 25th May members joined in an Ascension Day Eucharist at St Leonard's Streatham.

On 4th July Synod members discussed the Report on the Shared Conversations on Human Sexuality at St Stephens Clapham Park, when members with a range of views related the Report to their own Christian commitment.

On 19th October at All Saints West Dulwich the Lay Chair, Winston Trotman, welcomed members and guests. The Rev. David Stephenson then introduced a series of presentations about the work in different churches for primary age children. All demonstrated a generally caring and thoughtful approach to ensuring that these children could understand and participate in worship. In some cases there was specially designed children's worship; in others All Age worship, or parts of the main Services reserved for a children's spot; and in others the careful preparation of children in the liturgy of the church. Hugh Ridsdill-Smith, the Diocesan Consultant for Children and Young Peoples Mission and Ministry, described the resources available to assist churches generally across the Diocese. He invited parishes to use the material and advice available free from his office. At the October meeting it was announced that Hugh Bain, the Deanery's long-serving Secretary, would be handing over to a new paid Secretary. He was warmly thanked for all he had done.

During the year, Colin Hart, Anthony Merifield, Esther Moorey and Richard Winborn served on the Lambeth South Deanery Synod from Christ Church, with Hugh Bain co-opted by the synod to complete his term as secretary.

Financial Report Summary

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. Full accounts for the year are available separately but the summary below provides highlights of the accounts as follows:

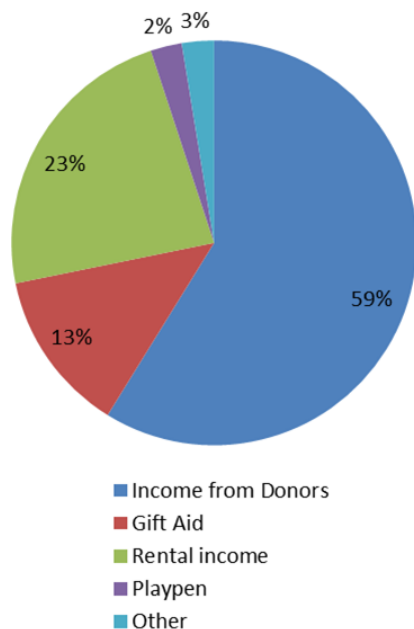
1. Unrestricted income of £233,838 compared to £233,161 in 2016:

- Last year's income included a one-off insurance rebate of £7,975. Excluding this, unrestricted income increased by approximately £9,000.
- £6,000 of this increase is due to higher Hall Lettings income.
- The remaining £3,000 increase is mostly due to higher donations from church members.

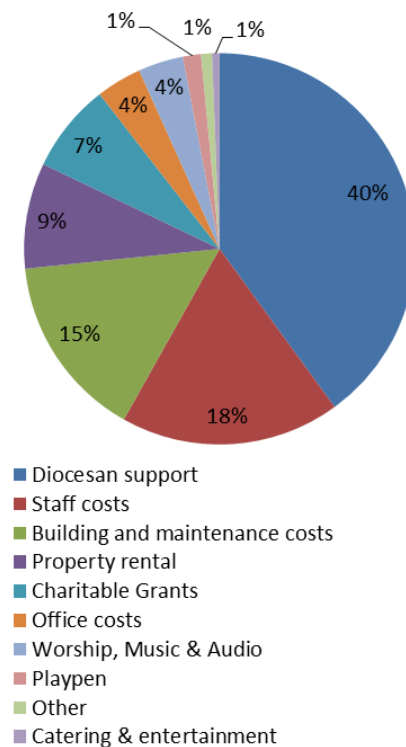
2. Unrestricted expenditure of £222,598 compared to £213,055 in 2016. Major movements compared to last year are as follows:

- Parish Pledge increased to £89,000 compared to £85,000. (Note that we are committed to paying £93,000 in 2018).
- Staff costs increased to approximately £40,400 compared to £26,000 in 2016. The increase is due to a full year of Ministry Assistant salary costs, compared to just 4 months last year.
- In 2016 we incurred £7,170 of vicarage renovation costs (relating to the kitchen). There were no similar costs in 2017.
- Other costs are broadly consistent with 2016.

**Income
(unrestricted funds)**



**Expenditure
(unrestricted funds)**



3. Restricted income & expenditure

- Given the specific grant income and other collections for Open Door, it has been treated as a Restricted Fund. Income was £5,941 and costs £8,601.
- Other Restricted income relates to the dividends on the endowment fund (reserved for children's work) and sundry special collections. Associated expenditure partially offsets this income.
- Overall, our restricted income was approximately £15,000 and restricted expenditure £16,000.

4. Balance sheet

- The value of the Goodliffe Endowment fund stands at £177,562. In 2016 the value was £163,266. The 9% increase reflects the strong performance of the underlying investments.
- We hold CCLA investments of £64,228, broadly unchanged from 2016.
- Our Barclays accounts total £96,957, compared to £68,107 in 2016.
- The other small items on the balance sheet are short term debtors and creditors.
- In total, our net assets were £336,619 at the end of 2017.

5. Funds allocation

Of the £336,619 net assets:

- Approximately £138,000 are General (Unrestricted) Funds
- £178,000 is the Goodliffe Endowment Fund
- £21,000 are Restricted funds.