



# Church on the Corner

## Annual report 2017



## Minister in Charge Report

*Mark Fletcher*

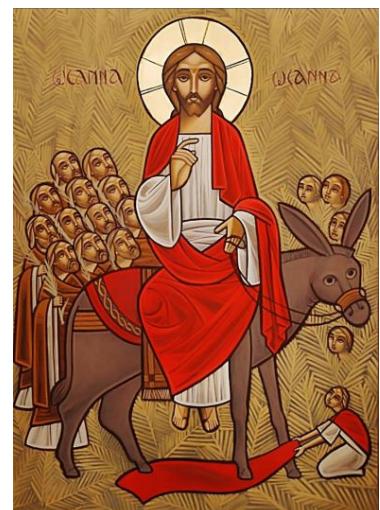
It is always a good to stop, remember and be grateful. And looking back over this year I am very grateful for what we have here at Church on the Corner. It is easy to take familiar things for granted. But on a Sunday evening surrounded by friends old and new singing beautifully from the heart I remember that Church is a gift from God, a loving community, a place of rich worship where people grow in their faith and understanding and flourish in their relationship with God and one another. Take a moment to think of what you are grateful to God for about Church.

I was talking to an old church member the other day, and I'm sure she won't mind me quoting her. *"COTC holds such a dear place in my heart, it was one of the best things about my time living in London and the first time, as an adult, I felt like I had a true church home and family."*

Of course we worry about Church sometimes, and the work of sustaining it can seem hard. We love welcoming new people, but it is hard to say goodbye to old friends. The routine of services week by week, our commitments to the parish, the responsibilities of the DCC and homegroups can all sometimes feel like a duty rather than a joy. But church is a living thing, and requires care and hard work to flourish.

One of the most frequent images that the Bible used for God's people, which we have looked at a number of times this year in Isaiah and Matthew, is the vineyard. *"My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside. He put a wall around and built a watchtower. He cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines."* It is a good image to remember, showing God's care for us, and how he protects and watches over us and provides all we need to be fruitful.

One striking example, in Matthew 20 is famous because of the outrageous generosity of God who pays the latecomers the same as those who worked all day. But it is a parable that also reminds us of the privilege and dignity of work. We are invited to come and labour in the vineyard - no matter who we are and how late in the day it is. Church should be a place for you to learn, to grow, to be fed. But it is just as much a place to give and to serve. What you get out of church is proportional to what you put in. And that is the challenge for us this year.



One of the movements in the wider church in the last few years is a move to a more big church focus. The Church of England is planting 'Resource Churches' in the centre of major cities. Now that may be good, but there is definitely a shift of attention that makes it harder for smaller churches. But we know that small is often beautiful and important. In smaller churches everyone matters. We can't be consumers of church, we need to have much more of a sense of ownership and responsibility. In a smaller church we feel it when people are away. Your importance to church is not just what you do, but your very presence. Perhaps you can commit this year to be here as often as you can. To not let busyness or tiredness stop you from meeting for worship. You will be blessed by it I promise.

The vineyard image is a reminder of the truth any farmer knows well - that it is God who is the source of growth and new life. There is perhaps no more poignant image of that than in John 15, where Jesus at the last supper says to his disciples;

*"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you abide in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."*



Our calling as the people of God is first and foremost to be rooted in Christ. The word 'abide' is a lovely one. Some translations choose 'remain' instead, but abide has a correct sense of inhabiting and growing. Amidst all the busyness of our city, with its bright lights and easy distractions, the self discipline to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness is more important than ever.

A church rooted in Christ will reflect his character, full of joy and truth, laughter and love. Parties are such an important theme in the Gospels, and one of the things that sets Jesus apart. And one of the things I have enjoyed this year is the way we have celebrated and had fun together - from our start of term party, pumpkin carving, Beer and Carols, games nights, our pancake party and lots more.

A church rooted in Christ will be a compassionate one, and abiding in Christ leads to deepened relationships with each other and our world. One area we have been challenging ourselves this year is to find our individual 'Just Cause' in the issue of mission, poverty, environment, justice or compassion - something that God has laid on their heart, and given us the desire and the gifts to make a difference. We have to be careful that our agenda for our church is what God wants too. Jesus goes on *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful."* Jesus priority is fruitfulness, even if that means pruning back things that we thought were good.



Last year we took hold of a simple vision of what it meant to be church, inspired by the rule of St Benedict. That of **hospitality, prayer** and **service**. And whatever else we do we will continue to pursue those things in the year ahead. Thank you to those of you who have prayed for church throughout the year, who have opened your homes and lives to welcoming the newcomer and who have served our church family and our parish in such significant ways.

We need to hold on to that call to being rooted in Christ, finding our identity and sustenance there so that we can continue to hold out that welcome, and be that place of hospitality and rootedness to our transient city, and be open not just to what we have to give, but also all that we receive in terms of creativity, fresh perspective, ideas and joy from those who are with us just for a time.

Bill has done an excellent job of overseeing our homegroups this year, and will be missed. Likewise the groups themselves have been committed to each other, and to prayer, service and hospitality. They are such importance places of welcome and growth.

It has been lovely to have Debs Hudgeton with us this year, as she trains for Ordination at St Mellitus College. She is living in the flat at Church on the Corner, and learning on the job as she studies. She is a blessing to me to have someone to work alongside, and reflect with on our ministry at COTC, and I know she has been a blessing to many of you.

So in the year ahead may we continue to abide in Christ, work faithfully in this little vineyard and see the new life that He brings and bear fruit for the kingdom; fruit that lasts.

## Team Rector's Report 2016

Michael Learmouth

*The Parish Church Council comprises representatives of each of the three churches plus Michael Learmouth in his capacity as Team Rector. The PCC meets at the same frequency as the individual District Church Councils from each of the three churches, but the PCC deals with matters which have parish significance. The PCC members are: Michael Learmouth, Mark Fletcher, Jess Swift, Ted Fell, Richard Parker, Roland Jones, Sally Jacobs, Claudette Crammer, Barbara Hooker, Linda Russell, Kath Hawkins, Kim Lawson, Helen Codling, Helen Groat, Stavroulla Andreou, Suzanna Hamilton, Steve Mawhinney & Sarah Wall*

### All Saints Redevelopment:

My report last year started off with a section about the All Saints Redevelopment. In spite of numerous delays to the project we felt that this time last year we were about to get everything signed off. In fact I wrote "*the situation as I write is that we are just about to sign off the contract with the developer*". I also highlighted the reason for the delay which we felt was lack of engagement by the Diocese of London who needed to agree the final paperwork. However, in the months that followed, very little progress was made. A meeting was arranged for the end of June 2016 with the main players - us, the Diocese and the developer - to try and deal with outstanding matters. That meeting itself was very positive, with the agreement to get everything cleared before the summer of 2016. In the end no progress was made. The next stage would have been to begin the planning process and then begin construction.

Therefore, over the summer I came to the conclusion that we weren't going to make any progress with the then developer because our relationship with them was so compromised - not us but by the Diocese. I planned to recommend to the next PCC Meeting (6<sup>th</sup> September) that we withdrew from the arrangements with our developer and selected a new one. However, just a few days beforehand the developer got in touch and said they wanted to pull out. The project was by then way behind schedule. When we started work on the project in 2012 we had anticipated that building would have started by 2016

We decided to take a deep breath and reconsider how we wanted to handle the project in the future. The top priority was to secure our relationship with the Diocese so that what happened before was not repeated. As a result we requested "a named officer" in the Diocese office. We have held regular monthly meetings once a month to review progress. She is also readily contactable by phone and email. This might seem to be a "given" in any working relationship, but sadly it had not been the case before. Previously emails and phone calls went unanswered for months.

We now have a full committee comprising Michael Learmouth, Ted Fell, Roland Jones, Helen Codling, Helen Groat, Chris Pring, Corin Piling, Anthony Codling and Sarah Wall, which meets regularly. We have slightly reworked the specification for what we want in the All Saints building in the light of the experience of the last four years. Fortunately a lot of the work hasn't been wasted, so all the paperwork and the legal framework is "oven ready". We don't have to go back to the drawing board.

We have appointed an architect for the Church side of the development. Just to recap - the basic plan remains the same. The current building at All Saints will be

demolished and a new church built with flats above. Our architects will be responsible for working with us to design the church building in accordance with our Mission Action Plan and also to liaise with the architects for the flats part of the building to make sure that our interests are protected. The next stage is to appoint a firm of Estate Agents to advise us. We had a firm in place for the previous phase of the development. They have done an excellent job for us, but we felt that in the interest of transparency, we ought to put this out again to the open market. After that we will seek a developer.

We are very disappointed there have been these delays but this is the situation we face. It does mean that All Saints will be in The Paget Christian Centre for longer than anticipated but it is important to remember that in God's plans nothing is wasted. We see that All Saints can be engaged in mission on the Bemerton Estate while they are still there "in exile".

#### Cash Flow Situation:

The delays to the building development project have already caused some serious problems for our cash flow situation as a parish. This was referred to last year. We decided to keep our giving to the Common Fund (that is the amount paid over to the Diocese of London made by every church towards the cost of the salary of their vicar, but also including housing, running costs of the Diocese, training of ordinands) at £100,000. In 2015 we had contributed £120,000 but had to reduce that for 2016 because of the impact of the delays to the development on our cash flow. Because we are still in that situation we kept to that figure for 2017. We should be paying £126,000. During 2016 we arranged to let out the All Saints Church building on the Caledonian Road on a short term letting. This has provided significant income. All Saints had received a considerable amount of support from parish funds in previous years but the income from the letting has enabled those amounts to be repaid. At the same time we also arranged during 2016 a Diocesan Loan for £60,000 which is referred to in the Associate Vicar Project report. This loan is due for repayment in July 2017. Although we will have the funds to repay it, it would leave parish reserves depleted. The PCC have already discussed briefly the idea of paying back a portion of that in July with the balance paid at a later date.

#### Associate Vicar Project:

Jess Swift originally came here as Associate Vicar to help me in my work when I was Area Dean. That finished in 2014 and Jess' time with us should have ended there. However the PCC made a decision to extend her contract initially for 2 years in order to provide me with time to handle other matters as Team Rector, particularly the All Saints Redevelopment. At that time we had expected building work to have commenced in 2016 at the latest, at which point the cash premium that will come to us from the developer when the site is redeveloped would have been in the bank. That would have enabled us to repay the loan. A year ago we thought the project had just been delayed and we were willing to take a loan out with the intention of repaying it from funds from the premium. Obviously with the delay that occurred in 2016 to the whole project that will not happen. That means that as planned Jess' time with us will come to an end during 2017. This is obviously a very sad thing for us to come to terms with but we knew it was happening. Jess has handled the situation remarkably well - living with the uncertainty - and of course will be sorely missed in the parish. There will be an opportunity for us to say farewell to Jess in an appropriate fashion but for now we just need some time to take that on board and to pray for Jess as her future takes a different turn.

### Church Plant:

The Church Plant group has been meeting since 2015 on the Bemerton Estate hosted by Steve and Ruth Mawhinney. The intention was that at some point they would be able to start establishing a service in The Paget Christian Centre. The group were able to organise several community events based around Steve and Ruth's house, noticeably a fireworks event in the Autumn. However most of their time has been spent in Bible Study and praying together about the future of the Church Plant on a weekly basis. During the year Steve also took part in the Church Planting Training Course organised by Bishop Ric Thorpe, the Church of England's Bishop for Church Planting. Each participant was asked to give a presentation at the end of the course about their project. I was there for Steve's - it was an excellent piece of work. The idea emerged during 2016 that the Church Plant could become involved in the life of All Saints in terms of leading a service in The Paget Christian Centre once a month at 10.30am. This would have enabled the Church Plant group to "cut their teeth" in leading worship. It also would have given the plant a place for them to invite any new contacts on the estate to come for a church service. It would also have enabled the plant to have access to Starchasers. However it became apparent that there was a fundamental difference of opinion which effected the relationship between the Church Plant and All Saints which made working together as we had hoped no longer viable. This was quite a major turnaround. It means that we need to go back to our plans for the future as specified in our Mission Action Plan, and to consider how that plan should be altered to take into account the new circumstances, and to work out a new way of planting a church. There is more work to be done on this and we will report back as soon as the future is clearer.

In order to take stock and rethink where the Church Plant is going, Steve Mawhinney has asked for a sabbatical. He will be taking this immediately after Easter and will be returning in the summer. We will try to cover as much as Steve's work as possible. One of the key areas is Starchasers. Jess Swift will take responsibility for this until the summer.

### Children's Worker

During the year Stephen Mawhinney (our Children's Worker) has been spending more time on the Church Plant. Our plan was that Steve would finish up his time as Children's Worker originally in September 2016 and a new Children's Worker would be recruited. We travelled a long way down the recruitment process, but in the end we were unable to make an appointment. We are now in contact with possible sources of Children's Workers and hope to be able to progress this soon as this is such an important area of church life.

### PCC:

The PCC comprises as follows:

- Clergy (*Michael Learmouth, Mark Fletcher, Jess Swift & Ted Fell*)
- Churchwardens (*Roland Jones, Sally Jacobs, Helen Codling, Helen Groat, Barbara Hooker & Kim Lawson*)
- Three elected representatives of each church who must also be on the DCCs of those churches (*St Andrew's - Claudette Crammer & Richard Parker; All Saints - Linda Russell & Kath Hawkins; Church on the Corner - Stavroulla Andreou & Suzanna Hamilton. Co-opted from the parish - Steve Mawhinney & Sarah Wall*)

During the year the PCC has been responsible for managing the Redevelopment Project, the Church Plant, Parish Finances with the Associate Vicar Project, the Children's Worker project, the reopening of Holy Trinity Church Cloudesley Square,

Safeguarding for the parish, Mission Action Plan, appointment of School Governors at St Andrew's School.

**Expectations of the PCC:**

We need to have in place a committed PCC. We have suffered during the year from people giving apologies at the last minute before meetings. Of course things crop up but it is involving too many people too often. The PCC has worked because there is smallish group of committed people who are always present and therefore business can be transacted but it is quite worrying that it makes our governance look weak. For this year we hope that people will be able to make a commitment to the PCC and be fully involved in terms of coming regularly to the meetings. Emergencies happen and problems arise but it has happened too often this year in a way that has affected the running of the church, or could have done had it not been for that committed group of core people.

**Conclusion:**

It is always good to be upbeat at this time but there is a real trap in false optimism. We have a number of quite serious issues to face during 2017, the handling of the Church Plant, recruitment of a Children's Worker and a change of staffing levels with Jess leaving. Tricky as these things are, we don't face them alone but with God's support and guidance.

# ADCM Building Report 2016/2017

Helen Groat

This last year, a whole raft of maintenance and improvement activities have taken place to keep our building in good shape, some of which hopefully you've noticed, but the majority have been happening quietly in the background.

Examples of things you may have noticed:

- The main lobby has been re-carpeted;
- the windows have been cleaned;
- the main space has been re-decorated.

And some of the things you probably haven't noticed:

- Boilers, hobs, fire extinguishers, gas meters, fire alarms, dishwasher and electrics all tested/serviced.
- Drain survey below CotC carried out, leaky taps fixed, broken doors repaired, new blinds fitted upstairs.

This work would not have been possible without the kind and highly organised assistance of Martin Lawford and a whole host of you too, so a special thanks goes to everyone who has donated their time to help look after our building.

We are continuing to excitedly work towards re-modelling the ground floor bathrooms and kitchen area, with the generous support of Richard Cloutesley's Charity. We now have planning permission for the changes, and the professionals are in the process of finalising their drawings and specifications, which will hopefully enable us to get a handle on the cost of the building works and allow us to get fundraising – watch this space!

This coming year, there will also be all sorts of smaller projects which we will need to undertake to keep the building ticking over, and as with this past year, the very generous volunteering of time from CotC members will help us to do this!

## **Administrator's Report**

*Martin Lawford*

Over the past year, the main space has been booked on most week day evenings by regular hirers, ranging from a contemporary singing group to theatre workshops. It is also hired on Saturdays on a fairly regular basis for, among other things, art classes. Sadly, just before Christmas Little Ark nursery closed its doors. This means that the space is now available throughout the day on most week days.

As well as taking care of lettings here at COTC, one of my regular tasks is putting together the rota for Sunday services. Being in London, with its transient population, the congregation at COTC sees people coming and going quite regularly. I am, therefore grateful to all who commit themselves to serving in different ways on a Sunday night in such tasks as tea-making, leading worship and putting together the Powerpoint.

My thanks also go to our churchwardens Helen Codling and Helen Groat, as well as our treasurer Anthony Codling for their support and to Mark for his guidance and care.

### **Electoral Roll Report**

The Electoral Roll is the list of those who are eligible to vote during annual general meetings. It is as close as the Church of England gets to 'membership'. It is only completely renewed every six years, the last time being in 2013. The number of people on the Electoral Roll now is as follows:

Electoral Roll 2017 - 66  
Electoral Roll 2016 - 61  
Electoral Roll 2015 - 56  
Electoral Roll 2014 - 50  
Electoral Roll 2013 - 44

# Finance Report

Anthony Codling

## Executive Summary

### Highlights: 2016

In my view, the highlights of 2016 are very similar to those of last year:

- We have once again been a self financing church
- We have been wise stewards with the funds we have received
- We are reliant on the generosity of past members of COTC

**Self financing:** We are a richly blessed church and we have all played a part in making church happen without the faithful giving of our members and past members COTC would not be financially viable.

**Wise stewards** As a church we have to manage times of both financial feast and financial famine and this year we have managed to balance the books keeping expenditure below our income and yet increasing our parish contribution by 28% and continuing to tithe 10% of our income.

**Spiritual discipline** Whilst this year our income has been healthy and we have been able to add to our reserves there is a danger we may be a little complacent and over reliant on the generosity of past members of our congregation. We had 44 givers in 2016 (2015: 56), quite evenly split between current and former members of our congregation: 24 of whom are members of our congregation (2015: 25) and 20 who were not (2015: 31).

As your treasurer I ask that we all prayerfully revisit our approach and attitude to the spiritual discipline of giving.

### Income: 2016 £155,941 (2014: £208,430) -25%

Overall our income decreased by 25% in the year to £155,941. The reduction was due a number of factors, discussed below. We are fortunate to have several sources of income at COTC, the main sources of which we discuss below:

**Regular Giving:** Our main source of income is regular giving from individuals (current and former members of COTC), which represented 57% of our income (2015: 49%). In 2015 regular giving was £88,701 (down 13% on the prior year), reflecting the number of regular givers who have left COTC and former members who have adjusted their giving to COTC.

**One off giving:** This decreased by 22% to £19,518 during 2016. One off giving brings both blessings and challenges. Blessings because we welcome the incoming resources and challenges because it is very difficult to build budgets around one off giving. We would encourage all those who are able to support us on a monthly basis because regular giving allows us to be better stewards of our incoming resources

**Flat Rental:** Rent from the church flat generated income of £19,320 in 2016 a decrease of 22% in the year reflecting a combination of void periods in the year and a change in the way we use the flat.

**Building Hire:** Income from renting out the church generated £14,142 a very similar level of income to last year of £14,317.

**Cloudesley Room (Workspace Hire):** Income decreased by 23% in 2016 to £11,300 reflecting the change in usage of the space now hired out to the on-line Christian news service Christian Today rather than a private company which used to also hire overflow space in the church office.

**Grants:** During the year we did not apply for nor receive any grants (2015: £25,300 from trusts for use in specific building projects.

### **Expenditure: 2016 £135,823 (2015: £145,395) -7%**

Our spending decreased by 7% in the year to £135,823. The biggest element of our expenses relate to employment costs which accounted for 51% of our costs in 2016 (2015: 49%).

Our second biggest expense is our contribution to the common fund which was unchanged at £23,000 in the year. Last year we were asked to increase our contribution by £5,000 due to a weaker financial situation this year at our sister church All Saints and the DCC believed the additional contribution to be the right and just use of our resources and we continued with the higher amount in 2016.

The Common Fund is the system by which the Church of England funds a vicar in each and every parish. Our contribution is based on our own level of income and expenditure. Our giving enables those churches who are not self financing to continue to serve their communities.

In 2015 we spent £27,639 running and maintaining the church building (2014: £28,524), this equates to around 19% of our total costs.

Our next biggest expense is our giving to charities at £15,595 (down from £18,313 in 2015) which represents 11.5% of our spending. Our policy on giving is to tithe 10% of our income (excluding restricted grants), whilst a significant cost we believe it to be an important and biblically based spiritual discipline.

### **The year ahead: 2017 – Spiritual Discipline**

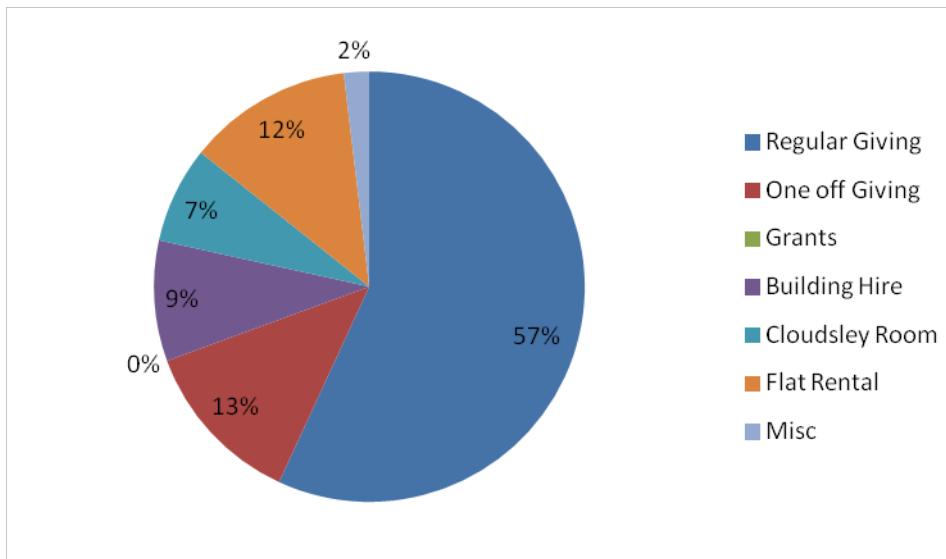
The biggest risk facing our financial situation is the loss of income from regular givers, in particular income from former members of COTC. During 2016, 41% of our income from individuals was received from people who are no longer members of COTC.

As we stand today, our financial position is robust, largely thanks to God's grace and the generosity of both current and former members of COTC. However, whilst we were a self financing church in 2016, this may change in 2017. Our reserves increased by around £25,000 in 2016 although around £40,000 of our income was from former members of COTC and we are aware that 62% of that (around £25,000) will not be received in 2017 and a further £9,600 is on a reducing glide path during 2017. At current run rates therefore we will start to eat into our reserves.

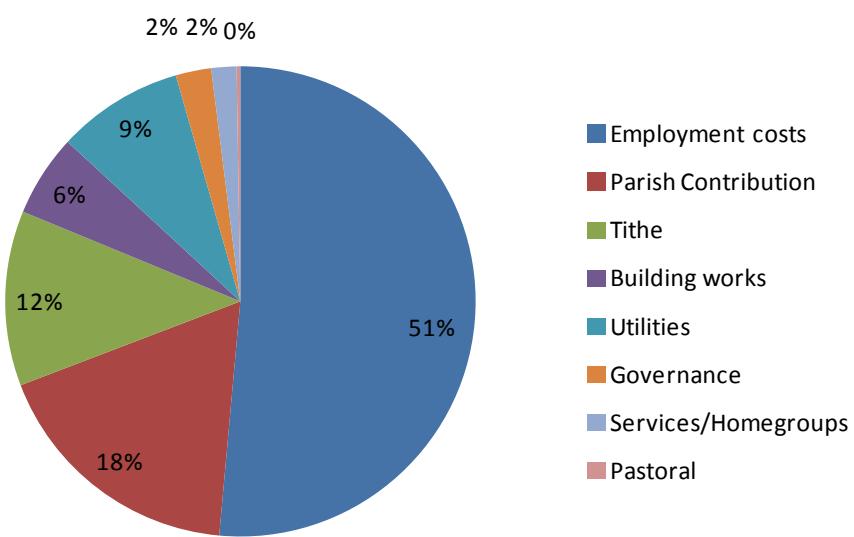
During 2016 we had on average 24 members regularly giving (where couples are counted as two individuals) and 20 former members, and [ ] on the electoral role – our official measure of church membership

Giving is a spiritual discipline and we would ask all of you to prayerfully review your giving and your attitude to money at least once a year. Do you give some of 'your' money away? Or do you keep what you need from what 'God lavishly provides to you'. Guidance from the Church of England is to give away at least 10% of your income with half of that supporting your local church and the other half supporting other causes.

## COTC Income 2016



## COTC Expenditure





## Children's Work

There are three strands to the Children's Work in our Parish:

**Engage** – showing God's love and building relationships

**Evangelise** – by telling the gospel and by living out our faith

**Encourage** – helping young Christians grow in their relationship with God

This report will look at the range of work we do in our community, in our schools and in our churches. It will also look at how we are supporting others beyond our parish.

### Children's Worker:

Over the last 12 months we have had to cut back on some of the children's and youth work in our parish. In 2016 I (Steve) continued to move from being the Children's Worker to looking at planting a church on the Bemerton. (For more information on the church plant please see the report elsewhere in this document). This has meant our schools work has just been focused on assemblies and school services and I've been less involved on non-Starchasers Sunday mornings in the churches.

We made two attempts to recruit a new Children's Worker in 2016, in the summer and in the autumn, but sadly on both cases we were unable to find a suitable candidate. We will continue to explore other options to find someone to take over this important role in our parish.

And after a testing start to 2017 I'll be taking a sabbatical from April through to August 2017. The aim of this will be refreshment and to seek where God is calling me next. Please do continue to pray for the Children's Work over the coming months as it remains a key part of what we do as a parish.



Our Christmas pictures from Bemerton Carols

## BEMERTON ESTATE

Much of our work on the Bemerton Estate has been in partnership with London City Mission (LCM). There are several regular clubs and one-off events we run there throughout the year.

### Bemerton Soul:

Bemerton Soul ran from Mon 25th July to Fri 29th July. This year we added an under 5s area to the week which was run by Sara Coffey and the leaders from Little Tots. This was in addition to the youth football, headed up by Alex Shoderu the youth worker from Kings Cross Baptist and Ambassadors in Football, the adults café, headed up by Ted Fell and All Saints, and the children's club, headed up by me (Steve) and volunteers from the parish.

At the children's club our theme for the week was "Blast Off Into Space". During the week we made rockets, moon-walked and attempted re-entry, and during the week we learnt about the big story in the Bible from creation through to Jesus coming to rescue us. We then pulled this altogether into a recap at the Sunday service (31<sup>st</sup> July) in the park followed by a Fun Day in glorious sunshine in Bingfield Park.

The numbers for the Children's Club were down from last year but across the park as a whole we had more people joining us than last year. Over the week we had 41 kids in total with an average of 24 per day. (2016 – 67 over the week, 24 each day). For the football club we had 28 young people over the week (2016 – 22) and another 40 people in the café / under-5s areas over the week. At the Sunday service we had 70-100 people join us (it grew as the service went on!) and approximately 180 people at the Fun Day. And as in previous years the vast majority of the children and young people who came were from non-church families.

### Bemerton Carols:

This year at Bemerton Carols our theme was 'focusing on the story of Christmas'. We wanted to use the service as a chance to switch off from the other distractions and hear again the Christmas story as told by Luke. And throughout the afternoon we made a giant picture to tell that story. Again we had a toddlers play area as well as crafts, games and a café. In total we had 75 people join us for the service, so many that is was standing room only at the back!

### **THE GAP:**

THE GAP is a group for those in Years 5-9 (ages 9-14) that we run in partnership with LCM at the Paget. Numbers continue to be steady at THE GAP with an average of 9-10 kids coming along to each session. And it continues to be a club for local young people with nearly everyone who comes living within a few minutes walk of the Paget – including some families we met through Bemerton Soul and Soul in the City.

THE GAP aims to be open and accessible to anyone of that age by offering table tennis, Wii, board games and a place to relax. And each week we have 15-20 minutes looking at the Bible and being a Christian. In 2016 we've looked at Christian Foundations, What is God like? and the start of Mark's gospel. We also regularly give the kids the chance to ask any questions they have about God, Jesus or being a Christian.

Each term we have a social and in 2016 we've had a treasure hunt around St. Paul's, a movie and pizza night and a trip to Oxygen free-jumping.

### **Kids Club:**

Kids Club is a group for primary school aged children than is run by LCM in partnership with Barnsbury Parish and Euston Church.

On Fridays during term time we collect children from St. Andrew's school and St. Mary Magdalene school and bring them to Kids Club. We play games, do craft, learn from the Bible and pray together.

In 2016 we've looked at stories from Jonah, Esther, Daniel and Acts and some of Jesus' parables. Unfortunately due to a shortage of leaders we had to stop Kids Club in December 2016. Please do pray for what the future holds for Kids Club.

### **Soul in the City:**

On the second May bank holiday weekend Soul in the City is held in Bingfield Park. It's organised by KXC and we are one of the partners involved in helping with the event. For us it's an opportunity to build relationships with local people and on Sunday we hold a Messy Church event in the park. This year the theme was Forgiveness and we looked at forgiveness and the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant.

### **SCHOOLS' WORK**

We are involved in two of the five primary schools in our local parish – St. Andrew's School (our church school) and Thornhill School (a community school).

#### **Assemblies:**

On Tuesdays during term we take an assembly at both schools and this is an opportunity to share what we believe with over 600 pupils. We continue to go in every week to St. Andrew's School and from September 2016 we now go into Thornhill School roughly once a fortnight. We are in conversations with the new Head at Thornhill and the teacher in charge of RE about how we can best serve our local community school. We are also hoping to go into another local school – Copenhagen – in early 2017. This year our assembly themes were: Myself & Others, Countdown to Easter, Inspirational People, The Olympics, Caring for each other and Advent. We also cover key Christian festivals such as Christmas, Lent, Easter etc.



The secret of any good assembly – ridiculous props (This one was about the tongue)

### **School services for St. Andrew's School:**

For key events in the school and church calendar the whole school comes to St. Andrew's Church for a service – about 6 or 7 services a year. These include Advent, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Easter, Pentecost and the Year 6 Leavers' Service. It's great that the church is central at key milestones in the school's life and to see the church full of pupils, staff and parents for these services. They are usually led by Steve or Jess along with a group of pupils from across the different year groups.

### **Scorpion football & After School Clubs:**

Sadly we've not been able to run Scorpion or After School Clubs for a few years now. This is one area we'd like to address to help build relationships with the school children, their families and staff.

### **Education Sunday:**

After no service last year we were pleased to celebrate Education Sunday with St. Andrew's School this year on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2016. This also gave us a chance to thank God for their recent 'Good' inspection.



We meet a Roman soldier at The Easter Experience

## **BRINGING PEOPLE TO CHURCH**

### **Heroes Party:**

Unfortunately there was no Heroes Party for the third year running in 2016.

### **Pancake Party:**

The Pancake Party is now at the Paget with All Saints hosting it. It was a scaled back event from previous years but we were pleased to have about 75 local people come and celebrate with us.

### **All-Age services:**

Our regular Sunday services are a key part of our ministry to children and families and All-Age services play a significant part in helping a child build relationships in a church and helping non-church families come into church.

At St. Andrew's All-Age services continue to be a mixture of traditional calendar events (e.g. Harvest, Mothering Sunday) and events that are now part of our calendar (e.g. Starchasers Sunday, Fairtrade Sunday, Christian Aid).

Alas at All Saints there are few regular families so All Saints do not have regular All-Age Services.

### **Messy Easter:**

On Easter Sunday the Bemerton Church Plant & All Saints hosted a special Easter Experience service. We heard the Easter story told from the point of view of people in the story such as a serving girl at the last meal, Pilate, a roman soldier and a woman who went to Jesus' tomb. There were plenty of chances not just to listen but to get involved with dressing up, eating and looking at objects involved in the story. Although only a few new families joined us for the service it was a good opportunity to invite others to join us in celebrating the most important event of the year.

### **Children and Communion:**

During September and October 2015 we ran communion classes for 6 children who now take communion. These classes are a great way to cover the basics of the Christian faith (Prayer, the Bible, Passover, Communion) and communion is a great way for kids to show they belong to the church family.

### **Faith at home:**

We continue to try and encourage families to read the Bible, pray together and celebrate at home. Each Starchasers session we give parents an activity to try at home based on that session. And we have also provided parents with Bible reading notes (and an app!) so they can read the stories we learn about at Starchasers at home with their children.

## **BEYOND THE PARISH**

### **Children's Work Magazine:**

I (Steve) continued to write the regular 'Games Master' column for Children's Work Magazine throughout the year. However, as of December 2016 I stepped down from this role due to time constraints.

To find out more about the kids work in our parish please visit our website:

<http://www.barnsburyparish.com/children/>

**Stephen Mawhinney**

Barnsbury Parish Children's Worker

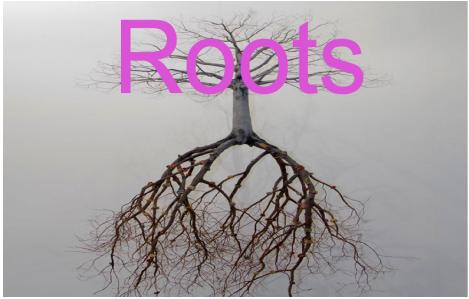
## Little Ark

Little Ark is a not for profit pre-school based in church on the corner. It offers gentle Christian values to its children. Sadly this year numbers at the pre-school remained low and research showed that other pre-schools/nurseries in the area were struggling too. In September we had 6 children in total registered with the pre-school and in October the decision was made to run for 3 days a week instead of 4. Trustees and myself continued to meet and finally made the very hard decision to close the pre-school on Wednesday 14th December. The work that Little Ark did over its many years and the impact it had on all those in the local community was celebrated on Saturday 14th January 2017 where past children brought in some memorabilia from what they created when they attended the pre-school.

Kate Gardner  
Little Ark Supervisor

It has been with real sadness that we closed the doors of Little Ark, our amazing pre-school, after 12 years. It has been such a blessing to our local community and offered the best introduction to education we could offer. The reasons for its closing are not completely clear, but our sense is that our neighbourhood has changed, and the demand for a part time nursery isn't there in the same way. I'm grateful to our trustees for all the work they have done in winding things up as carefully and correctly as possible. In January we invited Little Ark Family past and present to come and celebrate, and it was a delight to see old friends and generations of children again - some of whom are now at University.

Mark Fletcher  
Chair of Trustees



2016-17 has been a year of new discoveries and learning for Roots. The Tower Room was redecorated with a blackboard and the Room is now the home of many ladybirds, much to Roots' delight. Attendance has been fairly consistent: on average, we have around 7 teenagers attend and the number has peaked to 14. Sadly, we have not always been able to meet up due to the small number of Root leaders this term. The group is very close – we even went out on an ice skating outing around Christmas. More such outings are scheduled for this year.

The work of Roots is closely linked to understanding the work of the Parish and its role within our community. We covered aspects of the Old and New Testaments from 2 Sam, 1 Kings, John's Gospel and Acts. Each passage was accompanied by a question & answer session and a reflection. In particular, each member is encouraged to provide examples of how to implement these Bible teachings in everyday life, or offer prayers for the coming weeks.

We realise that Roots is only a small part of the group's journey with God. As such, we have been speaking about confirmation, with Jess being extremely supportive in this regard. Pray that each member continues coming to Roots and grows in faith. Finally, please pray that new leaders may join to keep the group meetings as consistent as possible.

***Georgina Wright***

# Safeguarding Report 2016

It is essential that Safeguarding maintain a high profile in the Barnsbury Parish. We want to do what we can to ensure our parish is a safe place for all especially children and vulnerable adults. Our Safeguarding Policy (Policy for Safeguarding in the Diocese of London - 2012, revised

February 2015) is renewed annually and is our guiding document in our practice. The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, in relation to having due regard to the House of Bishop's guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

Our Safeguarding Policy was reviewed at the PCC meeting 24 April 2016, and will be next reviewed on 25 April 2017. Each of our churches have their own Safeguarding officer and Children's champion, and Steve Mawhinney continues to be our Parish champion.

A Safeguarding Audit was conducted in March 2017 by Revd. Jess Swift (Associate Vicar), Stephen Mawhinney (Children's Worker) and Sarah Wall (Parish Administrator). It was overseen by Bridget Learmouth (Safeguarding Officer). The Audit and Action Plan arising from it will need to be approved at the APCM in April 2017. The key points arising in the action plan are: Formalising a regular role for safeguarding at DCCs and PCCs, ongoing Safer Recruitment of volunteers, updating our risk assessments, improving storage of our records and safeguarding in partnership with LCM.

## **St Andrew's (including Parish volunteers and staff)**

Safeguarding officer - Bridget Learmouth

Children's champion - Jess Swift

PCC Safeguarding policy statement and key telephone numbers displayed in the Welcome Area

5 - Volunteers completed full process

5 - Volunteers completed DBS check and brought to PCC (first time)

0 - Volunteers completed DBS check and brought to PCC (renewing)

2 - Volunteers still in process in probation period

0 - Volunteers who have left (role or parish) and therefore no longer in process

Volunteer training (DCC, wardens, and volunteers for children's groups) - one outstanding volunteer which will not be pursued as standing down from role, all others completed on-line training or CCPAS course on 21 Jan 2017.

Staff, safeguarding officer, clergy training - Safeguarding officer still to be pursued, all others are still current in their diocesan training.

## **All Saints**

Safeguarding officer - Linda Russell

Children's champion - Barbara Hooker

PCC Safeguarding policy statement and key telephone numbers displayed on the notice board in the Hall of the Paget Centre

4 - Volunteers completed full process

0 - Volunteers completed DBS check and brought to PCC (first time)

0 - Volunteers completed DBS check and brought to PCC (renewing)

3 - Volunteers still in process in probation period

2 - Volunteers who have left (role or parish) and therefore no longer in process

Volunteer training (DCC, wardens, and volunteers for children's groups) - all completed on-line training or CCPAS course on 21 Jan 2017.

Staff, safeguarding officer, clergy training - Safeguarding officer completed training, clergy still current in diocesan training, staff and staff volunteers completed CCPAS course on 21 Jan 2017.

**Church on the Corner**

Safeguarding officer - Ellie Welsh

Children's champion - Stavroulla Andreou

PCC Safeguarding policy statement and key telephone numbers displayed on the Entry Notice Board.

6 - Volunteers completed full process

3 - Volunteers completed DBS check and brought to PCC (first time)

0 - Volunteers completed DBS check and brought to PCC (renewing)

2 - Volunteers still in process in probation period

3 - Volunteers who have left (role or parish) and therefore no longer in process

Volunteer training (DCC, wardens, and volunteers for children's groups) - many still need to complete on-line training, it is currently being pursued.

Staff, safeguarding officer, clergy training - Safeguarding officer completed training, clergy still current in diocesan training, staff completed on-line training.

**Summary**

We are grateful to all those who have contributed their time to helping make our parish a place where everyone is safe. If you ever have any concerns speak to the Safeguarding officer of your church, or a member of the clergy.

**Bridget Learmouth, Ellie Welsh, Linda Russell**



### **Starchasers – the fifteen second summary**

For those in a rush here's 12 months at Starchasers in 15 seconds: It's a year of big changes! We changed venue from St. Andrew's School to the Paget in Summer 2016 and at Easter 2017 Ruth and I (Steve) will be stepping down from Starchasers as I go on sabbatical. Change can be an uncertain time but pray for God to continue to bless Starchasers and bless the kids who come along.

### **Our vision and aim**

Starchasers aims to **evangelise** (tell the children about God, His love for them and how they need Jesus) and to **encourage** (to grow and mature the faith of those who are Christians).

### **Big changes!**

This year has seen some big changes at Starchasers. The first is our venue. After 12 years of meeting at St. Andrew's School we were no longer able to use that venue so in Summer 2016 we moved to the Paget Christian Centre. We're grateful to the school for letting us use their building so long and to London City Mission for letting us use the Paget on Sunday mornings.

Also March 2017 was Ruths' and my (Steve's) last Starchasers before my sabbatical. Having been involved with Starchasers since it first started 13 years ago this is a big change for me as well as Starchasers! Please do pray for the group next term and especially for the leaders who'll be in charge in my absence.

### **The kids**

After 2015's declining numbers I'm pleased to say that numbers have increased and we now have an average of 11 kids at Starchasers. The work of Starchasers is closely linked to that in our churches, roughly speaking in 2016 the split of the 23 regulars was – 13 from St. Andrew's Church, 7 from All Saints Church and 3 from families not connected to churches in our parish.

Many of the new kids this year come from All Saints or from the Bemerton area so moving venue has brought in new people. There is more that could be done including looking to bring new families into All Saints, growing the pre-school children's group at St. Andrew's and building off our existing links with families on the Bemerton.

In 2016 we said goodbye to Nina and Catherine as they moved up to Roots. Pray for them to continue being part of church and growing in faith as go through secondary school.

Thank God for the increased numbers this year, the new kids who've joined us and the regular who come week after week, month after month. Please do pray they would all discover more about God and grow in faith and understanding.

### **The leaders**

In Summer 2016 we said goodbye to Naomi Hodgins from CotC as she returned back to Ireland after finishing her PhD in London. We're very grateful to Naomi for all her hard work and commitment and the kids and leaders were sorry to see her go!

The remaining leaders in 2016 were Helen Coffey from CotC, Shan Estavia from St. Andrew's, Ruth Mawhinney from Bemerton Church & me (Steve Mawhinney). And we're also grateful to Ele from All Saints and Chanel from St. Andrew's for stepping in whenever we've needed help. Praise God that He has always blessed Starchasers with a great team of leaders who have incredible gifts to help these children grow in faith.

But 2017 will see more changes. As mentioned earlier Ruth and I will be stepping down at Easter and Azhar from All Saints has joined the team and Jess will be helping out in my absence. Please pray that during the next term God would continue to grow and bless Starchasers.

### **Starchasers Service**

We held our annual Starchasers service on 3rd July 2016 at St. Andrew's Church and we looked at the book of Esther. The children helped to lead the service and told the story of Esther through a film we made.

### **Teaching:**

Over the last year we have looked at:

**Spring term 2016 – Jesus' I am sayings:** We looked at some of the ways Jesus describes Himself and what they teach us about who Jesus is and His mission.

**Summer term 2016 – Esther and Ruth:** We looked at the story of these two women in the Bible, Esther and Ruth. We saw how they were both part of God's bigger plan for His people.

**Autumn term 2015 – Elijah and Elisha:** We looked at the story of these two great prophets in 1 and 2 Kings. We saw how they were prepared to stand up for God even when it was difficult.

**Praise God for...**

**The kids** –for all the kids that come to Starchasers, the regulars and those who come occasionally. And for the new kids since moving to the Paget.

**The leaders** –for our team and their faithfulness in serving at Starchasers.

**The venue** – for a new place to meet on the Bemerton Estate.

**Pray to God for...**

**The kids** – the kids would grow in faith. Pray for new kids to join, through the churches and our links on the Bemerton.

**Next term** – the big change ahead for Starchasers. Pray God would continue to bless Starchasers and for the team and Jess.

Thank you so much for your prayers and support (in many different ways) over the last 12 months and please do keep praying for us over the next year.

**Stephen Mawhinney**  
**Barnsbury Parish Children's Worker.**



A comic strip by one of the kids telling the story of Elisha and the widow