

Reports for our Annual Vision Meeting

Holy Trinity Church, Twickenham, 26th April 2009.

Mikes Reflections

The big question is: what comes next?

This past year has seen us preoccupied with one big project: the refurbishment of the Parish Room to become the Green Room. We spent much of 2007 drawing up plans for the work, and we launched the Green Room scheme on 5 February 2008. Our fundraising culminated with a big evening of music, wine-tasting and an auction of promises on 29 March. We were also fortunate to receive grants towards the work. In very broad terms, the sums raised were as follows:

- Individual Gifts: £20,000
- Hampton Fuel Allotment Charity: £25,000
- London Diocese: £40,000 (of which £15,000 grant, £25,000 loan to be repaid)
- Fundraising Event: £11,000

The work started in mid-July 2008 and was completed by the end of August 2008, on budget and on schedule! The room was transformed, with a new block of toilets and storage cupboards, new creche area and flooring, and a complete facelift for the whole room. Special thanks go to our architect (and church member), Rob Macpherson, our builders Haymills and to all who helped make the vision a reality. We still have a £25,000 loan from the Diocese to repay (a little over £8,000 a year for the next three years), so any donations to the Green Room project will still be gratefully received. And don't forget, donations can be Gift-Aided.

The response from users of the Green Room has been unanimously positive: from church groups and regular hirers, such as the dance school, to individual hirers – including children's parties.

In recent months, our PCC has been wrestling with the question of what comes next in the life of Holy Trinity following the Green Room scheme. Our answer to that question is contained in our new Mission Action Plan. In it, we highlight four key areas for particular attention:

- **Welcoming:** we want to be a community, family church where visitors feel welcomed and quickly become a part of the family.
- **Engaging:** helping adults and children grow deeper in faith, not just being a 'Sunday church' – or even a waiting room for families hoping to get a place at our linked primary school!
- **Practical issues:** especially sharing out administrative duties more widely, to allow me to give greater attention to pastoral care. Currently a higher proportion of my time is spent on admin than I would like.
- **Grow income:** Our finances are healthier than they have been for a number of years. But we still have some way to go. We are still around £10,000 a year short of paying our way to the Diocese, and if we aspire to taking on any additional staff at some stage (eg a part-time parish administrator), this will only be possible with additional funding from within the congregation.

Our new Mission Action plan goes into more detail on all four of these areas, with specific plans and proposals. You could say that the next stage for Holy Trinity is a shift from fabric to spiritual and community vitality. Of course, every church has to address both of these areas. But, in the euphoria following a successful building project, we must never forget that the refurbishment that matters most is a work of God, and it happens in the human heart. This is the work we need to focus on now.

Mike Starkey, Vicar

Electoral Roll

The Electoral Roll is the membership list of a church. This past year our Roll saw another healthy increase, from 235 to 254. But this wasn't simply a matter of 19 new people joining the Roll. Forty people joined the Roll, and 21 left – for a variety of reasons, including some moving away from the area.

Wardens' Report

As in previous years, this report concentrates on church fabric matters which are a particular responsibility of your wardens. This past year has been dominated by one major project.

The Green Room and associated maintenance

During the summer, starting on 11/07 and completing in 01/09 the old Parish Room was completely refurbished, and the rear portion of the church was transformed into two meeting rooms. The resulting Green Room is now a wonderful space for church and community use: it is bright, spacious and complies with the disability discrimination rules.

In preparation for the Green Room project, the following maintenance/repairs were undertaken:

- The sound system had to be repositioned to make room for the works at the rear of the church.
- The outside toilet was re-roofed, a new sink and toilet installed, and the room was painted. This was vital as the parish room toilets were being refurbished, and we still needed to provide facilities. The increased use of the Blue Room (formerly known as the vestry) and garden during the summer months made this additionally desirable.

Other maintenance

- The lead flashing on the gully to the chancel had to be replaced after water was found to be leaking down the wall. It was discovered that squirrels had eaten some of this away! We are now waiting for the chancel wall to dry out before we re-decorate.
- The wooden cupboard sliding doors in the Blue Room were repaired.

In summary, the church accommodation has been considerably refreshed, and its utility greatly improved, to the benefit of the church family and the local community.

Liz Rogers, Clare Stocks

Deanery Synod

Since I was appointed 12 months ago we have met on three occasions - at St Richard's Hanworth, St Stephen's Twickenham and lastly at Holy Trinity.

These meetings give an opportunity to meet the members of other churches within the Deanery and to discover at first hand what is going on in the Deanery. At each meeting a representative of the host church has outlined what is happening in their own parish.

Interesting talks have been received from the leader of the chaplaincy at West Middlesex Hospital and a vicar in Teddington on the idea of Café Church where the local Costa Coffee shop opens up on one evening a week when patrons and members of the church can meet over a cup of coffee. I have found it a useful broadening of my church experience.

Gordon Nockles

Music

Music at Holy Trinity is alive, well and varied. We sing a mixture of hymns and songs at the 10.30 services, aiming to provide a balance between traditional and modern styles: the best of the old and the best of the new. We have different styles of music each week:

- The first Sunday of the month is the all-age service so the songs tend to be simple and repetitive, to enable young children to participate easily (especially when aided by actions and shaky fruit!). The accompaniment is provided by a lively mix of piano and violins, with occasional flute.
- On second and fourth Sundays the music is generally more traditional to suit the more formal Communion service, with organ playing for the hymns and during communion.
- Third Sundays of each month see a chamber group of piano, violin and bassoon accompanying old and new hymns, usually in three or four-part harmony.
- On the occasional fifth Sunday the service and the music follow the pattern of third Sunday services, accompanied by piano and violin.

For special services the Trinity Singers, our occasional church choir, sing congregational and solo items. This year highlights were the carol service and the Christmas Eve midnight service. It was particularly good to welcome some new singers this year, and the standard was as high as ever. At least twice a term the church is packed to the gills on a weekday for Archdeacon Cambridge's School services, with lively seasonal hymns and frequent performances by the Infant and Junior Choirs.

We are always looking for more musicians to play at services, especially pianists who would be willing to learn how to play the organ. Please do contact me if you are interested on 020 8755 3982. I am also always keen to hear from anyone who would like to join the Trinity Singers – preferably with experience of singing in four-part harmony.

Alice Dallosso

Archdeacon Cambridge's School

This has been an exciting year for the school with many changes inside and outside the building. We have had the school kitchen renewed and have had a retractable roof put on to our swimming pool. The development of the wildlife area is ongoing where work has begun to create additional space for outdoor learning.

As part of the range of activities to engage children in their learning, and as an opportunity to celebrate the diversity within our community, the school halls became a departure lounge and an aircraft when we celebrated Archdeacon Airlines Day in the Autumn term.

In January Ofsted Inspectors visited the school and found the delivery of the curriculum and pupil personal development and wellbeing to be 'outstanding'. We were pleased with that report and furthermore delighted with the result of our Religious Education inspection which judged that the school was 'an outstanding Church school'. The report noted that 'The strong Christian vision that is articulated by the headteacher and governors combined with outstanding links with the parish church to create a supportive community that is valued by all'.

Janet Foster, Headteacher

Sunday School

Vicki Rogers and I have continued to run the Sunday School groups. We have had another good year and the groups are well attended.

We have three groups, catering for children aged 3 to 11 years old. The groups are organised according to school year groups. We usually have about:

25 x Nursery and Reception

15 x Year 1 and Year 2

6 - 9 x Year 3+

Our leaders and helpers all work on a voluntary basis and at the moment we have 9 leaders and 10 helpers. We hold groups on weeks 2, 3 and 4 of each month and do not meet during the school holidays.

Our teaching material is provided by Scripture Union. Each term we purchase teacher's books and workbooks for the children. This provides us with a Bible passage and associated activity for each week. Vicki and I go through the teacher's books each term and decide which sessions would be the most appropriate and enjoyable for the children. This programme claims to 'Use the Bible to inspire children, young people and adults to know God'. As leaders and helpers we endeavour to make each session interesting and inspiring

We are continuing to look at ways of maintaining the older children's interest in attending Sunday School. For example we have recently bought easy to read Bibles for the older group. The older children are still enjoying using the Scripture Union material and we have fantastic discussions based on what we've been studying.

We are looking at providing opportunities within the Sunday service for the Sunday School groups to report back on what they have been doing in their groups. We would also like to develop the social side of Sunday School to allow all of the groups to meet up and have fun together.

Katy Patterson

Midweek Minnows

Midweek Minnows has been meeting on Tuesday afternoons in term-time, 1.30-3pm, since November 2003. The original vision behind Minnows was for a toddler group with more of an artistic and musical focus than Trinity Toddlers, a place where young children can learn songs, including Christian songs, and hear Bible stories.

This year we were grateful to Louise Edwards and Christine Nockolds for joining Kerina Morgan and myself in leading the group. At the start of the 2008 autumn term we lost a significant cohort of children when they started school, and numbers never really recovered. After that, we felt we had to keep the future of the group under review. Numbers remained stubbornly low, with a number of parents commenting that this after-lunch slot was when their children took their afternoon nap. In the end we reluctantly decided to end the group, at least for the time being, and we held our final session on 31 March 2009.

It may well be that there are other options for mid-week toddler group provision in future, and we look forward to some creative thinking in the months to come. Many thanks to all who attended and led Midweek Minnows from 2003 to 2009!

Jo Gunning

Trinity Toddlers

Trinity Toddlers meets on Thursday mornings in term-time, 10-11.30am, and is a popular group for pre-schoolers and babies. As always, the group has had its ups and downs. The families and carers who attend the group have been consistent, although not every week. We have had lots of new families visiting the group.

All families have commented on the incredible renovations to the Green Room, and how proud we should be. They always comment on the variety and good condition of the toys. Some of the weeks recently have been very quiet: I put this down to weather and the downturn in the economy. Even so, the group is still very viable to run.

Purdey Davis

Charitable Giving

Holy Trinity has been supporting charities operating at local, national and international level for a number of years. Our current pattern of charitable giving has been in place for around four years now. Many of us feel that it is important that as a church we consider and respond to the needs of others, particularly the most marginalised.

Locally, Holy Trinity supports Welcare, a charity based in South West London which works with disadvantaged families. Before Christmas we held a Toy Service to collect new toys for children whose families are struggling because of social, economic or personal difficulties. We also had a speaker from Welcare who gave us an insight into how the organisation helps get families back on their feet.

Nationally, Holy Trinity supported the Children's Society, a charity helping children facing danger, discrimination or disadvantage in their daily lives. At our Christingle service in December, we raised £203 for them. We would like to thank all who helped organise this service.

We also support Oasis Trust, a charity which helps young people who are homeless and socially excluded, in some of the poorest communities in the UK. Last year's May Fair, where we offered lunch and snacks in the parish room and had a book stall, raised £700, half of which was donated to Oasis Trust. A big thank you to Leigh Gibson and Cathy Liversidge, who did a lot of the organisation, and to everyone who helped on the day. Please contact me if you are available to lend a hand this May Fair, on the Bank Holiday Monday, 25 May.

At the international level, Holy Trinity supports a Christian Aid project providing assistance to communities in Mali, West Africa, one of the poorest countries in the world. Our Lent Lunch in March raised a record £268. Thanks to Fleur, Nicola, Giles, Gary and Paul for making their delicious soups and to others who contributed bread, and other food for the children.

In addition, we organise an annual collection for Christian Aid in the spring, to support their work more generally. Christian Aid was founded on the premise that Christians should not accept a world in which some people have nothing and some have so much. Last year we raised £538. Thank you to everyone who contributed so generously.

The Charitable Giving Group meets a few times a year to organise events to support the church's charitable giving. New members are always welcome.

Nicole Piché

Financial

These notes have been provided in addition to the formal accounts (which are reviewed by an independent examiner) in order to help explain the main items. *Note: the church's financial year is a calendar year, in this case Jan-Dec 2008.*

Financial Review

The Green Room Project was a significant activity in the year, with £73,570 raised in donations and grants and a further £25,000 in the form of an interest-free diocesan loan, repayable over three years, with the first installment due in September 2009. As income exceeded the £100,000 reporting threshold set by the church centrally the accounts this year are produced in a slightly different format to previous years.

Excluding the Green Room Project, receipts in the year were £73,250 and are detailed in the financial statements. Gift aid donations were up nearly 8% on 2007, with loose collections at the same level and representing less than 10% of the total – i.e. over 90% of our income is received tax-efficiently. Expenditure aside from the Green Room Project was up around 6% on the previous year, mainly due to the 10% increase the parish share paid to the diocese. This is good news as it shows we are making progress towards paying the full cost of around £60,000. The church contributed £46,608 as its diocesan parish share – this is used mainly to pay clergy, provide housing and pay for training. The rest of the expenditure represents the costs of running the church, including insurance, utility bills and maintenance.

Overall, excluding the Green Room project, income was around £5,500 higher than expenditure. Had we been reporting using the same receipts and payments basis as in previous years the surplus excluding the Green Room would have been nearly £9,500, with around £4,500 a one-off benefit from accelerating the timing of our tax reclaim.

The Green Room Project effectively raised the amount of the project, with the expected final cost at £99,323 and income to date (including amounts received in 2007) just £400 lower at £98,920. Of course as £25,000 of the income was in the form of a loan this will have to be repaid either from fundraising, church reserves or a combination of these.

Reserves Policy

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance on the combined general and emergency maintenance funds (if possible) which equates to approximately six months' unrestricted payments, to cover emergency situations that may arise from time to time. The balance of £48,153 substantially exceeds this level, but part may be allocated to the Green Room project.

It is our policy to invest our funds mainly with the Church of England Deposit Fund, with a working level maintained in our current account. To optimize interest some of the surplus funds in the current account were transferred to the deposit account in January 2008.

Robert French, Treasurer