

# The Ecclesiastical Parish of Chingford



## Report of the Parochial Church Council to the APCM 2017

Registered Charity number: 1127259

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# 1. Rector's Report

## First: A Thank You

2016/ 17 has been a tremendous year in Chingford in which there have been great strides made in Parish life. Confidence has been much recovered, foundations have been firmly laid for the future, and now the several congregations here are now growing in strength and depth. That this has all been possible in such a short space of time is down to the corporate wisdom and hard work of a great team of people.

This year we have added many new faces to that team and said goodbye to some too. We continue to be blessed with two excellent wardens who work voluntarily yet tirelessly doing a myriad of small things, shaping, helping, leading across many areas.

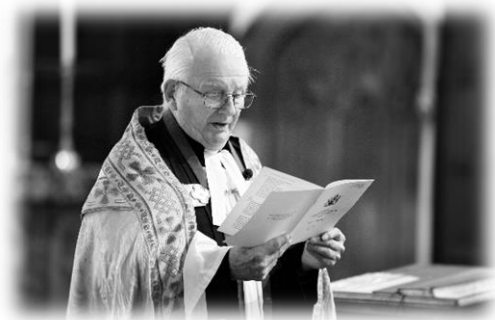
After four years of retirement service as the Parish's Associate House for Duty Priest, Fr Hall, and his wife Sarah, have now retired for real and relocated to Lincolnshire. With his colleagues, Fr Hall had helped revive the congregational life at the Old Church markedly. A farewell to Hall meant a welcome to Mother Susan, who, as a prayerful team player, has made an immediate impact. She has responsibility for congregational development at the Old Church and faith development across the Parish.



We also said farewell to Gerald Osmond who was thanked for many years of service as Treasurer. He has handed over to Ross and Hannah Clegg who have done a wonderful job catching us up this year. Another farewell to Clare Codling as Parish Administrator and another welcome to Charlotte Hay-Campbell, her replacement, and the parish's first bona fide employee.

A number of new DCC and PCC members have served in year. Thanks particularly to Gill Hoxby for being Deputy Warden and chairing at the All Saints, (Jenny Beardsmore having handed over the reins) and Jacqui Neophytou for taking on the second Deputy Warden role at Ss Peter & Paul.

Fr Maxwell arrived at Passiontide to be Parish Deacon and is now a firm fixture and a good source of radio advertising! Maxwell is using his range of skills, visiting a number of care homes, deaconing, preaching, and assisting with a review of the Hall project.



Fr Rodney has been a rock in a year when he has also been Mayor's chaplain. Mother Tina has continued an excellent ministry here and on placement at St Edmund's, and here again assisting with cover as she comes to the last weeks of her curacy. A new curate, Fr Lee Taylor, arrives in the summer and so the cycle continues on.

As a training parish we now have Katherine Ward serving alongside as an Ordinand this year- due for ordination in 2018. She is regularly preaching, leading prayer, and is overseeing wedding ministry. Tania Payne and Robert Church have visited on vocational placements. Marilyn Claydon has been accepted for ordination training beginning in September, and with her team, has overseen a wonderful rebirth in the Cherubs ministry.



As always- thanks to Mike and his team and Jan Hawkins and hers, to musicians, sacristans, servers, and Sunday Club teachers, to those make tea, run rotas, arrange flowers, visit the sick, do assemblies, join in daily prayer, edit magazines, teach, preach, organise and lead others, to team members and team leaders, uniformed groups, gardeners, funeral arrangers, and cleaners, to occasional attendees and faithful regulars. To one and all who add to the richness of life in this place and have contributed in whatever way - THANK YOU!

## 2016 Foundations for Growth

Much of this new participation is made possible by a deliberate turn towards team working. This year for instance, we have created a new Fabric Team of eight people to add to the Leadership Team and the Finance and Stewardship Team. This allows more people to participate, more to get done, and helps ensure that what does get done in these crucial areas is done in the best possible way. There is also a new Cherubs team- a fluid and creative group that offer a great example to the rest of us. And the serving teams, musicians, social committee and others continue of course. To support all this we have also begun a lay leaders support group that meets once a quarter to pray together and encourage one another. The PCC has also set aside monies to train lay people in leadership in the year ahead.



In addition to these foundations we have also invested in our families ministry and schools ministry. Partnering with Red Balloon, (Luke Lowrie and his team), a new weekly youth club- the YC Club- has been launched to add to our other work in the choirs and Sunday Clubs. Luke also assists with All Age Services and at school where twice weekly assemblies, and a new Yr Six Club are now running. A further support group for adopting and fostering families has also begun meeting regularly in the Rectory.

A focus on improving welcome in both DCCs, (our local mission teams), has had a big impact, a new website and improvement in the Parish's communications- especially in the noted posters and online have also helped, and having Fr Maxwell on air on BBC Radio London every Tuesday is the icing on the cake!

We have been investing a great deal in much overdue fabric repairs, as the wardens note later in their reports. All three Quinquennial reports were done this year to give us a

baseline and help the team plan our investment over the next years. Longer term repairs are planned and large funding bids have been sent off.

As well as all this the parish finances have turned good. Two years of modest surplus have now been posted thanks to a continued increase in giving, in fees for occasional offices, in rental income, and in our investments. The importance of a continued increase in our own giving cannot be overestimated. The Church of England recommends that each parishioner tithe 5% of their income before tax. And we ask that each would move towards that target as soon as possible, and pay by standing order. Having a proper dependable and independent income is the surest way to lay proper long term foundations for this parish.

These foundations have led to a real and lasting growth in the numbers attending worship. Not just at major festivals- which posted another rise this year. But more importantly during the rest of the year. Attendance is up around 30% across the parish and our wider worshipping community is now something in the region of 350 diverse people across several congregations in two churches.



Given that the Church of England has been experiencing a slow but steady decline year on year- these figures are something we can be really proud of. They show that there is a hunger for God and that any parish, with the right intent, can turn in and reform, turn around and grow, turn out serve their community. I get very regular positive impact from the town about the impact, in large ways and small, that you are having on your community.

## **2017 Some thoughts for the year ahead**

Having those foundations sets the stage for us. Now comes the question of what we should be doing next? I don't hold much store by big strategies. I am far more interested in creating a sustainable and supportive culture.

To build this together there are three challenges, at least, in the year ahead that we, with our leaders, new leaders, and new teams must face. Chief among them is to help all of us grow in depth in our faith and in breadth in our life together as leaders, teams, and worshipers together. Secondly, we need to grow together as a parish, weaving a connection between the many and varied aspects of our life. And thirdly, the natural consequence of all of this and surely the most important consequence of faith, is that we need to grow in our leadership and in our service in the parish at large.

**Growing in depth and breadth** As the PCC and DCCs have reflected on the success of the last year and looked ahead they have time and again returned to the need to deepen our life and faith. With larger churches small groups are needed for reflection, study, and friendship.



A small group could be within your choir, your team, or your midweek congregation but it might also be a house group that meets to eat, study, and pray together. I see that people are hungry for this and I hope together we will have at least two more of these such groups in each church this year as well as continuing to provide opportunities for those wishing to be baptised, confirmed, and to explore first communion. Of course, Mother Susan has this in her remit and will help but it is really a lay leaders task so that those ordained to teach and administer the sacraments can do that without also running everything as well and running themselves into the ground.

There is also a need to develop depth in our volunteer and leadership group and embed our team working. Churches can get stuck because the same people end up doing the same things year on year and it is my belief that the people who are too busy to develop other leaders end up burning up by trying to do the work themselves. This restricts growth and excludes people from joining in.

Our challenge is to break out of that cycle and find a new way of working to help us forward. With this in mind Bishop Peter and others in our diocese are investing in and promoting community organising through the use of Citizens UK as an aid to congregational development. This is not to create any more work-precisely the opposite. It is the best way we know to embed our growth by listening to what is wanted in the Parish and beyond, and by sharing the responsibility for that, bringing on new lay leaders.

Already we have helped launch a chapter of Citizens UK in Waltham Forest. This alliance of churches, schools, colleges, mosques, and others, exists first and foremost to build up our institutions and then to help them participate effectively in their communities. I have benefited from some extended training, as will other clergy, three of our number (and as many more as want it) can go on a two day program, and ALL are invited to pop across the road to St Mary's School on 9<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30 pm to see what it is about and to think about what we can do differently. I know it is new- but please have faith, try it out, and get involved.



**Growing Together** The second challenge this year is to grow forward together. As our wider community grows it is important that we do not split apart. Having a PCC that acts as an overall board helps with this unity- and this year we hope to increase representation from different parts of our life in the parish.

Having DCCs that do not replicate or complicate the work of other teams has been crucial to this and maintaining an explicit focus on local mission- not maintenance seems key. It is also important that as much as possible becomes cross parish. Mthr Susan's focus on faith. The clergy roles and presence across the board. The Pilgrim Course, the Lent Courses, the teams, and more already are. What else can we do to foster unity?

Bishop Peter is coming to preside and preach at a joint service for the whole parish at Pentecost- June 4<sup>th</sup> 10am at St Peter & Paul's. All are invited.

## **Growing Outward**



I have already talked about evangelism and the need to provide nurture for Christians new and old. Our diocesan Bishop, Steven, has laid down the gauntlet to us all to turn out and evangelise- to make new Christians and to grow new disciples. It is a challenge but one we hope to resource meet.

Lastly, we are challenged at every turn, to turn outwards from ourselves and even from the church to give more in love and service beyond its walls. I hope we continue our wonderful contribution to running charities, uniformed groups, providing a wonderful place for baptisms, weddings, and funerals.

I hope we deepen our association with the Foodbank, the Nightshelter, the Almshouses, and the many charities that we support through concerts, fundraising, and direct support. Giving to them rose markedly last year.

Turning outward also means leading in the community though and I suspect that will be the challenge for us. The public realm is not just for shops and states and our contribution cannot be limited to buying and voting. The church, of all ages and in all its diversity, is called to participate fully in public life and make its proper contribution to the common good.

## **A final encouragement**

In all this I want you all to be encouraged. We have a rare thing here. A diverse, growing, and strong parish. It is a gift for us to treasure. It is a gift for us to nurture. And it is a gift for us to share with others.

*Fr Andy Trenier*  
Rector

## 2. Report from All Saints, (the Old Church)

**Coming and Going** The past year saw the ministry of Fr Hall Speers come to an end on the last Sunday of October. Hall and Sarah were much loved, and the church benefited greatly from their presence and friendship. They are remembered here with much affection. Mother Susan was licensed on 27th November 2016 and has been welcomed warmly, for which she is very grateful. The kindness and support given during her unexpected illness has been particularly appreciated.

**Occasional Offices** During the past year there have been thirteen Baptisms, three Weddings and over sixty Funerals. Thanks to Diana and the excellent work of the vergers, these important outreach ministries have been beautifully organised and sensitively managed.

**Sunday Club** has continued to grow, thanks to the dedicated leadership of Val Lewis, and with the help of her team, all undergirded by prayer. We are seeing the fruit of this ministry in the growing faith and confidence of the children, and the wisdom of their input each Sunday. A Sunday Club Special, held in July, was a happy occasion for everyone.

**Purple Praise** has flourished. They sing every third Sunday of the month, and have given two fundraising concerts, including lunch, one to celebrate the Queen's birthday in June, raising funds towards to hall porch, and a Christmas concert in December, raising funds for a new kitchen cooker. Standing room only for both occasions; times of inspiration, fellowship and good fun.

**Discipleship** In discipleship, two Parish wide Pilgrim Courses were run here successfully, each on Monday evenings and Wednesday afternoons. Participants have found these courses most helpful, and they will be continued this year.



The first Quiet Day was held in September, and there will be more. Morning Prayer and Eucharist continued each Wednesday morning, though with lower numbers than before. Jan Hawkins has led a monthly Hour of Prayer on the first Saturday of each month, with time for shared reflection and quietness, and thoughtful input from all concerned. The church has



linked up with the ecumenical E4 Lent groups which have been well led and challenging, though with disappointing take-up across the area. All Age services on the first Sunday of each month are endeavouring to be sensory, and accessible to all. They work best when Parades happen on the same Sundays, and hopefully this will gradually become the norm. The church much appreciates its links with the uniformed organisations and hopes to develop these in the coming year.

**Looking out** The church continues its giving to the food bank, week by week, to Traidcraft through regular stalls, and Christian Aid through coffee mornings. Sunday Club also sponsors a child, and many Christmas boxes were filled and sent from the church, with both children and adults taking part.

**Looking in** The church is in good heart, much appreciated for its friendliness and welcome. This year Ivy celebrated her 101st birthday, Amy's daughter Elisa her 1st birthday, and baby Bo was born a couple of weeks ago. Sadly Richard Luscomb died in the new year and is much missed. There is an informal but very important ministry of loving outreach and support to those who are sick or bereaved. There was a celebration of Harvest with Bishop Peter in October, and preparation for First Communion, Baptism and Confirmation is under way.

The hall porch has been refurbished, the hall was redecorated by parishioners, new kneelers were made, donated and dedicated in November, and the gardening party continued to keep the churchyard beautiful. Passers by often take pictures of it.

**Thanks** are given to all those who have contributed so faithfully to the worship and welcome of the church. So many of the congregation are involved that probably everyone deserves such thanks.

But in particular, the church wardens and the sacristan, DCC members, servers, readers and intercessors, sides people, organists, flower arrangers, those providing refreshments, the hall booking manager, those who have done decorating and repairs, and all the clergy who have led services and preached throughout the past year.

Mother Susan Sayers  
Associate Priest

Jan Harrison  
*Churchwarden*

### 3. Report from the DCC of the Parish Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul

2016 was another busy and largely very successful year for the Parish Church.

**Looking Out** We looked outside the Parish on many occasions firstly supporting 'Project Paddington' which saw our Sunday club; CofE schools and St. Mary's Catholic School combining to send boxes of much loved Teddy bears accompanied by a message of love and support to refugee children in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. We also supported Christian Aid; Macmillan Cancer Care; Waltham Forest Night Shelter; The Children's Society; Helen Rollason Organisation; and our Sunday Club sponsors a girl in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Thanks to the people who contribute to and deliver/sort goods for the food bank, it is providing a huge benefit to its many users

**Churchyard and Halls** On the second Saturday in each month we continue to have coffee in church and a gardening morning with just a few of us doing our best to keep the churchyard tidy and safe. We recently removed almost 40 decaying Christmas wreaths and other unwanted objects from the area while the coffee morning contributes up to £1,000 to the Hall on the Green Fund. Extra hands are always welcome.

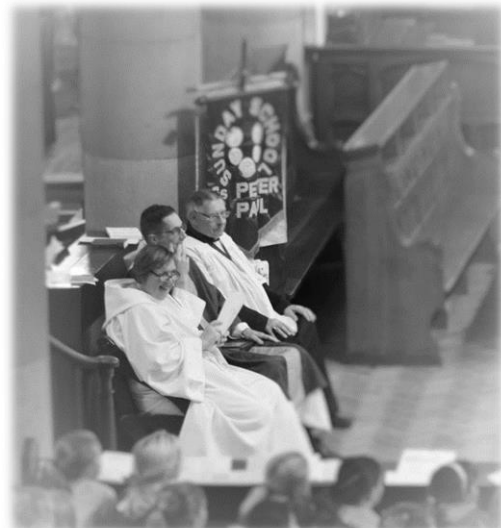
We haven't neglected the building and asbestos was removed from the boiler room by a professional company, all inspections eg. Boiler and lightning conductors were completed and various small repairs undertaken by different people.

The Hall is used by a breakfast/after school club (Yellow Birds), fitness/lifestyle groups; stage school; Scouts; boys' choir club; Sunday club/Little Cherubs and choir club; children's parties and for many social events including the Village festival, bazaar, choir show and Parish lunches, while in addition to services the church is used for Cherubs, choir practices, organ practice, the YC Club, and 'open church'.

**Welcome** The DCCs' focus for the year was to ensure that we are a welcoming church.

Discussion/training sessions were offered to agree the approach we would make to visitors and regular attenders alike. It was agreed that sidesmen would become stewards as that is a more recognisable term and they would wear badges with their first name on them.

The results have been great.



The visitors book mentions the warm welcome and it is frequently commented upon by our growing congregation. It is really encouraging to see so many young children and babies joining the congregations with parents and sometimes grandparents accompanying them.

Thank you to all volunteers for everything you did last year and continue to do to promote God's love in Chingford. The church wouldn't function without volunteers and we're looking forward to more success and fun with HIM in 2017

Joyce Hilton

*Churchwarden*

## 4. Report from Chingford Parish Church Music

### *Chingford Parish Church Choir - Chingford Parish Church Girls' Choir - The Chingford Singers – Chingford Parish Church Chamber Choir - The Monthly Concerts' Series*

The musical highlights of 2016 were the recording sessions for the new CD, the Chamber Choir's Evensongs in Westminster Abbey, the boys and men's week at Ely and the weekend with the girls / men at Worcester Cathedral. There were also individual services at St Edmundsbury Cathedral and St Alban's Abbey. The Grand Christmas Concert was highly successful as usual and we maintained all the choral services at Chingford, which we know are very much appreciated.



The boys' section continued to thrive and maintain good numbers, which is very important as this is so rare in parish churches now. Our girls' choir remained at full strength and there was excellent support from the large number of choirmen who made sure we had all the resources needed to maintain the repertoire again.

There were a high number of Bishops' and Deans' Award exam successes again, and in addition Grace Chitty gained the RSCM Gold Award – the highest exam that can be taken by a chorister. We've not had anyone achieve that for a while. Chingford Parish Church was used by the RSCM as one of the exam centres for the diocese for all three of these awards.

The boys and girls recorded a television documentary programme during September in collaboration with Fr Maxwell. As yet the programme has not been shown, but we had a lot of fun doing it!

The Chingford Singers sang various concerts and services, performed John Rutter's Requiem on All Souls' Day with an instrumental ensemble from our Chingford Sinfonia.

The new CD 'A Christmas Blessing from Chingford' went on sale in time for Christmas and also served to regenerate more sales of our existing CDs. This led to CD income

of just over £4000 for the year, which easily covered the £2700 production costs of the new CD with a rewarding surplus and stocks to generate future income.

Through hard work fundraising, and a huge amount of generosity, sufficient funding was again generated to support all our musical activities. The concerts' series also enabled us to support the parish and contribute towards the Parish Share, as well as the 'Hall on the Green' project. Carol singing produced another record amount with the proceeds shared between Haven House and our music funds.



All our regular concerts were again well supported, and involved events by our own musicians as well as other organisations such as the London Forest Choir.

We are very grateful for the help, support and enthusiasm of our whole team of musicians who do so much voluntarily to organise, prepare, rehearse and perform our music. Particular thanks are due to Tom Cowhig, Jonathan Marten, John Rippin, and Rory Thorndyke. Also to Joyce Hilton, Colette and the many wives, friends and choirmen who quietly undertake all the other necessary jobs that keep our music going. Fr Andy and Katherine Ward provided valuable Christian Training for the choristers, particularly in the preparation for Deans' and Bishops' Chorister exams.

Mike Emerson

*Director of Music*