

St. John's Church Stratford London E15

ANNUAL REVIEW FOR 2007



Ken Fuller from Christian Aid interviews soul singer Beverley Knight - celebrity guest at Positively Jamaica, held in St. John's Churchyard 4th August 2007

Incorporating the

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PCC

For the Parish of St. John with Christ Church and St. James Stratford

for the year ended 31st December 2007

VICAR'S REPORT

2007 went very quickly for me. I found it a busy year with a lot of challenges, including the need to get to grips with the Olympic bandwagon, working on ways to minister effectively to a congregation which continues to grow steadily, and continuing to relate to an ever-changing Stratford. As ever, I am grateful to those who share this ministry with me.

A highlight of this year was the appointment of a full-time Verger and Building Services Supervisor. This appointment has enabled me to delegate quite a lot of building related matters. Needless to say, I have found other things to occupy my time.

I have tried, over the past few years, to strengthen our leadership structure, and I am grateful to all those who take on specific leadership roles in so many different ways. I hope to develop this further in the coming year. It is good to have a growing list of people who act as "heads of department" for different parts of our ministry.

As we encourage leadership within the church, I am always keen to emphasise that our task is not to suck people into the church and church activities, but to send people out. The value of all that we do on Sunday is shown when it equips us to be Christians on Monday, and we need to constantly hold the balance between encouraging ministry within the fellowship and affirming ministry outside. Please let preachers know whether their teaching on Sunday helps you to live as a Christian on Monday.

Schools work took up a lot of time in 2007. St John's is a popular place for school visits. Whole classes of pupils come to look around the church; for many of them it is their only opportunity to see the inside of a Christian building. A typical visit lasts 45-60 minutes and includes a guided tour, with an explanation of the different things which happen in the church building and a high-speed guide to the main message of Christianity. Over a thousand young people visited during 2007.

Our big event in 2007 was Positively Jamaica. This involved a lot of people, and a good partnership with Christian Aid, but the main inspiration came from Maxine Webster, who saw the project through with amazing vision and determination. It is always good to be able to be part of events which combine mission, real social benefit and a fun time for those who attend, and Positively Jamaica was an outstanding example of this. We have the capability to put on these events with space, resources and talented people; they are always good for our mission, and we need to ask the Lord to guide us towards the next such event. Well done Maxine; are there any more visionaries out there?

The Annual Review appears in a new format this year. The first part includes a whole host of reports, reflecting all that happens at St. John's, written by a variety of people and edited by me. The aim is to give us an interesting and informative overview of what has happened at St. John's during 2007. I want to express my thanks to all who have contributed to this section, and I hope you enjoy reading their reports.

The second part is the official report of the Parochial Church Council, approved by the PCC and conforming, we trust, to the legal standards required by the Charity Commissioners. I am grateful to those who have helped draft this report, and to all involved in compiling our accounts.

Finally, thanks to all who have typed, printed, collated and stapled this document.

David Richards

2007 AT A GLANCE - *Extracts from the Newsletters*

There are pictures of some of these events on the website (www.stjohnse15.co.uk)

- Newham Primary Care trust launched "**The Big Quit**" stop smoking clinic at the start of 2007 – there was an amazing response
- An **Information Pack** was given out on 14th January - an attempt to improve communication with church members
- St John's hosted several meetings about the **Olympic & Paralympic Games** during the year
- **School Visits** to church were an important part of the year with pupils from Tollgate, Salisbury, Carpenters, Calverton, Rokeby, Earlham and Ranelagh enjoying a guided tour of the church. Dave, Carol and Darren also led Assemblies at Maryland and Carpenters Schools
- St. John's played a leading part in the Newham **Fairtrade** Steering Group and supported Fairtrade Fortnight. St. John's was declared a Fairtrade parish on 25th February and Darren helped launch the Newham Fairtrade Faith Group.
- **Manny & Ohita** were married in February
- People went **ice-skating** outside Stratford station in February
- We **Prayer Walked** the whole parish during 2007, including the Olympic site in February
- **Positively Jamaica** was launched at 11am service on 18th February – lots of volunteers signed up
- We held a Wake-keeping service for **Atiyebi Omuaru** 24th February
- The Women's Group led our **Mothering Sunday** Service, with the aid of 1000 Daffodils
- **East London Clarinet Choir** performed at St. John's on 3rd March
- Stuart Windsor from **Christian Solidarity Worldwide** was our guest preacher on 4th March
- **Benoit & Andrea Cibangu** from OMF visited on 11th March en route to Japan
- We joined in the **Focus on Slavery** past & present during the year with the March of the Abolitionists visiting Stratford on 23rd March and the film, "India's Hidden Slavery", shown on 19th October
- St. John's offered guided tours of the church on 17th March as part of the "**Be a Local Tourist**" weekend
- The annual St. John's **Quiz Night** was on 24th March
- We celebrated **Easter** with our Easter "Flower Cross" in the churchyard, an Easter Garden scene outside and 3000 Easter cards to the parish
- **Rev. Desmond Gritten** was 90 on Easter Sunday, 8th April, and celebrated Holy Communion on his Birthday
- Some church members joined in the **Prayer & Peace walk** in Leytonstone in April following the fatal stabbing of Paul Erhahon on Good Friday
- St John's hosted the **Newham District Scouts** St George's Day Service on 22nd April
- **Michael Fatungase** raised money to go to India to work in a school and orphanage through bric-a-brac sales in the churchyard. He was joined by Joel Semakula, and they went to India in October
- Chris Aubrey led a **Beating of the Bounds History Walk** on 26th May, before the Olympic Park site was closed off in July
- Anna Morgan went to Lambeth Palace to meet the **Archbishop of Canterbury** as part of a youth event
- A group from St. John's attended the **London Prayer Event** at West Ham stadium for Pentecost 27th May
- We offered people the opportunity to **Light a Prayer Candle** in church from 3rd June – initially for an experimental period. It quickly became a popular part of our ministry
- **Cornelius Henry** was accepted for Ordination training in June
- **Rosemond's daughter**, Precious, married George on 25th June
- **Darren** was ordained priest on 24th June

- Members of the **African Praise Group** sang at the Farewell service for Ven Michael Fox, Archdeacon of West Ham, on 4th July at St. Margaret's Barking
- The annual Friends Service and Lunch was on 8th July. The Guest preacher was former curate, **Rev. James Maddern** and we also welcomed Katie & baby Isaac before they departed for Mozambique
- **Bishop Jim Roxburgh** (former Bishop of Barking) wrote to us for the Friends' Service "St. John's has become the heart of East London and is moving towards being the centre of the world! What an opportunity! What a responsibility! But what chaos faces you, and what hard work."
- 10 members of YPF went to Sidmouth on a **CYFA Camp** in July
- **Dennis Pritchard** completed the Course in Christian Studies and started on his training to be a Parish Evangelist
- **Open-air services** were scheduled to start on 22nd July but only 3 were held outside because it wasn't a very good Summer
- "**Positively Jamaica**" was the BIG event of the year on 4th August – Maxine's vision, raising over £4000
- **The coach trip to Great Yarmouth** on 11th August was a successful day, organised by Shirley Lacey
- St. John's members went to a **Vicarage Tea Party** on 18th August – cucumber sandwiches and scones
- We enjoyed a **Picnic & Cricket in the park** after the morning service on 28th August
- **Wilfred Ansah and Rebecca Taylor** were married on 25th August
- **Adrian Bryzak & Yadira** were married in late summer
- **Adrian Clarke & Jackee Brown** were married during the morning service on 2nd September
- Our Sunday morning teaching series in September was entitled "**Godly and Green**". It ended with a "Green Fair" on 30th September after the morning service
- Carol Richards was appointed half-time Regeneration Adviser to the Bishop of Barking in October. This builds on her Regeneration work in Stratford.
- St John's members prayed "**Around the Clock**" on 3rd November
- Some Church members were invited to work with consultants drawing up plans for Stratford City in late autumn
- The **Association of Christian Teachers** held a conference on 16th November at St. John's
- We joined the **Operation Christmas Child** Shoe-box Appeal in November – 30 boxes were sent from St. John's
- Some members of YPF performed at the **Iroko Theatre Company** 10th Anniversary on 24th November
- "**To Serve Others**" was the theme in the Autumn when 89 people completed pledge forms
- Gill organised a **Remembrance Sunday** poppy cross for the 8th time on 11th November
- Bishop John Ball led our **Confirmation Service** on the evening of 11th November – 16 people made a commitment of Baptism and/or confirmation or were received into the Church of England
- The Choir sang **Carols in the shopping centre** once again on 15th December
- We delivered a total of **8000 Christmas Cards** to our parish in December
- The **outdoor Christmas Crib** again attracted lots of attention
- The total collection for **Newham Nightshelter** from lunchtime Carol Service, Midnight Service and Carol Singing and some donations was £1114.84

SUNDAY SERVICES

St. John's continues to be a church where Sunday worship is important, and attendance at Sunday services continues to increase. On Sundays we aim to equip people for their Christian life and ministry wherever they are during the week, through lively worship, relevant teaching and united prayer

THE MORNING SERVICE continued to grow during 2007, with an average attendance of 292, and the largest number, (580), on Easter Sunday.

The morning service is an all-action event, offering a number of different elements, including prayer and praise, prayer ministry for individuals, teaching for adults and for a wide range of different age groups and Holy Communion every other week. There is also a time for coffee, fellowship, Good News courses, Baptism and Confirmation Preparation and the occasional meeting, afterwards. There are usually Baptisms once a month and, increasingly, welcome prayers for our endless numbers of new babies. All this is crammed into a relatively short time and takes a huge amount of organisation and the involvement of many committed people. The growing numbers suggest that it manages to be a helpful time for a large number of people.

Teaching at this service is delivered in a variety of different formats, with a new, more inter-active, format developed for the Sunday when YPF join us for the teaching. Any suggestion that that Dave and Darren want to develop careers as chat-show hosts is wholly inaccurate.

Report by David Richards

THE EVENING SERVICE remains a popular choice for those wanting to worship with a smaller group of people. Though there is overlap with the morning congregation, there are still a number who purely attend in the evenings. Numbers remained steady at somewhere around 50 people.

The Confirmation service, and the Christmas Carol Service were two larger services that broke the mould. Both attracted congregations that were near the morning numbers. The Confirmation was shared with a number of Churches in our deanery, and saw the much-appreciated return of Bishop John Ball to lead the service.

Report by Darren McIndoe

PRAYER MINISTRY operates at both Sunday Services. There is a large team of over 30 people who minister on a rota basis. Prayer ministry makes a major contribution to our ministry and mission because it allows us to meet the needs of individuals who seek personal prayer in services. Some people have even attended services for the first time in order to receive prayer ministry.

Report by Sheva Williams

THE CHOIR AND MUSIC GROUP work together to lead and enhance the sung worship of the church. There are 15-20 people in all on Sunday morning and 8-10 people on Sunday evening. This group is constantly changing and evolving, always open to new voices and instrumentalists with appropriate skills who wish to join.

Report by Frances Aubrey,

THE ARK At the end of 2007 there were 35 children aged 1-3½ on the Ark Register. Weekly attendance is usually 8 – 10 children, but it is sometimes more and we need to plan to move the Ark to a larger space. There are 10 adults who take it in turns to lead the group. Each session includes a story from the Bible and a special activity.

SUNDAY CLUB There are 4 Sunday Club groups covering the ages from 3½ -13. At the end of 2007 the number of children registered was:

Sparklers	24
Kingdom Kids	21
The 'J' Team	33
Teen LIVE!	17

We use the Scripture Union "Light" syllabus. During the year the children covered the following topics: Elijah and Elisha, Jesus the Friend, Jonah the Runaway, Ruth the Widow, The First Easter, The Gift of God's Spirit, Paul's Letters, Living with Jesus, Three Old Testament Kings, Paul in Prison, Stories Jesus Told, Jeremiah the Prophet, A Good and Faithful God (Christmas).

There are 28 adults leading and assisting with the various Sunday Club groups.

Reports by Carol Richards

Please pray for all the children in our Church, and for those who lead the various groups on Sundays.

YPF is a group for 14-18 year olds. It meets during the Sunday morning service, and has a regular attendance of 20+. The group follows a programme of activities and Bible studies aimed at strengthening members understanding of their faith. For the second year running 10 members of YPF went to a summer CYFA Venture camp, this year in Sidmouth. Despite lousy weather they all had an amazing time, made friends and learned lots about Jesus.

Report by Elis and Sheila Matthews

Carol Richards is St. John's designated child protection officer

CHURCHWARDENS AND WELCOMERS

There are at present a total of 63 persons on the Welcomers list, some 20% of St John's congregation. Each Sunday between 8-10 members provide the essential welcoming and organizing functions at the morning and evening services, assisting new visitors, distributing books and papers, finding appropriate seating, arranging car-parking, directing communion and collection, helping in the movement of Youth groups, monitoring fire safety - generally ensuring that congregation

members can focus on the more important spiritual parts of the St John's Sunday experience. Recently a more efficient system of collecting books and service sheets has meant that the Welcomers can also engage at the end of services, helping to maintain the friendly and supportive atmosphere that is a highlight of worship at St. John's.

I am very grateful to all the volunteers who assist in this important part of mission.

Report by Chris Aubrey

MIDWEEK SERVICES AND MEETINGS

St. John's ministry and mission is not limited to Sundays. During the week there are daily prayers at 9am and 5pm Monday-Friday, mid-week services, homegroups, and our Healing Café. The church is also open for prayer almost every day

THE TUESDAY LUNCHTIME SERVICE

continues with a 20-minute time of hymn, bible reading, short talk and prayer. Attendance is 20-30. Teaching has covered a wide range of topics including, "Take up your Cross", "Living life in the Reality of the Resurrection", "Stewards of Creation", Philippians, and Jesus' Promises from Luke's Gospel. Services have been led by Darren, Margaret, Sheva and Dave.

Report by Margaret Hurley

THE HEALING CAFÉ

meets on Tuesdays from 11am to 2.30pm and is an extension to Prayer Ministry. 3 Prayer Ministers are involved, about 20 people attend. The Café befriends all who come along, offering light refreshments and a listening ear, often followed by words of comfort, hope, encouragement and prayer, if desired.

The group supports St. John's ministry and mission by encouraging people to pray and to bring along friends to this gathering.

Report by Sheva Williams

THE THURSDAY LUNCHTIME SERVICE

is a short, quiet Holy Communion Service. This service has grown slightly during the year, with 12-15 people attending. Canon Peter Kolawole celebrates and preaches at many of the Thursday services. The congregation include people who have missed a Sunday Service, those who prefer a quiet mid-week

service and people who enjoy this special midweek time.

Report by David Richards

CHURCH ON WEDNESDAY

meets every Wednesday in the café at 8pm. It is a relaxed environment with tea, coffee and biscuits available throughout the evening. Because it is a relaxed environment people are free to top-up their coffee or tea at any time during the evening. It is an opportunity for Christian fellowship, bible study, praying, singing, discussion and spiritual reflection. It is open to anyone who wishes to study the Bible and fellowship more.

In 2007 the group studied aspects of the book of Genesis, Jeremiah, John's Gospel and Galatians. We also did a study on the Holy Spirit during Pentecost, Making decisions, and a Focus on Advent series leading up to Christmas. In 2007, the studies were led by Dave, Maxine, Pat and Cornelius. Occasionally, Dave leads the group in the Eucharist within the context of study and spiritual reflection. Usually any number of people from 8-15 are present. Most come every week, but occasionally there are visitors.

Report by Cornelius Henry



St. John's members also meet during the week in HOMEGROUPS.....

The new **DAYTIME BIBLE STUDY GROUP** meets every Tuesday morning between 10.00am and 12.30pm. There are usually at least 6 of us but we have had as many as 9 and hope the group grows in 2008.

We have fun, fellowship, praise, prayer, Bible reading and discussion and sharing of thoughts and ideas, always accompanied by tea/coffee and goodies that add inches to the waistline.

The group began in 2007 and studied Mark's Gospel in order to get a good foundation as we journey onwards to understanding God's purpose for us as individuals, within the church and the wider community, and in preparation for eventually meeting Jesus face to face.

Report by Gill Carter

The **WEDNESDAY Group** meets at 8pm at either Gill's flat or Jean's flat. 4-6 people attend. During 2007 they looked at the whole Gospel of Matthew, an overview of Old Testament history, and some Old Testament characters.

Report by Dennis Pritchard

THE 20s AND 30s GROUP meets on Wednesday evenings. This group has about 15 members, usually 8 attend. The group has a mixture of worship, Bible study and social events. They aim to contribute to St. John's mission and ministry by continuing to support each other and the wider church.

Report by Rafe Smallman

St John's now has 2 "geographical homegroups", based on proximity to 2 major roads - the A12 and the A13.

THE A12 HOME GROUP meets on the 3rd Friday of the month, and has an attendance of 12+.

We come together monthly as a family of God, including parents and children to discuss practical biblical issues in a spiritual but lively and pro-active environment. It is also an opportunity for us as St John's church members to get to know one another better in a homely setting. The target for 2008 is to finish discussions on "Job - Wrestling with God" and move on to another practical and topical spiritual topic, while also looking at growth in numerical terms.

Report by Tolu Babarinsa

THE A13 GROUP continued to meet, intermittently, in 2007 and intends to re-launch in 2008.

We hope to start a new group for those who live near Lakeside in 2008 - if you are interested please contact Kenny Olaleye.

ST. JOHN'S WOMEN'S GROUP Meets monthly on Fridays at 7.30pm. The average attendance is 12

The group continues to support Church functions where required and continues to expand its numbers, striving to reflect the diverse cultures within the church, at the same time. It has also expanded its supporting welfare roles, to enable more visits to those who are unwell, to hospices and those who are bereaved to take place. The group hopes to expand its role further through greater interaction with other Women's groups, young people and with Christian Solidarity Worldwide.

Report by Sharon Cumberbatch

During 2007 we continued our **TELEPHONE PRAYER HOTLINE**. Urgent prayer requests can be phoned through to the Church Office and quickly circulated around a group of people who will pray these requests immediately. The hotline has 10 people and is co-ordinated by Jean Scott.

The **WORKPLACES PRAYER GROUP**, organised in partnership with Transform Newham met fortnightly under the leadership of Terry Diggins during most of 2007, but shut down towards the end of the year.

St John's continues to host some **workplace prayer groups** for those who work in Stratford.



MISSION AND OUTREACH

EVANGELISM AT ST. JOHN'S is overseen directly by PCC. This ensures that Evangelism is at the heart of all PCC decisions.

We continue to work at making the most of the Mission opportunities which our location, Sunday Services and open doors provide, and have continued with a number of regular Mission events initiatives during the year:

- **Prayer Walks** provide an opportunity to pray for a small area and invite prayer requests from residents. Thanks to Gill for leading them.
- **The Healing Café** continued every Tuesday with Sheva in charge.
- The outdoor **Christmas Nativity Scene and Easter Garden**, were a powerful visual witness to passers-by. Thanks to Chris Aubrey for all his work on these.
- Gill Carter again organised the **Flower Cross** at the front of the church for Holy Week and Easter.
- We again sent out **Easter cards**, incorporating a message and an advert for our Easter services. We distributed 3000 of these, and had very positive feedback.
- The usual **Open-air morning Services** in the summer enabled us to take our prayer and praise out into the community.
- Richard Aubrey and his team organised an excellent **Quiz Night** in March.
- **Christmas** provided major mission opportunities with carol singing in the Shopping centre, our annual Lunchtime carol Service and a host of other special services. We also led an open-air carol service at Carpenters estate and the 20s & 30s Group sang Carols at the Three Mills estate. We continued to deliver Christmas cards to all accessible homes and workplaces.
- **Door-to-Door Outreach** continued, co-ordinated by Dennis Pritchard, with a team going out every month to meet people in their own homes, or on the streets of Stratford. The team aim to make contact with people, and to see what happens from that contact. The team hope to do some workshops and an evening door-to-door in 2008.

Reports by David Richards and Dennis Pritchard

Dennis Pritchard has been training with Chelmsford Diocese to be a Parish Evangelist and expects to be commissioned in 2008. We expect this to further strengthen our evangelism work.

POSITIVELY JAMAICA, on Saturday 4th August, was our special mission event for 2007.

Over 6000 people attended this event, which was the result of over a year of planning and preparation.

Positively Jamaica was a celebration of culture, heritage, music, food, history, people and diversity. The main focus of the event was to highlight, support and fund raise for Christian Aid's current HIV / AIDS campaign and their work in Jamaica with JASL (Jamaica AIDS Support for Life) and the 3Cs (Children and Community for Change). In all, £4233.71 was raised.

In addition to raising the profile of this work the event raised awareness about other health issues, healthy living, fitness and Fairtrade.

Positively Jamaica brought the spirit of Jamaica to the centre of Stratford with the recreation of a Jamaican village atmosphere; incorporating a food village, a craft village as well as an Ackee Tree school area for young people to learn about Jamaica and Caribbean history, culture, customs, folklore etc.

Positively Jamaica brought the congregation of St. John's and local volunteers together. Volunteers spanning a cross-section of ages, abilities and nationalities came together to lend their support, skills and knowledge in order to bring this event to life. It was a truly positive community effort.

Report by Maxine Webster

MISSION/CHARITY SUPPORT

The MGC (Mission Giving Committee) meets to agree recommendations to the PCC for St John's Mission Giving Fund. This is made up of 10% of budgeted giving from the congregations – and is allocated as 80% to regular giving and 20% for emergency appeals. (In addition to this, it is worth noting that St John's gives away the Christmas Collections from its Lunchtime Carol Service, and the Midnight Christmas Communion – this usually goes to Turnaround for their work with the Homeless in Newham).

In this year's recommendations the MGC focussed on the balance between Local, National and International organisations that we support – with an aim to support more local organisations. In 2007 we supported 16 organisations.

Following a number of years as the MGC Convenor, Maxine Webster stepped down in April – though remaining busy as the Chair of the highly successful Positively Jamaica event which took place in August. Cornelius Henry also stepped down, to begin Ministry Training.

This left Rev Darren McIndoe, (the new Convenor), David Aubrey, Pippa Pritchard and David Richards. In April we added Rafe Smallman and Jean Scott to our number.

In morning services, we had three speakers. In March we heard from CSW. Benoit and Andrea Cibangu came to speak about their work in Japan with OMF, and Rev James Maddern was our Friends' service speaker – talking about his intended work with Maforga, Mozambique.

Another notable Mission activity in 2007 involved the St John's Minishop. The Minishop went on tour to a number of Fairtrade Events – in support of the Newham Fairtrade Campaign. Darren also played an active role in the Fairtrade Steering group, and members of St John's gave considerable support to a promotional event in the Mall during Fairtrade Fortnight.

A list of organisations we supported in 2007 follows, but for the latest information, watch the Mission Giving Noticeboard with its Monthly focus on a different organisation.

ALLOCATION OF MISSION GIVING in 2007

£500 Christian Solidarity Worldwide – *Advocates for human rights/religious persecution*

£400 C.O.M.E - *providing support for the Gulu Resource centre in Northern Uganda for community development*

£500 NAPAC – *UK's only provider offering support, counselling and helping adults rebuild their lives after suffering child abuse*

£300 Leprosy Mission – *responding to medication needs and the eradication of poverty*

£1500 OMF (Overseas Mission Fund) – *supporting Benoit and Andrea Cibangu in mission work in Japan*

£300 CBM (Christian Blind Mission) – *providing eye care in more than 100 countries*

£500 Spitalfields Crypt – *A Christian run hostel for single men based at St. Leonard's, Shoreditch*

£500 St. Joseph's Hospice – *A hospice in Hackney run by the Roman Catholic Church providing care for terminally ill patients*

£500 Through Faith Missions – *A mission organisation working with local churches to organise evangelistic missions*

£500 Medicines for Muheza – *providing support for a Christian run hospital in Muheza, Tanzania*

£300 Lifewords formerly known as Scripture Gift Mission – *Providing evangelistic tracts in every language*

£500 XLP - *providing Christian support for assemblies, RE lessons and activities in Newham secondary schools*

£6300 TOTAL

EMERGENCY FUND DONATIONS:

£400 for the ARC-Addington Fund - helping farmers in the UK hit by floods

£400 for the Africa Floods Appeal. - British Red Cross

£300 for the Zimbabwe food crisis Appeal. - Tearfund

£400 for the Darfur Emergency Appeal - Christian Aid

£1500 TOTAL

OTHER DONATIONS:

- **£1000, to Rev. James Maddern for his work at the Maforga Christian Mission, Mozambique**, from previous Mission Fund underspends.
- **£1114.84 for Turnaround (Newham Nightshelter)** was collected at Christmas Services.

St. John's also supported the Operation Christmas Child shoebox programme.

If you have any questions about Mission Giving, or would like to suggest an organisation we should consider, speak to a member of the MGC

Report by Darren McIndoe

ST JOHN'S WEBSITE www.stjohnse15.co.uk continued to make a significant contribution to our mission with an average of 160 visitors per week. New developments were a re-arranged history section and a panoramic view of the church interior.

The website continues to offer the most up to date information on St. John's mission, ministry and special events.

ST. JOHN'S MINI-SHOP

The Mini-shop is open after the Sunday Morning Service, and in the evening and midweek if requested. The Mini-shop does a regular trade in Christian books, Bible Reading Notes and Traidcraft goods. Among the most popular items this year have been Bibles and Fairtrade chocolate!

The Mini-shop has continued to share in the promotion of Fairtrade in Newham. It supported the Fairtrade Fortnight stand in Stratford Shopping Centre and provided stalls at events at Woodgrange Baptist Church and Newham City Farm as well as the Fairtrade Evening at St. John's and "Positively Jamaica". Also, some of the profits from previous years paid for the "Positively Jamaica" fund raising furry bugs.

Thanks to Richard Aubrey, Margaret Hurley, Keziah Jimoh, Carol Richards and Scilla Morgan who have taken charge of the Mini-shop during the year.

The Audited Accounts for the year are available on request from the Church Office.

Report by Margaret Hurley

THE LONDON ACHOLI FELLOWSHIP

I warmly welcome you to our annual report 2007 and it's our hope and prayer that as you read this annual report you will be encouraged and inspired to continue to pray and support us in God's mission.

In 2007 we were able to share in God's Mission and:

- Witnessed a spiritual and numerical growth in our Fellowship
- Celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Martyrdom of Janani Luwum, The Archbishop of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Boga Zaire at Westminster Abbey.
- Financially supported our Mission partners abroad in Uganda (Gulu and Kitgum Dioceses).
- Held our annual Bible conference at Maidenhead United Reformed Church Shared in Mission Oxford and celebrated the Chosen Evangelical Revival mission Day

I am very pleased to report that through your prayer and financial assistance ALCF supported the Clergy forums of Northern Uganda and Kitgum Dioceses. The Christians and the Clergy of these Dioceses have lived under very difficult circumstances for over 21 years now. The people of Northern Uganda have lived in the Camps in appalling and inhuman habitations for along time without any support. The rhetoric has been very biased and unhealthy in many ways.

However, we know that in God; " I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Acholi London Christian Fellowship acknowledged with deep appreciation your personal prayer, financial contributions and family sacrifice to support our endeavour to bring the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ to the people in East London. Once again, thank you very much for being our partner in mission, friend, supporter, brother and sister in Christ.

Report by Modicum Okello.



COMMUNITY MEETING FACILITIES

The Church is continually serving the community.

Our priorities are to meet the perceived needs of the local community. We particularly seek to provide space and encouragement for:

- Community arts
 - Children and young people
 - Community meetings and events
 - Education and training
-
- We also aim to open the church for a large part of every day as a place of prayer, peace and quiet in a busy part of London, and as a venue for displays and exhibitions.
 - We do not accept bookings for religious meetings – any religious events have to be organised as part of our Anglican ministry.
 - We do not accept bookings for public meetings which we perceive to be of a campaigning or political nature.

During 2007 a large number of organisations used our facilities.

London Borough of Newham Groups included:

Newham Social Services, Newham House, Newham Education Department, Newham Age Concern, Stratford And Newtown Ward Councillors, User Involvement Group, Stratford Community Forum, LBN Leisure Services, LBN Environmental Health, Older People's Rep Group,

Music and Arts: included Newham Music Academy, Christine Radjabou, Newham Music Month, Stratford Circus, Shea Lolin.

Education/Training: LEAN, LB Tower Hamlets, Landmark Training, Learning Disabilities, Heritage Care

Community Groups included: Epilepsy Action, Action For Life Styles, Service User Council, Black & Ethnic Minority Care Forum, Community Empowerment Network, Stratford Town Centre Forum, Newham Advocacy Project, NewTec, East Living, East Thames Housing, Newham Voluntary Sector Consortium, Newham Unison, Newham Refuge, Newham Asian Women's Project, Newham Writers Group, Newham Bookshop, Cemvo,

Counselling: Mental Health Groups, Hearing Voices Group:

Health Groups included: Newham Primary Care Trust, Newham Centre For Mental Health, Substance Misuse Group, Health Checks, Community Health Team, TB Network:

Children's Development /Training: Theatre Royal (Youth Theatre), Scouts and Para Active Summer School.

Other Users included: Welcare, Local Space, Weight Watchers, Waltham Forest Unison, Mary Kay Cosmetics, Public Service Vehicle Circle, Newham Writers Group, Somalia Women Advice Network, Drug & Alcohol Service For London, Care, Mind, Chelmsford Diocesan Regeneration Forum, Market Research, Shoefayre,

A particularly successful group has been the NPCT stop smoking clinic "The Big Quit".

Its good to know we don't have to advertise our service - word just gets around and we get recommended by other groups. One group love it here so much we have remind them it's time to close. As groups come into our church they always comment how lovely the rooms are; it's always nice when they phone back after a meeting and thank us for our help. This could not happen with out the hard work of our team. It is good that we can all work together. I would like to thank all our staff who keep St John's going during the year.

Our new facilities downstairs are working out well, and are heavily used by young people's groups. 2007 brought a number of new groups into St John's, so lets keep the faith and show the faith.

Report by Kay Garib

SCHOOLS WORK: St John's Ministers have continued to lead assemblies at Carpenters and Maryland schools.

During the year we had class visits by the whole of Rokeby year 7 and year-groups from Tollgate, Salisbury, Carpenters, Calverton, Earham and Ranelagh schools. Some of these visits were linked to the Newham "Visit a Place of Worship" week, but many were arranged independently by the schools. A typical visit lasts 45-60 minutes and includes a guided tour, with an explanation of the different things which happen in the church building, a high-speed guide to the main message of Christianity and a hands-on experience of organ-playing, drumming or preaching for the pupils.

MUSIC AND CONCERTS were, again, reduced during 2007. We are now the resident space for the East London Clarinet Choir, who stage their increasingly successful concerts at St. John's. We hope that 2008 will see the return of our Lunchtime concerts, to be organised by Frances Aubrey and Jacqui Mwaniki.

RECEPTION AND VOLUNTEER WORKERS

Every week a team of voluntary workers serve the local community at St. John's Church. The volunteers make a massive contribution to the church as they enable the church to be open for the public 6 days a week, do lots of admin. work and keep the main church clean and tidy.

RECEPTIONISTS offer a welcome to visitors and help keep our building secure. They greet people, direct them to the correct room, and make all our visitors feel at home. They sometimes offer a listening ear to those who want to talk, and recognise those who regularly come into the building for prayer. In addition, they do a huge amount of routine administrative work.

Report by Jean Scott

Editor's note: You are reading this now because a receptionist collated and stapled it!

GRIMEBUSTERS meet to clean the church on Friday evening or Saturday morning every week. They dust the pews, Hoover the floor and ensure that the dirt dragged in by hundreds of people doesn't hang around. They ensure that worshippers and visitors see our wonderful building clean tidy and shining. New members of the Grimebusters team are always welcome - please contact Christy Asinugo.

Report by Christy Asinugo

STAFF AT ST. JOHN'S DURING 2007:

** Denotes volunteer worker.*

- VICAR: Rev. David Richards
- CURATE: Rev. Darren McIndoe
- ASSISTANT MINISTER (Children and Young People) Carol Richards*
- ASSISTANT MINISTER (Administration) Kay Garib
- ASSOCIATE MINISTERS: Rev. Desmond Gritten*
Canon Peter Kolawole*
- READERS: Maureen Gowrie*, Rosemond Isiodu*, Sheva Williams*
- VERGER: Fitzroy Williams,
- EVENING SITE SUPERVISORS: Anita Hallcup, Sheva Williams
- OFFICE HELPERS: Pat Cordrey* Jacqui Mwaniki
- CASHIERS: Gill Carter*, Shirley Lacey*
- HEALING CAFÉ CO-ORDINATOR: Sheva Williams*
- RECEPTIONISTS: Roma Allen*, Rosemarie Drummond*, Jean Eveleigh*, Omolade Fajuro*, Anita Hallcup*, Margaret Hurley*, Evadney Mapp*, Christine Morris*, Connie Ogden*, Violet Ogunleye*, Jean Scott*, Bev Slingo*.