

St. John's Church Stratford London E15

ANNUAL REVIEW FOR 2010



Getting out where the people are – some of the Gazebo Team at work on Saturday morning in the Churchyard

VICAR'S REPORT

2010 was a year with many highlights. **The Ultimate Goal Festival** was an amazing time of sharing the Good News with those around us, and an important learning experience. Our long-standing partnership with Through Faith Missions should enable us to offer a suitable ministry to the tens of thousands of visitors during the Olympics; it is good to see more church members training as TFM Missioners. It was good to have **Darren McIndoe** back for a short time, before we sent him off to Stoke-on-Trent as Vicar of Burslem and Middleport. It was also good to attend **Modicum Okello's** induction as Vicar of Hall Green in Birmingham, and to attend the ordination as Priest of **Christy and Cornelius**. Last, but not least, we welcomed 2 new Ministers - Rev. **Peter Ngugi** as Curate and **Cheryl Ramballi** as Reader; we also sponsored **Robert Otule** for Reader Ministry training. We also saw Pat Larocque begin training for ministry as a Pastoral Assistant, and the Evangelism Team grow in confidence in their Saturday Morning work. It's good to be able to share in the wider fellowship of the Body of Christ as we receive and share ministry with the wider church.

I celebrated **20 years at St. John's** in April 2010. The general wisdom is that 20 years in the same parish is too long, but with the constant change in Stratford it has seemed like I have been Vicar of several different parishes over the past 20 years. As we look back over 20 years, we have seen real growth in numbers and ministry; even our building has become bigger. There is, however, no place for sitting back and resting - there are lots of new challenges around us, and we need to be ready to minister to them. Please keep on growing in faith, and please pray for me, that I will have the strength to continue for a while more!

I remain grateful that we have such a **good team at St. John's**; numbers have grown only slightly during the year, but we have consolidated ministry. I am particularly grateful to Robert for taking over leadership of the Gazebo Team, and to Sheva for training extra Prayer Ministers. As our ministry opportunities grow, it is important that our Ministry team grows.

Over the past 5 years I have spent a lot of time working, with other local Ministers, on the **inSpire** project, (not a misprint - that's how we spell it). This project has been working to establish a Christian space somewhere in the Stratford City development. It now seems that we have managed to secure a space in the Westfield Shopping Centre for a Prayer Room, to be used by people of all faiths. The new Vicar of St. Matthew's will spend some time as co-ordinating chaplain for this project, but I believe that St. John's, as the closest church, will need to provide some volunteers to staff the space, and possibly offer some Christian Prayer opportunities to the centre users. We expect the shopping centre to open in September, and inSpire will need to be up and running on day one.

Demand for meeting space at the church was high in 2010. As we face cuts in services, and as other voluntary organisations close, churches will be at the forefront of meeting community needs. I suspect that churches will survive the cuts better than many other groups. We are among the few organisations with an independent funding stream, (our Giving), not reliant on grants or contracts from local or central government. It is important that we are there for people, offering spiritual and practical hope and help in difficult times. Please pray that the Lord will give us a clear vision for our ministry and mission over the next few years.

Thank you for your continued partnership in Jesus' service during 2010. We have shared good and bad times together, and Jesus promises to give us his strength to continue in his service.

David Richards

The Annual Review is, again, in two parts. The first part contains reports, reflecting all that happens at St. John's, written by a variety of people and edited by the Vicar. Sincere thanks to all who have contributed to this section. 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. This part also contains the audited PCC accounts and is available from the Church Office. Thanks to those who have helped draft this report, and to all involved in compiling our accounts. Thanks, also, to all who have typed, printed, collated and stapled this document. *David Richards*

2010 AT A GLANCE – Extracts from the Weekly Newsletters

There are pictures of some of these events on the Church website at <http://www.stjohnse15.co.uk/galleries/gallery.html>

- The first event in January was a Thanksgiving Service for the life of Sir Emmanuel Nzewuihe, a long-standing member of St. John's.
- Every month we walk to a different part of our parish and pray for the area. In February we prayed at the Olympic site – for safety for the construction workers, for everything that happens during the Olympic & Paralympic Games, and for the legacy.
- Joyce Newby's egg cosies were a big hit before Easter and raised money for Richard House Children's Hospice.
- Hundreds of people visited St. John's on the day of the Unlock sponsored walk in East London at the end of April, and the Women's Group served refreshments.
- Several children play musical instruments and they joined the music group to play a song at the Sunday Club 20th Birthday.
- Stratford Churches' "Ultimate Goal" T-shirts went on sale in April – hundreds were sold with the message "Transforming Stratford one life at a time".
- Wednesday Lunchtime Concerts ran from the beginning of May to end of September.
- On 9th May there was a special Service of Thanksgiving, organised by Cheryl Ramballi, for the new rooms that have been created downstairs – we're very grateful for the legacies, donations and grants that made the work possible.
- The Women's Group had an eventful weekend in North Norfolk in May, visiting Rev. Pat Baggaley's parish to perform at a fund-raising concert.
- Frances Aubrey organised a Choir Awayday in May.
- "Picnic in the Park" on the Sunday afternoon of Bank Holiday weekends has become a regular event.
- 5th – 12th June was the "Ultimate Goal" Festival, as 18 Stratford Churches joined together to share the Good News of Jesus with the people of the area.
- Rev. Darren McIndoe came back for a few weeks to help with the "Ultimate Goal" event and then he went to be a Vicar in Stoke on Trent.
- Peter Ngugi was ordained in Chelmsford Cathedral at the beginning of July.
- Keziah Jimoh and Robert Otule graduated from the Course in Christian Studies.
- Gill Carter invited the whole Church to her 60th Birthday party on 18th July.
- Summer Sundays were generally fine and most Services were open-air in the churchyard – this year we needed insect-repellent as it was a bad year for wasps.
- Sheva Williams organised a Service on the green at the Carpenters Estate on 1st August, to pray for the residents of the area and for the future of the estate.
- Southend was the destination for this year's coach trip in August.
- Sadly, Karlene Henry (a friend of St. John's) died in September after a long illness. St. John's Choir sang at her funeral in Hornchurch (where Cornelius is Curate).
- Dave & Carol were away in early October on a Mission in Wales (Taith Dewi Sant).
- After many years of study, Cheryl Ramballi was licensed as a Reader in October
- Dave went on a tour of Olympic venues in mid-October – you must look at the October photo on St. John's website!
- St. John's definitely has talent – as we saw at the Saints' Party in October.
- A new venture – a free film show on a big screen in November.
- The Confirmation Service was a large occasion – and the Bishop baked a cake!
- Stratford Churches opened a Winter Nightshelter, one night a week, as a pilot project.
- Another new venture was the Stratford Churches' Carol Singing before Christmas.
- The younger children in Sunday Club performed a nativity play on 19th December.

SUNDAY SERVICES are an important part of our Mission and Ministry. The Bible expects that Christians will meet together to praise God: "*Praise God with the trumpet, the harp, the lyre, the tambourine, strings and flute*" - (Psalm 150), to encourage one another: "*Let us not give up meeting together,.....but let us encourage one another*" - (Hebrews 10:25), and to share ministry together: "*To each one a gift of the Spirit is given for the common good*" - (1 Corinthians 12:7). We meet together to share faith and learn how to live for Jesus, wherever we are, during the week.

THE MORNING SERVICE continues to be our largest service. It is a one-stop shop with prayer, praise, teaching (including special teaching for children and young people), prayer ministry and fellowship over coffee. On alternate weeks there is also Holy Communion, and there are often groups meeting, for different purposes, after the service. During 2009, average attendance remained constant at 329. This service aims to be as inclusive as possible, and we emphasise this with all-age teaching at the 4th Sunday Together services, which often incorporate baptisms, and the summer series of Open Air Services..

A very large number of people help to make this service happen, and we need to recognise their hard work and commitment to ministry.

THE EVENING SERVICE averaged 63 people during 2010, a significant increase over 2009. This service is quieter than the morning, with more opportunities to incorporate different patterns of worship. Healing and Prayer ministry have been increasingly important at this service. During 2010

Specials in 2010 included a number of united Stratford Churches services, mostly as part of the Ultimate Goal Mission, the Confirmation service and the Carols by Candlelight at Christmas.

Reports by David Richards

THE CHOIR AND MUSIC GROUP

The Choir exists to help lead worship at the morning and evening services, by our familiarity with the hymns and songs, giving the congregation a good lead as we come together to worship God. To this end we have worked hard this year to learn new music and improve the quality of our singing. A new departure for this year has been the "Choir Awaydays", of which there have been two. These have been study days, starting with a scripture meditation and going on to learn new music, which will later be used in services. These have been popular with the Choir. When the last one was ending, people were heard to say, "Do we have to go. Can't we go on singing?" We are very pleased to have a small number of young people in the choir and would welcome any others who wish to join us.

The band has maintained its core of members, with a regular morning line-up of guitars, 'cello and bass guitar, horn and drums. It has been

particularly pleasing to see a new group of younger drummers joining the rota. The evening set-up has again been quite settled with guitar, clarinet, horn and drums. We are pleased to welcome "guest" members who join us regularly but not weekly. We are always on the look-out for new musicians. Would-be members need to be fluent readers and sight readers. If you fit that description don't hide your instrument (light) under a bowl – bring it out and use it to praise the Lord with us!

Report by Frances Aubrey, Director of Music

PRAYER MINISTRY takes place in the prayer chapel during Sunday morning and Sunday evening services. There are 39 prayer ministers: three members completed the training course this year to enable them to take part in Outreach.

Prayer ministers pray in pairs for people who come forward with prayer requests; many people are very grateful for the service we provide and have returned to give thanks for prayers answered.

We are thankful to God that we are in a team growing both spiritually and in numbers; although some members have moved on, numbers remain unchanged.

During 2011 we plan to have two meetings for discussion and to refresh: our aim is for God to continue to bless us and strengthen us and to make us a blessing to others for his glory.

Report by Sheva Williams, Prayer Ministry Team Leader

THE ARK

At the end of 2010 there were 40 children aged 1-3½ on the Ark Register, which compares with 41 in 2009 and 41 in 2008 – which shows a remarkable consistency. Obviously it's not the same children, as a number moved up to Sparklers during the year. The changes implemented early in 2010 to take account of increased weekly numbers have continued to work well, and the children have benefited from the routine and consistency across the weeks, (very important since different people lead the group). During the year 15 adults were part of the team taking it in turns to lead the group (thank you). 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 2010 the number of children registered was:

- Sparklers (age 3½ – 5) 39 (27 in 2009)
- Kingdom Kids (age 6 – 7) 24 (18 in 2009)
- The 'J' Team (age 8 – 10) 25 (32 in 2009)
- Teen LIVE! (age 11 – 13) 32 (22 in 2009)

During the year 30 adults have been leaders or assistants for the various Sunday Club groups – thank you everyone.

We use the Scripture Union “Light” syllabus. During the year the children covered the following topics:

January – Paul’s journeys in Acts

February – Moses in the desert (including the Ten Commandments)

March – “Light for Life” (Good Friday & Easter)

April – Joshua

May – Jesus - true path and true guide

June – Jesus the healer

July – Judges rule God’s people

September – Sharing the Good News

October – The challenge of following Jesus

November – Hearing from God (Samuel)

December – God is Love (Christmas)

On Easter Sunday the children were given fair-trade Easter Eggs and “He is Risen” balloons. At the end of April Sunday Club celebrated its 20th Birthday.

Some of the older children attended the Scripture union Longbarn Camp in Kent in August. Once again, Sheva Williams organised a successful Saints’ Party at the end of October with the theme “Stratford’s Got Talent”. In November 4 members of Sunday Club (+ 3 members of YPF) were confirmed. All the children who attended over the Christmas season were given a Christmas present.

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 youth fellowship group for 14-19 year olds, and meets during the Sunday morning service for a 30-45 minute session. Typical sessions will involve bible study, prayer and worship but in a creative or multimedia way. The main news for the group over the last 12 months is that we have said goodbye to many of our older members, who have gone to university, the workplace or the main body of the church

congregation. A crop of new members is currently coming up through the ranks, and they have taken to the style and format of our meetings well.

A few members of YPF went to the Barnstaple 1 Venture in the summer, which was a great week of teaching and activities. We hope to take more in 2011.

Other aims are that we would hold more social events, arrange fundraising for the Asha Trust, and grow more and more in love with Jesus Christ. It’s also very exciting that Chizoma has gained her youth work certificate and will take a greater role in leading the group.

Report by Elis and Sheila Matthews

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

CHURCHWARDENS AND WELCOMERS

The Bible is quite clear on the value of “Gifts” to spreading and servicing God’s Word: and it is important to remember that “they also serve who only stand and wait”. At the last count around a fifth of the congregation have volunteered to form part of the Welcoming Team. Wonderful. Let’s be honest: the first face a stranger to St John’s will see will be that of a member of this Team; and for a regular attender the face of a known friend is also a sign of community spirit and love. The responsibility here is a great one, and I for one am very grateful for all who undertake it, a gratitude I know is shared by the Clergy and other members of the leadership. **[Advert: there is always room for more volunteers].**

St John’s has four Wardens: we have that many because we have a large congregation of worshippers. Wardens are like civilian workers inside the Army: Dave and Carol and both Peters and Sheva and Rosemond and Cheryl are the religious Officers [thank you all], but they rely on many of the rest of us to perform some of the every-day jobs to leave them freer for the more direct Mission. Some of us get to wear badges and go to fun-packed PCC meetings, and even Deanery Synod. Yet remember, we are all part of the St John’s Team – Office staff, Vergers, Choir, PCC Members, Wardens, Welcomers, Grimebusters, the Car Park attendants and, of course, all of us in the congregation. We travel different paths, but the destination is the same.

If I have any targets for the future then it would be to build upon the generosity of volunteers amongst the congregation: one of the things that really pleases me when on duty “at the back” is the willingness and eagerness of St John’s members to step in and help out if, (for instance), a Welcomer is missing. With more people

attending, especially during the 2012 Olympic period, we could do with more Welcomers. We could and should make more of the foreign language skills of the congregation. We must be proud of St John's as a beautiful building, as a place of worship, as a symbol for a revived Stratford and, most importantly, as the House of God.

Report by Chris Aubrey

THE TEA MAKERS

This Ministry operates on a voluntary basis and is as important as other St John's ministries. We serve refreshments in the café area after Sunday services, morning and evening. Everyone

is welcome to sit around for a chat to meet new members and make new friends.

This ministry helps to build relationships. It is seen in the light of God using his people as they grow in faith by serving others. Some 25 volunteers work on a rota basis, each member working around once per month in a group of 5 to 6 people. Sometimes we serve home-made cakes, celebrating a birthday, for example.

We often keep in touch during the week as members sometimes ask for support through prayers. As this ministry is growing, we pray that God blesses all his enthusiastic people in what He has called them to do, and we hope for this blessing to continue in the coming years.

Report by Patricia Larocque

MIDWEEK SERVICES AND MEETINGS

Jesus said that the Temple at Jerusalem should be: "A house of prayer for all nations" - (Mark 11:17). St. John's ministry and mission continues throughout 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

is the shortest service of the week at St John's, lasting for just twenty minutes, from 1.10 to 1.30, but in that time, we manage to include a hymn, a Bible reading and talk, and some prayers. Dave, Sheva and Iris share in leading it and we follow each series for several weeks.

The services attract a variety of people and, for those on their lunch break, we try to make sure that we don't overrun! Numbers can be anything from twelve to twenty plus, with over 140 people attending the Christmas carol service. I know from experience how much it helps to have a space during the day when you can switch off from other things and focus on God. But you don't have to work in Stratford to come to the service! We all need time out and fellowship during our busy weeks. If you are around on Tuesday lunchtimes, why not come and join us?

Report by Iris Bryzak

THE HEALING CAFÉ

meets in the church café every Tuesday between 11 am and 12.30 pm (except for official breaks such as after a Bank Holiday).

The core group consists of 6 prayer ministers, and visitor numbers range from 7-20 people. We welcome all who come to us (we even provide tea and biscuits).

Our aim is to help people through listening, mentoring and prayer, in the hope that God in His infinite wisdom will meet their deepest needs.

We also pray in general and for individual prayer requests on the church Prayer Board; most importantly we are there for each other. Come and See!

Report by Sheva Williams

THE THURSDAY LUNCHTIME

SERVICE

continues to be an important part of our week, with an average attendance of 15. For some people this is their main church service, others are members of different churches who work in Stratford. The service always includes a short talk and lasts a strict 30 minutes. Most of the Thursday services are led by Canon Peter Kolawole, now enjoying a well-earned break in Nigeria.

Report by David Richards

CHURCH ON WEDNESDAY

This diverse group meets at 8 pm on Wednesdays to hold a midweek Service to witness God's love. After a busy day everyone is welcome to join us to find fulfilment in His word, in a relaxed way, with light refreshments.

In September 2010 this group celebrated its 7th anniversary with a Thanksgiving and Communion service. We have an average of 18 members engaging in fellowship, prayer and praise, with Bible readings. We discuss what we read and how it reflects in our own lives, helping us to know God's will and purpose for us. We have lively and interesting discussions.

The group exists to help our spiritual growth, in learning to know more about ourselves as individuals. In the past year, some members from

the group have grown in confidence in sharing the Gospel and leading others to faith in God. Our hope for the future is to continue in understanding His love and goodness and to help others to know Him as Lord and Saviour.

Report by Patricia Larocque

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

The TUESDAY DAYTIME BIBLE STUDY

GROUP continues to meet and have a fun time sharing and learning together even though our numbers have been depleted due to members pursuing training opportunities where the schedules clashed. Also, as we tend to belong to the older generation, we experienced some periods of sickness within the fellowship but were encouraged by the opportunity to pray about these issues and thank God that he has brought us through another year. Usually there are 4 or 5 of us that meet between 10.00am and 12.30pm and during 2010 we looked at the message in the Book of James and also decided to look back at the history books and started our journey with the two books of Chronicles. It has been most interesting to see how God has been working His purpose out throughout the ages and how He is faithful to His covenant promise. We were able to see many parallels with today's society, which has been both challenging and thought provoking. We look forward to continuing our historical journey into 2011.

Report by Gill Carter

The last 12 months have seen the 20s and 30s Homegroup change to TNT.

As the lives of the group members changed, so did the needs of the group, and we decided to open up the age range to encourage more church members to engage with bible study, fellowship and relevant events during the week. Though we remain largely a group of young and local adults, we've welcomed new members and seen the benefit of their wisdom and way of thinking. We continue to discuss a wide range of issues with our rule of 'no taboos'. We also hold lunches after Sunday morning services, and have recently used these to invite newcomers who may find it hard getting to know people at a big and vibrant church.

Topics we've covered include prayer, justice, impostors and Christmas. We've also experimented with pub bible study and sung carols in the Three Mills area. Add to that two significant arrivals (babies Jessica and Gregory) and it's been a busy year. Plenty to build on in 2011/2012.

Report by Elis Matthews

The LAKESIDE GROUP has a regular attendance of 5 adults and 6 children (the children are active members of the discussions). They meet monthly at 8pm on a Friday at the hosting family's home to study the Bible. During 2010, they studied the book of Ruth. In this book, they experienced the rewards of trusting in God's will for our lives. In order to solidify the foundation of their knowledge, in 2011, the group will be looking at Genesis.

Report by Dolapo Peters

THE AGENDA GROUP is a new group, formed in autumn 2010. It was recognised that there was no specific ministry for the 'single' people who form part of the congregation at St. John's Church. The Church is made up of a diverse group of people of varying ages, cultures, traditions and backgrounds and the thing which connects many of them is the fact that they are single, divorced, separated and widowed. Therefore, it is inevitable that they may possibly share a number of common issues and challenges, which would be of benefit and of interest for them to meet together regularly to explore.

Agenda Forums are held once a month, on a Saturday evening, 19:00-21:00 in the Christchurch Room.

Two forums have been held so far. The first (focussing on 'Faith and the Single Person') was via special invitation only and was attended by 16 people and the second (focussing on 'Friendship/Companionship') attracted 20 people. It is important to note that children are not permitted to attend the Agenda Forums.

For 2011 the group aims to attract a good mix of men and women of different ages and cultures, to encourage real and natural friendships amongst members, to facilitate a number of interesting, informative and thought provoking forums throughout the year and to encourage organisation and participation in a variety of social activities

Report by Maxine Webster

ST. JOHN'S WOMEN'S GROUP meets on the first Friday of every month at 7.30pm. Around 15 people attend, with 5 postal members

The group exists for fellowship with each other combining bible study, discussion on preparation, coordination and support of Church functions, as well as women's issues.

The group sent another relief package in October to Burma's Good Life Club for displaced persons, and continued fellowship with the team of churches in Mundesley, Norfolk fundraising (May

2010). They also organised a Women's Pamper Evening as part of the Ultimate Goal Festival in June 2010 and organised refreshments for the Unlock Walk in April 2010.

During 2011, the group aims to continue to support to St Johns Church functions (including hospice visits) and Women's issues. The group strives to provide more support for international groups, as well as those at home.

Report by Sharon Cumberbatch

ST. JOHN'S MEN'S GROUP had monthly meetings throughout 2010 on the last Thursday of the month. These meetings were mainly fashioned around bible study time led by members and occasionally invited guest clergy.

The Men's Group led the 2010 Fathers' Day Morning Service and members did a rendition of an anthem during the service.

In the autumn, following the arrival of Rev. Peter Ngugi, it was agreed to re-launch the group with a view to extending its membership base. As such a number of activities were organised by a designated Steering Committee co-chaired by

Pastor Peter and Tolu Babarinsa. Activities included an open house at the Curate's home, after-service discussion with men and interactive notice session during church service.

These initiatives peaked in December with a Men's Group Christmas themed-lunch/meal which was held after a Sunday service in December, attended by about 20 men. Christmas Cracker-jokes were shared and a questionnaire completed by those in attendance seeking their views on the way forward for the group.

The group looks forward to an exciting 2011 in Jesus name.

Report by Tolu Babarinsa

During 2010 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 members and is co-ordinated by Jean Scott.

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



The newest member of the team - Cheryl Licensed as a Reader at Chelmsford Cathedral

MISSION, OUTREACH and SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Jesus said: "Go and make disciples of all nations". - (Matthew 28:19). St. John's Church aims to be, "Local, Outward-Looking and Participating", (Faith in the City Report). We want to relate to the local community and reflect the love of Jesus for those around us.

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

The highlight of 2010 was the "**Ultimate Goal**" festival in June - a major event, in partnership with Through Faith Missions, involving 18 Stratford Churches.

The Ultimate Goal was a multi-faceted festival. Each church contributed some special events, leading to a good programme stretched over 8 days. Part of the aim was to explore opportunities for "Mission Olympic" in 2012, so St John's majored on events in the churchyard with live entertainment, free refreshments, and, most popular of all, Prayer! The amazing response to this work in the churchyard surprised everyone, leading the TFM team to describe the Churchyard as "Holy Ground" - a common description for Churchyards, but with a whole new meaning for TFM evangelists. St John's also contributed a Women's Pamper evening, Men's Curry Evening, Gospel Concert, Community Fête, two Open Air Morning Services and hosted two Stratford Churches Evening Services with a healing theme.

Other events during the week included music nights, a large screen football night, a men's breakfast, youth events, pub outreach and the very popular Hot Potato Lunch, where a baked potato was eaten and a "hot potato" subject discussed.

Most people thought that the week was very worthwhile as a mission, (some of the smaller churches gained a significant number of people as a result of the week), but the greatest value was the fact that it demonstrated that 18 diverse churches could train together, work together and share in mission to the community together. Further events are planned, leading up to 2012.

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

- **Prayer Walks** have continued, led by Gill and Iris. These provide an opportunity to pray for a small area and invite prayer requests from residents.
- **The Healing Café** continued every Tuesday with Sheva in charge.

- The outdoor **Christmas Nativity Scene and Easter Garden**, were, again, powerful reminders of the Christian message. Thanks to Chris Aubrey for all his work on these.
- Gill Carter organised the **Flower Cross** at the front of the church for Holy Week and Easter.
- We sent out 3000 **Easter cards**, incorporating a message and an advert for our Easter services.
- We managed 5 out of 6 **Open-air morning Services** in the churchyard during July and August, with very good feedback from passers by.
- We took full advantage of the **Christmas** mission opportunities with carol singing in the Shopping centre, our annual Lunchtime carol Service and a host of other special services. The 20s & 30s Group sang Carols at the Three Mills estate. We continued to deliver Christmas cards to all accessible homes and workplaces.

Report by David Richards

During the summer months The Gazebo Team were again at work in the churchyard.

The 'GAZEBO' Outreach team is an evangelistic mission of the church that meets on Saturdays, (designated dates) to bring 'church' and prayer efforts to members of the general public who might walk through the churchyard and the Broadway. We sometimes use questionnaires, which may be general or specific, according to the church calendar. The name of the outreach is taken from the Gazebo tent that is used for shelter in the churchyard.

To date we have a total of up to six 'full time' members/volunteers although it is expected that more will be added in the course of 2011 as the result of the TFM (Through Faith Missions) course in February 2011

The group offers prayer to passers-by in a spirit of love-witness for Christ as well as tea and coffee for those who might be hungry and/or thirsty.

Current full-time team members are Patricia Larocque, Iris Bryzak, Eon Wade, Marcia Hazel, Keziah Jimoh. Bunmi Opedare and Flora Manieson have also joined us, and Sheva has trained us for Prayer Ministry.

Report by Robert Otule,

SUMMER MUSIC AT ST JOHN'S.

May – September 2010

Once again, there was a full programme of 22 lunch-time concerts beginning on 5th May and continuing until 29th September.

This year we heard from 6 organists, 3 pianists, 4 jazz ensembles, 2 wind groups, 4 singers and 1 each from a school choir, a gospel singer and a folk duo. The performers were as widely spread as ever, coming from the far north of Scotland and Tennessee, USA as well as a good contingent from East Anglia. 14 of the 22 were from Newham.

There was a significant increase in audience numbers this year, with most of the concerts seeing more than 20 which, we are told, is a very healthy number for a lunch-time concert outside the centre of London.

Many of the concerts were excellent, but worthy of special note were the 4 in which local jazz musician Marius Rudnick played a part, the amazing "Lone Arranger", a wonderful programme of Jazz and Show numbers on the oboe, and almost at the end of the season, a terrific Organ recital, shared by two musicians which included a special take on The Last Night of the Proms, complete with whistles, bells and a huge Union flag!

We already have a number of new contacts for the 2011 season and thinking ahead to 2012, we are hoping to be able to run extra concerts – one each day during the Olympics – watch this space!

Reports by Frances Aubrey

MISSION/CHARITY GIVING

The MGC (Mission Giving Committee) meets to agree recommendations to the PCC for St John's Mission Giving Fund. The fund is made up of 10% of budgeted giving from the congregation. 80% of this is given to organisations as a regular donation, while the remaining 20% is given to emergency appeals, usually through charities. (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 year it was given to the Newham Nightshelter).

Rafe Smallman convenes MGC. Jean Scott (host!), Dorothy Hylton and Dave Richards remained as members of MGC, and Joel Lewis left the committee in July 2010.

We gave regular donations to 15 organisations in 2010 and supported 3 appeals with the Emergency money. Details of this can be found below and on the St. Johns website.

ALLOCATION OF MISSION GIVING in 2010

£500 Archbishop Janani Luwum Trust - providing support for the church in Northern Uganda

£500 Amos Trust - working with the deprived people of Palestine

£200 Asha Trust - a Newham-based charity run by volunteers that works with communities in Sri Lanka to tackle poverty, hardship and distress.

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

£200 Church Urban Fund - support for Christian projects in Urban Priority Areas

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

£1300 CMS (Church Mission Society) – supporting Gautam and Sabrina Money in mission work in Delhi

£500 Leprosy Mission – responding to medication needs and the eradication of poverty

£500 Lifewords formerly known as Scripture Gift Mission – Providing evangelistic tracts in every language

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

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

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

£7500 TOTAL

EMERGENCY FUND DONATIONS:

£500 for the Christian Aid HAITI EARTHQUAKE APPEAL

£166.49 Packing for goods and supplies sent to the Good Life Club in Burma

£500 for the PAKISTAN FLOODS APPEAL

£683.51 (the Balance) to TEARFUND GENERAL FUNDS

£1850 TOTAL

OTHER DONATIONS:

- **£859.03** for Stratford Winter Nightshelter was collected at Christmas Services.
- **£160** was collected for the Poppy Appeal,

In 2010 we had speakers from 3 organisations that we support. In February TFM spoke to the Sunday morning congregation about the forthcoming mission, while the Asha Trust also visited to speak to YPF. We were then joined by XLP for a morning service in November.

The committee met 4 times in 2010 to discuss which groups to support, which appeals to receive emergency money, which month to pray for each group and who to invite as guest speakers. We also met once socially.

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 Rafe Smallman

THE MINI-SHOP

The Accounts for the year appear elsewhere in the Annual Report.

Sales of fair-trade items have declined a little over the past year, probably due to the fact that people are struggling in the economic downturn. We'd still like to encourage people to replace just one item of their shopping with a fair-trade item because this small gesture can make such a difference to the producers.

The Mini-shop was transformed before Easter and Christmas when the items knitted by Joyce Newby went on sale – the Easter egg cosies were very popular, as were the Christmas tree decorations made to look like clergy and the choir (Dave sold out very quickly!). All the proceeds went to Richard House Children's Hospice.

The "Ultimate Goal" tee shirts were sold through the mini-shop.

We have continued to purchase Christian Books from "Books for Life" in Bethnal Green.

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

Report by Carol Richards

SCHOOLS WORK continued during 2010, with a large number of school groups visiting St. John's. Some of these visits were linked to the Newham "Visit a Place of Worship" week, but many were arranged independently by the schools. The Easter Experience, pioneered by Darren McIndoe, was held for a second year and involved almost 500 children from 8 local primary schools, who came to learn about Easter and take part in some exciting workshops.

SCOUT REPORT During 2010 the Scouts attended several events; at one of these the Chief Scout, Bear Grylls, dropped in for a visit. We also had a Camp at which our members took part in activities that lead towards different badges.

Three scouts were awarded the Chief Scout Gold Award, and one Beaver gained the Chief Scout

Bronze Award. These are the highest awards to be gained in their sections, and the first time we have had four of these in one year. We also have a new Assistant Scout Leader, Sadik, who has two of his children in the group.

Report by John Grey - Group Scout Leader

COMMUNITY MEETING FACILITIES

St. John's aims to be open all week to serve the community. The requests for use of the Church facilities are increasing year on year.

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
- A subsidiary aim is to allow the church to be open for a large part of every day as a place of peace and quiet in a busy part of London, and as a venue for displays and exhibitions.

During 2010 a large number of organisations used our facilities.

The London Borough of Newham held several of their meetings in the Church space, including meetings for LBN Social Services, LBN Leisure Services, Newham Home Improvement Agency, Older People's Rep Group, Newham Careers Network, Newham Youth Offending Team, Learning Disabilities Group, Newham Psychological Service, and Transform Newham, Stratford And Newton Ward Councillors hold their weekly surgery at the Church.

Other Public Sector users included: Newham Primary Care Trust, Newham Centre For Mental Health, Newham House, East London Environment Health, East London NHS Foundation Trust, Olympic Delivery Authority, Substance Misuse Group, Service User Council, Stratford Town Centre Forum, Community Health Team, Stratford Community Forum, Inland Revenue, Terrance Higgins Trust.

Voluntary Organisations included: Newham Asian Women's Project, Newham Writers Group, Newham Bookshop, Cemvo, Sector Consortium, Newham Unison, Newham Refuge and Urban Development, Asian Health Agency.

Music and Arts users included: Eastend Opera, Newham Music Academy, Stratford Circus, East London Clarinet Choir, Newham Youth People Chorus, Scintilla Arts, and our own Lunchtime Concerts.

Education/Training: Apple Pie Enterprises, Stratford Saturday School, Chelmsford Diocesan Youth training, Diocesan Communication Officers

Conference, Barking & Dagenham LEA, Birkbeck College, Christians in Education, Education Links, All Saints Catholic School, Jackpot Training, Actorshop, Stratford Saturday School, Bipolar.

Community Groups included Epilepsy Action, LookAhead Housing, Mind, Newham NHS Anger Management, Black & Ethnic Minority Care Forum, Community Empowerment Network, Community Links, Fairtrade Groups, Fundamental.

Counselling – Mental Health Groups, Hearing Voices Group, Newham Psychology Treatment Centre.

Children's Development /Training: Theatre Royal (Youth Theatre), Little Hands Theatre, Scouts and Iroko Theatre Company, London East Connexions Partnership Ltd.

Other Users included: Local Space, Weight Watchers, Waltham Forest Unison, St Mellitus College, Iceland, National Childbirth Trust, Mind, Diocesan Regeneration Forum, Market Research, B M Research, Expert Patients Programme, Alzheimer's Society, Street Cred, Global Exchange, Stratford and Newtown Safer Neighbourhood Team, Theatre Resource, The Forum For Health & Wellbeing.

With so many changes going on around us we must focus on God he always blesses us with fresh groups coming to use our facilities. Groups may come and go here at St John's, but its God who is at the mist of it all. Once again I would like to thank all our hard working staff who help to keep St John's Church going each year. Our new rooms downstairs are increasingly popular, each room is getting used more frequently. In 2011 with God's guidance we will rise up to what ever challenge comes our way. With so many things to do in this fresh year we ask God to open our eyes to see and hear him in all that we do.

Report by Kay Garib

RECEPTION REPORT: There are 12 of us in the Receptionist Team. We work on a voluntary basis between 10 am and 4 pm on Mondays to Saturdays, two people covering three hours each day. We greet people as they come into St John's. Visitors come to spend quiet time in prayer in the church and for booked meetings in the rooms. Special activities this year have been groups of children from local school being shown around the church as part of their RE lessons. There are also weekly concerts on Wednesdays in the summer, and visitors on sponsored church walks. Last year the Receptionists worked extra hard for the Ultimate Goal mission.

As for 2011, we aim to keep doing the job we are doing with a welcoming smile. Thank you to all the volunteers.

Report by Anita Hallcup

STAFF AT ST. JOHN'S DURING 2010:

** Denotes volunteer worker.*

- VICAR: Rev. David Richards
- CURATE: Rev. Peter Ngugi
- ASSISTANT MINISTER (Children and Young People) Carol Richards*
- ASSISTANT MINISTER (Administration) Kay Garib
- ASSOCIATE MINISTER: Canon Peter Kolawole*
- READERS: Rosemond Isiodu*, Cheryl Ramballi*, Sheva Williams*
- READER IN TRAINING: Robert Otule
- VERGER: Fitzroy Williams,
- VERGER/BUILDING SERVICES SUPERVISOR: Motie Ramballi
- DIRECTOR OF MUSIC: Frances Aubrey*
- ORGANIST: Geoff Hobbs
- CONCERT TEAM: Frances Aubrey*, Yvonne Bailey*, Geoff Hobbs*
- EVENING SITE SUPERVISORS: John Grey, Sheva Williams, Patricia Larocque
- OFFICE HELPER: Pat Cordrey*
- CASHIERS: Gill Carter*, Shirley Lacey*
- HEALING CAFE CO-ORDINATOR: Sheva Williams*
- RECEPTIONISTS: Roma Allen*, Chris Aubrey*, Yvonne Bailey*, Rosemarie Drummond*, Anita Hallcup*, Shirley Lacey*, Evadney Mapp*, Christine Morris*, Ephraim Namanya*, Violet Ogunleye*, Jean Scott*, Bev Slingo*.

ST JOHN'S WEBSITE. Because the newsletter is updated weekly and the photos and statistics updated monthly, St John's website continues to attract attention from all over the world. We now also have a FaceBook fan page and a page on the Stratford Churches website.

The history section was expanded and added to again this year and social network links were added to a number of pages so that you can 'like' them on FaceBook or Digg or Twitter them.

In the background, site security was improved, as was print output, and the code was tidied up to make it just that little bit faster, and also to make it viewable on more systems and devices. Some pages had to be completely re-written to achieve this.

During the next year the aim is to add separate pages for each of our regular groups, which can be updated regularly with the latest information and coming events, and to seek feedback from users as what they would like to see on the site.