



Trinity Methodist Church Woking
General Church Meeting
25 October 2020

The Spring 2020 General Church Meeting was postponed due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

This report contains the following sections:

Leadership team
Pastoral Work
Finance and Premises
Family Work
Foundry
Prayer Group and House Groups
Bible Study Fellowship
Coffee and Chat
Trinity Garden

Leadership team (Stewards) report

Tragic circumstance prevented Rev. Gillian Le Boutilier Scott from joining in September 2019. In July we met with Rev. Jackie Case and were pleased that Jackie agreed to join us for a year as minister in pastoral charge. We are grateful for all the help and support she gave us during her time with us.

We were unsuccessful in the first round of stationing in November. We then had a successful meeting with Rev. Sam Funnell in January, and as we now know Sam joined us in September. Sam is also an assistant district chair but is not the minister for Sheerwater. The Circuit welcome service was on September 2nd. Due to covid-19, numbers attending had to be restricted but we were able to live stream the service across the circuit and to other friends who watched on You Tube.

Our biggest challenge this year was managing worship when the outbreak of covid-19 prevented us meeting in church. With the help of our techy team we quickly got used to using zoom, and then in more recent weeks we have been able to live stream our services on You Tube.

We have ensured we follow all the safety rules required in this current situation and Dan our administrator has been instrumental in ensuring we have all the correct risk assessments in place.

The stewards do not just get the Church ready for worship on Sundays, but we arrange, support, and facilitate the many events which happen in our Church life, some of which are: -

- Sourcing an alternative method of serving bread and wine at communion services.
- Arranging Thy Kingdom Come and 9 days of prayer.
- Recruitment of Office Coordinator, Missioner and Church Council Secretary.
- Applications for grants to support staff recruitment and building plans/renovations.
- Renovation of the Kabin.
- Organizing the new office space.
- Supporting R.O.C. & Foundry.
- Arrangement of the "Talking about our Faith Course."
- Supporting the Church Plant Sale for Christian Aid.
- GDPR & Safeguarding are permanent items on our agendas.
- Organizing the Harvest Festival.
- Planning the Christmas Services.
- Arranging with Jackie the very well received Advent Course.
- Facilitating the Marriage & relationship discussion & lunch.
- Facilitating the successful Woking Rock Concert
- Arranging the Mission Supper.
- Managing staff and carrying out appraisals.
- Arranging the Lent Course (which due to circumstances had to be abandoned)

Jean Normington
Senior Steward

Pastoral Work at Trinity

The Pastoral Team have continued to support our Trinity members and families in a variety of ways. We have sadly had a number of deaths of longstanding members this year.

We are grateful for the team of Pastoral Visitors, and thank them for their practical and prayerful support.

Training: We have promoted several sessions for our Pastoral Visitors, including a session on Gravetalk run by Christ Church. We ran a session on Membership and what we are called to do on our Membership cards. We also looked at the Pastoral Visitors "job description" and discussed how we can care for our community and our Church family.

We had a social evening, with fish & chip supper, followed by some discussion on loneliness. We had hoped to run a session on this before lockdown, but time ran out. We aim to run one during May on Loneliness. NB this was run on Zoom in the end.

At Christmas and Harvest we distributed plants to 23 people in our congregation and took Home Communion to eight, and we continue to support those who are housebound, in hospital or in need of care.

We continue to support the All Souls Service, which is received gratefully by those who have lost loved ones, and take this opportunity to remember them.

Pastoral work continues to take many different forms - phone calls, visiting at home or chatting in church, and the Wednesday coffee mornings are popular for the chance to chat and eat cake, and are attended by members as well as local people, and we support the Prayer group, and sharing information with the body of the Church.

With their permission, we include members of our Church family each week in the Intercessions book – do feel free to add yourself or anyone in your family who is struggling, and let one of us know if you have any concerns that we can help with, or pray for.

We pray for the continued support of the Pastoral Team, and we pray for you, your families and all those in need. We find that we are encouraged to share our faith, and as Jesus showed his love to all, we put Jesus at the centre of our lives.

We thank Joyce, John, Jackie, the Pastoral Working group and the Leadership Team for their support during the last year.

Allison Jackson & Shirley Turner, originally written April 2020

Finance Report

The Financial Year to 31st August 2020 has been particularly testing and it is only because we had prudently built up Reserves over recent years, that we have been able to meet all of our commitments.

Covid 19 brought all lettings to an end when Lock Down was imposed.

Our collections were also affected as we could not worship together for many weeks; additionally there have been a significant number of deaths during the year, all of which means that our total collections were well below our budget. That in turn has an impact on Gift Aid Recovery which was also below budget. When we set a budget to cover the employment of the Administrator/Co-ordinator and Missioner (Dan and Hugh) we were counting on a District Grant of £30pa but in the end were only awarded £15K and so Trinity has had to cover that shortfall.

On the plus side, there have been a number of generous, unexpected donations for which we are very grateful. Also, when we appealed for help to purchase the technical equipment to enable Live Streaming of our services, there was a very generous response, covering the cost very quickly. That has been a very successful new venture with a good number of people watching each week. So a big THANK YOU!

The end result for the year in the General Fund looks like a deficit of £32K which is covered by Reserves this year. The accountant is currently auditing the books and will confirm an exact figure in due course.

Looking at the 2020/21 year we cannot see a great improvement; in fact without anticipating any unplanned donations, the shortfall in the General Account could well be around £39K. That is a pessimistic view but it is hard to be optimistic when we face such a serious problem for we cannot carry on in this way. Church Council resolved to look very seriously and

quickly at what we may be able to do to enable us to confidently continue. At the moment, there is a great deal of momentum behind some exciting Projects following the ROC Conversation (which Trinity sponsored) and Hugh, Dan and Ruth are deeply involved and so our declared mission to serve the community is evolving and we must find a way to fund them.

We have still got significant funds in the 2020 Development Fund. That money was given by our members in support of our mission and development and Church Council and Finance Committee believe that if it is at all possible, we should use that money to invest in the future of our building and our mission, rather than use it to pay the gas bill.

We used that fund to pay for the office conversion for example and also to put a new roof over the Narthex. Even though that money was spent, the fund increased because there are some regular donations to it which attract Gift Aid but mainly because we received a hugely generous legacy of £40K from the estate of one of our deceased members. Thus the balance in the Development account was around £139K at the year end.

The Church Council resolved that we need to be positive and should proceed with our plans to invest in the Sanctuary which is at the heart of all that we are doing now and hope to do in the future. So we are planning to spend around £64K renewing the sound desk, the lighting and the carpet and have asked Property Committee to organise that. We will then be able to draw down a grant of £20K which the Circuit agreed towards the cost of the Narthex Roof and Church Carpet.

This will still leave a significant balance available towards the new heating system in the Sanctuary and the Circuit have awarded a Grant of £45K towards that Project. We don't have a figure yet for the cost of this Project but it will be high and so we intend seeking additional external grants. We also wait to hear about the cost of converting the East Entrance.

Our overall concern is that whilst we have many members who are extremely generous, membership is likely to continue to decline through further deaths and so we must speedily

come up with ideas about finding new sources of income to help us fund our ambition to bring more people in the community to know Jesus.
John Nelson, Finance Committee, October 2020

Premises Report

Since the meeting in 2019 we have achieved the conversion of the 2 small vestries into a more useable single office with desks for Dan, Sue and Hugh. The Covid regulations have prevented us finishing off the decoration and fitting but it is in full use.

We have also achieved some refurbishment work in The Kabin, largely under our own steam, apart from the new roof. The Kabin may come into regular use again in November through links made during the ROC Conversation and follow up meetings.

The Polish family that rented the Bungalow for 7 years returned to Poland and whilst it was empty we managed a substantial refurbishment before letting it again at a higher monthly rent. There is now a young family with 2 children living there.

Church Council, having concluded that we should continue our investment in the future of the building using the 2020 Development Fund, have authorised us to proceed to renew the Sound Desk, which will be moved to the back of the Sanctuary, beneath the Dove Window. This will simplify the controls which is so important as different groups use it. At the same time, we will renew and improve the Sanctuary Lighting so that we will be able to vary the lighting to better suite different activities such as worship, morning and evening, and then occasional concerts or large meetings. When that work is done, we will renew the carpet tiles, which will no longer lift and stretch.

We are also working with our Consultants to design a replacement heating system for the Sanctuary which will improve reliability, increase efficiency and thus reduce our carbon footprint. This Project has been delayed and made more complicated by the Covid Pandemic and is unlikely to be completed until spring 2021. The Circuit has awarded a Grant of £45K towards the cost and we will try to raise some more external

funding but are likely to need most of the 2020 Development Fund. We will talk to Church Council once a workable scheme has been developed.

Now that Daniela is working in the new office, our ambition is to convert the East Entrance into a warm, friendly entrance space where, as a Church, we can witness to those who are visiting our premises. There are many different pieces of work needed to achieve this and we are at the early stages of calculating the cost. We plan to include:

- an internal lobby to reduce draughts and heat loss when the doors are open
- new, quicker sliding doors
- digital welcome and notices screen, possibly duplicated in the Courtyard
- CCTV to enable door management from the Office
- removal or replacement of the coat hanging area and cupboards, which are always untidy
- provide suitable furniture

Whilst we can proceed with the physical aspects of this change, if our welcome is to be truly a Christian Witness, we need many others to get involved perhaps as a welcome or perhaps a 'Buddy' for one of the groups.

Meanwhile we continue our small group of Wombles doing what we can to keep the premises, inside and out, in good order. New Wombles would always be welcome.

John Nelson, Property Committee, October 2020



Report for family work

Since March 2019, as a team we have worked together and achieved.

- Lark in the Town Square – went well. I was heading up the under 5's with a team from our church and other churches in the Woking area. It is a long 4 days plus all the preparation before and after, but somehow you forget it's

long days because Christ Church put on lunch and worship each day, this pulls you back to the purpose of bringing the local community together and building God's Kingdom in Woking.

- Garden party was a huge success as well, we had more families this year and we simplified the lunch by pre-making rolls and buying cakes at Costco and using Boz's for fruit and salad.
- Fun club - the fun club leadership have worked hard to achieve consistency, to include a wide variety of games, activities and to include a substantial mealtime, to include prayer when we all eat together, to share our week with each other. The attendance changes each week; therefore, we adjust according to the needs of the families.

NB Because of Covid, Fun Club is currently meeting via Zoom. It has done so throughout the pandemic.

- Junior Church and Messy church are all doing well, we have adjusted some sessions to fit in with the main church, there will be some mornings you will see children in for a children's address while other weeks we may come in at the end of the service.

NB Due to Covid, Junior Church is taking place via Zoom each week, and has done so throughout the pandemic.

- Bible investigators – is a Sunday afternoon group for teenagers from Trinity and the Chinese Church to come together as a house group style meeting, leaders from both churches are supporting the young people. We have played games to enable us all to get to know each other better, these games have included our Bible knowledge, personal sharing, and bible study. It is an enjoyable and valuable time together.
- NB Bible investigators has just resumed (October 2020), via Zoom.
- Mother's day was well attended, and the children and parents help make the gifts for the whole church.

- Easter 2019 fell very late, therefore we had only a few children in because parents used the holiday period to go away.
- A well-attended holiday club took place in October 2019 with an average of 100 people per day, this included children from local schools, the toddlers at Trinity, families from fun club, connections from Lark in the Square, Messy church. The main areas of activity for the holiday club are: leadership, planning, including DBS's, creativity, advertising, Worship and Prayer, the setting up and the actual days, kitchen – meal and refreshments, and teams for each day. Without the dedicated leaders and volunteers for each day, holiday club would certainly not happen. This report gives me an opportunity to thank everyone who, prayed, gave their time, gave resources and for the leadership team for their support and the opportunity.
- The Nativity – was done differently in 2019 we decided to have the Christingle service embedded within the nativity. This was done to relieve the ministry team. On reflection and conversations with my line manager, we have decided that we will return to the two services for December 2020.
- After Christmas, Jean Normington and Rev Jackie Case, met with me to put a three-year plan together. It is an incredibly positive and achievable plan, it has been shared with the family worker teams including, leadership team and the connect team.
- We have a registry book that's filled in at every session, this is a good indication of attendance, it also is a record we can look back on to see which services and activities work well.
- Moving into the spring we had made plans to take the parents and children of Fun club and J church away to big churches day out and do a camp indoors at the church to enable children and

parents to find out what camping is like – preparing them the way for the May camp. But unfortunately, this has now been cancelled, due to the Covid.

Sue Waddington

Family and children's worker

The Foundry

A successful ROC Conversation was held at Trinity in March 2020.

Following the ROC Conversation three action groups (supported by a Comms strand) were formed in the areas of Mental Health and Wellbeing, Social Isolation and Loneliness (SILAG), and Youth. Trinity is represented on the SILAG and Youth groups, and the Comms sub group.

Most of the work I am doing is under the ROC umbrella:

I facilitate the Social Isolation & Loneliness Action Group (SILAG). This is undertaking the following:

- Launching a phone befriending service for those still effectively locked down. **Volunteers needed! Find us on Facebook or email phonefriends@rocwoking.org.uk**
- Jointly with Comm's group have submitted a funding application to Woking Borough Council to develop a flexible volunteer management platform based on the volunteer model used by the mutual aid groups. This was submitted under Trinity's legal entity pending ROC Woking acquiring a legal status. Thank you to Church Council who allowed us to do this.
- Sub-group looking at how we can Reach Out to Socially Isolated People especially those that are younger and/or hidden.
- Wanting to develop projects to improve the life of those isolated, which is challenging in the current environment.

Dan co-chairs the Comms group. In addition to the above, comms is working to improve the

ROC Woking image (publicity; social media). Possible activity related to sign-posting people to services and activities that may help them or someone they know.

Ruth Taylor, Dan and I sit on the ROC steering group. Ruth chairs this. The steering group monitors work across the action groups. An application is being made for ROC Woking to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This is necessary to apply for grants, take on contracts and potentially employ.

There is much going on behind the scenes as a result of the networking ROC has enabled. Two examples:

- Surrey County Council want to lease out two of the unused youth centres in Woking to groups that will restart youth work in them. Through ROC Woking's Youth Action Group a group of interested people have been brought together and are looking at the possibilities;
- North West Surrey – Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) recently held a listening event. Through contacts made, they are reaching out to ROC Woking to help the ICP connect with the charitable and faith communities, particularly in the areas of Mental Health and Isolation.

The elephant in the room is the question as to how all this ROC work relates to Foundry, Trinity and our desire to grow God's kingdom here at Trinity? Hopefully the following will give a few pointers as to the thinking:

- A fundamental of Foundry is engaging with the wider community. ROC is helping us to do this.
- One way of engaging with the community is to organise activities, think neighbourhood party. Say Trinity provides 50% of the volunteers needed but then recruits the other 50% through the Woking wide volunteer management platform, which ROC is trying to develop. We then have even wider community engagement and are working alongside the community rather than just serving them.

- As more activities are linked to ROC Woking, so it will need an admin base. We are positioning the Foundry/Trinity to become that. More people based in our premises equates to a greater presence in the buildings. Coupled with improvements to the ambience of the public areas, this will start to turn us into a place to be rather than a place to use, a community hub.
- A number of existing and planned activities we are aware of through ROC need new places to meet. We have parking and are considered town centre – there is scope to draw more people through our premises. Our task is to be God's people so that his spirit of love is palpable to our visitors.

- In due course, I'd like to see us arranging more activities for the community. We can then get out into the town centre and recruit volunteers to help run them. This is a bit challenging at present due to Covid – but ideas are welcome and we should be working them up ready.

The above will give opportunity to engage with people, develop relationships, share stories and ultimately to invite people to discover the God that sustains us. It will take time – we need patience – but I hope you can see method in what we are doing.

Challenges I think we have:

- Anything digital. To be fair, we're not bad, but we are still a long way off the pace. Much of what I see Foundry needing to do to be relevant & effective going forward requires a level of digital capability we don't yet have. We need to think seriously about how we gain and sustain this capability.

- Having enough existing and willing members to actively engage with users of the premises. God may be found in the beauty of our sanctuary, but he is more likely to be seen in the strength of His love we share with others. This is a whole church responsibility. What is our plan?

- Finding the funding to do some of what needs doing to create the correct ambience within the building. My view is that this is a key part of delivering the plan. There are plans, but in an increasingly financially tight situation where will they be on our priority list?

The Big Dream?

A bit tongue in cheek, but say our site becomes known as The Foundry Centre, home of:

- Trinity Methodist Church,
- Chinese Church,
- Foundry Fellowship,
- Cremona Ballet
- ROC Woking
- lot's more

I realise this will be a challenging concept for many - it was for me - but on reflection I think it has many merits, one of which is that the 'church' becomes the people, what we do and more importantly what we believe rather than the building.

A wide discussion on the pro's and con's of this 'Big Dream' would encourage us to ask ourselves lots of challenging questions. This would, I believe, help us to explore God's purpose for Trinity and be very positive all round. This is surely something we can be doing in the current context? How could we approach this?

Hugh Bowerman
Community Development Missioner

Prayer Group and House Groups

Prayer Group met in person on a Friday morning, in a regular group of 4-5 people, until lockdown. After lockdown prayer group transitioned onto WhatsApp. Their prayer time on Friday morning is maintained. 5-6 people regularly contribute, and members of the church family often ask for prayers to be made on their behalf, or on behalf of others. Please don't hesitate to contact Jean, Ann or Dan if you would like prayer group to hold you or your family and friends in their prayers.

House Groups have continued to meet during the pandemic, via Zoom and WhatsApp video. Phoenix House Group were able to organise a 'love feast' via Zoom. Friends of the church family who have moved away have been able to participate in Zoom house groups, which has been nourishing for all.

A new 'digital' house group has just been established to support some of the families Sue engages with in her work, and anyone else who

would like to participate! Speak to Hugh for more details.

Daniela Warr Schori, Administrator

Bible Study Fellowship (BSF)

Bible Study Fellowship met in person weekly, on Wednesday mornings, until Lockdown. Meetings then moved to Zoom. John and Dan met 'virtually' with BSF recently. They do not intend to return to physical meetings for the time being. The 2020-21 theme is entitled 'Beginnings, a study of Genesis'.

Daniela Warr Schori

Coffee and Chat

A lovely core group of church members and friends met for coffee and chat on a Wednesday morning every week up until lockdown. Topics have varied widely, from poetry and music, to sacred art, and personal reflections on the past. Sadly, the group has not been able to meet since. The Foundry team (Hugh and Dan!) are looking at ways in which we can support this group and help it resume some form of activity soon.

Daniela Warr Schori & Hugh Bowerman

Trinity Garden

We were planning to change some of the planting this year and plant up the new bed at the front by the notice board. It's happening, just a bit later than planned!

There is usually a quiet period between Advent pots at Christmas and Easter. We put yellow ribbons on the pots for Easter but for the first few weeks of the lockdown everything stopped while we reassessed what we could do.

Gardeners were allowed to continue to work outside, so we went back to gardening, although at a distance with no shared tea and biscuits! It was lovely to meet up outside and talk and wave to people passing by. We thought it was important when the church was closed that it didn't look abandoned. As usual lots of people commented on the flowers. Unusually it was a very hot May. It was so hot and dry that it held back the dahlias and the zinnias didn't germinate - and they come from Mexico! The roses and clematis however kept going with very little attention. Indeed, most of the garden continued without too much attention apart

from watering and deadheading and has still provided colour and scent - and a good crop of figs from the tree outside the creche!

By July we were making plans and the rain of August boosted the dahlias and the second sowing of zinnias which are still looking good in October. We are digging in bags of stable manure in the new bed and more manure and feed will go round the roses in the spring. We are planting the new front bed with climbing roses and *Hydrangea paniculata* and maybe some shrub roses and perennials. We want to add some new plants to the Narthex beds and top up the centre bed, still with the theme of bright colours to match our stained-glass window. Hence, we are planning to relocate the Christmas stable to allow permanent planting in the east narthex bed. The compost area has a new potting bench and there are plans for a small greenhouse - we want to take cuttings and go into production! We are now starting to plan the Advent pots and stable.

We also have the rain garden to build and plant on the west side. This is a condition of the planning permission for the new parking on the east side, to counter the extra surface water that will drain from the new parking into the main drains. It has to be done soon or we will be in trouble with the Council. A rain garden is effectively a shallow dip in the ground into which surface water is directed (from the roof in our case), instead of going down the drain. The water then slowly soaks into the ground, some evaporates a little and some is taken up by planting. The bottom of the dip has plants that like being wet some of the time. The sides have planting that can cope with being wet occasionally and the top, plants that like being dry. It looks attractive but reduces run off into the drainage system. Having a variety of different plants is good for insects and with the right choice of plants it's not difficult to maintain, The leading UK expert is Nigel Dunnett who designed the planting for the London Olympics. He has written a book about it and has a good website. He was also a guest lecturer on my course at Kew! For anyone interested - google his work in Sheffield town centre where they have turned an old duel carriage way into a rain garden to prevent

flooding. I am doing extra (Zoom!) courses on sustainable gardening and biodiversity so we can garden to help climate change and the environment.

Gardening during Covid 19 has been therapeutic for us but also we hope for anyone passing by or using the garden after church services. Our aim has always been to use the garden as an advert for God and Trinity - to connect with the community and give people a positive experience of Church as well as a space that can be used by Church members. We hope to show that God and nature continue despite Covid and there may be more we can do to use the garden as a resource to connect with people during what could be a difficult winter.

Jill Willis and the gardening team



Useful Information

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