

Loughton Methodist Church

Annual Church Report 2016 - 2017



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Minutes of the Annual Church Meeting held on Sunday 27th November 2016

1. Forty- three people attended with apologies being received Victoria Williamson, Sue Palmer, Steve Perry, Joy Vollmer, Colin Hay, Peter May, Mary Knapman and Jill Angold-Stephens.

Remembrance We stood in silence to remember who had died since the previous meeting – Ken Angold-Stephens, Bill Lattimore, James White, Sally Wicks, Agnes Davenport and Alf Dobson, followed by a reflective prayer from Rev Oseias da Silva.

2. **Apologies for Absence** Please see names above
3. **The minutes of the meeting held on 28th February 2016** were agreed as a true record and signed.
4. **Matters arising** - none.
5. **Church 30th Anniversary SATURDAY 29TH SUNDAY 30TH APRIL 2017** Christine Baker addressed the congregation and shared some of the ideas for the church anniversary next year. These being:-
 - Rev Lord Leslie Griffiths has accepted an invitation to address the service on Sunday
 - Saturday evening - a entertainment evening is planned
 - Flower Festival
 - Exhibition in the Welcome Area
 - Grapevine special edition with 30years of memories
 - Banners and literature to be produced
 - Replica of photo taken outside the former church

No questions were asked.

6. **Election of Church Council members for 2017/18** , Maggie Buttress, John Hart, Mary Knapman, Peter Medway, Kim Schofield and Charlotte McKernan were elected as members of Church Council. Victoria Williamson will retire as Youth Leader in June 17 and was therefore nominated as a member of Church Council in her own right for the forthcoming year. All named members were approved.
7. **Steward** Anne Spong stated that the following people had come forward and offered their services as Church Stewards in addition to Anne (senior) and Chris Beament:-
 - Sharon Heather
 - Jill Geddes
 - Peter Medway
 - Steven Murray - from June 17 onwards
8. **Thanks to retiring steward** Anne Spong was introduced as senior/leading steward for this year. Rev Oseias da Silva outlined the new structure with stewards and Sunday stewards.

Anne Spong thanked Chris Beament for his extended 18 month period as Senior Steward as well as his other duties as property steward and worship leader. Chris developed the role of Sunday Steward and was thanked for all he does for the church. He was given a card and gift. Anne Spong also thanked the new stewarding team.

9. **Annual Report 2015-16** Rev Oseias da Silva used his message to look at our 5 year plan and the main 4 points of Reaching Out, Nurturing our Faith, Enriching our Resources and Developing Leadership and Organisation. Here he mentioned our wonderful new heating system and new projection system which are now both in place and working well.
- Messy Church is growing with many non-church members attending. Holiday club and Creative Loughton were successful in encouraging new people to come to our church.
- Our Mid-week Meditation service and Quiet Day services are growing in number and popularity
- Safeguarding policies have brought our church to a good standard in this area.
- Oseias thanked all the Chairs of Committees and the Steering Group for their hard work.

Questions:-

Andrea Moles raised a question regarding the location of Messy Church and it was clarified that due to the growth in numbers, the dining location may have to be moved to the Wesley Hall with the activities staying in the Worship Area and Church Hall.

John Millar also asked for the following to be considered, that more smaller house groups are formed so that people can be invited to share worship and study without feeling intimidated.

No other questions were raised.

10. **Financial Report** Martin Howarth had produced 3 additional reports

Detailed Accounts

Treasurer Reports

Graphs showing financial status

Martin stated that the offertory was down from last year and that a financial appeal had been disappointing with less than £1,000 increase in giving. Although it looked like the envelope offering was down, Chris Pond stated that many people had gone over to standing order.

Martin stated that although the reserves looked good, the heat pump money needed to come out of this so it would go down. Also as the salary to Tom Donoghue and Selma Alcantara were only for part of the year from November 2015 (Selma) and January 2016 (Tom), this would be reflected in next year's budget.

As the income has gone down and the expenditure had gone up, it had been agreed that members of the Finance Committee would look at our expenditures and report back by February 2017 to see how the church could reduce the deficit.

Questions:-

Jeff Gooding asked about the cost of commodities (gas/electric/water) regarding the new heating system being in place. It was stated that the electricity cost would remain around the same but the gas cost should go down.

Keith Aldred stated that this cost was around £8,000 last year and this cost should be met by Government grants bringing the cost to £0 for this year.

Malcolm Bell raised concern that the congregation were being asked for more money, Martin stated that we had not had a big appeal asking for more money in the past two years.

Chris Pond stated that the vast amount of giving was in the hands of a small number of people and that people joining the church did not give as much, we should look at what we can afford. Keith stated that the plan being prepared for February 2017 would look at funding regarding income and expenditure.

Pete Moles stated that the good news was that the letting of our premises had increased. Christine Watson asked if these prices had been raised and it was confirmed that this was on an annual basis. Steven Murray asked if there were grants available (answer no) and if the church was relying on one or two large lettings for income. It was explained that did not have one large letting and that enquires regarding letting our hall were a weekly occurrence. Andrea Moles stated that we should not have a limited vision due to lack of finance.

Oseias thanked both Martin and Keith for their work. Oseias explained that posts should only last for 6 years maximum and that Martin had been treasurer for far longer than this so need to be approved as Treasurer on an annual basis. Keith proposed Martin and Jean Hobbs seconded. Agreed unanimously.

11. Collection Counters David Wright had decided to retire from the collection counters due to health issues and Brian Lawrence had kindly agreed to join the counter. The following people were approved – David Ellis, Andrew Graves, Michael Hall, David Hobbs, Barbara Martin Keith Aldred, Peter Medway and with Margaret Hart as substitute.

12. Any other business Chris Beament updated us on the Stationing Process, explaining why there is a restructure taking place within the Forest Circuit with Rev Jongikaya Zihle being promoted. Both Chris and Phil Miller (from Trinity Church) were invited to join the committee to help with the Stationing Process, where they try and match ministers and churches bearing in mind the minister requirements.

We were unsuccessful in round One; in fact 7 churches in the London District were not matched including Wesley's Chapel. We are now in round 2 and will know by the end of November if we have a match. If yes, a visit to the church will take place by the interested ministers.

Chris stated that Circuit have been 100% supportive re this process and ultimately it is the Forest Circuits responsibility to find Loughton Methodist Church a minister. Chris was thanked for all his hard work and he in turn thanked the others (Keith, Anne and David Hobbs) who are also involved.

13. The meeting closed with prayer.

Glynis Reeve standing in for Jill Angold-Stephens
Secretary to the Church Council.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Church Council:

Chairman

Secretary Mrs Jill Angold-Stephens

Church

Stewards:

1 Senior Ms Anne Spong
2 Mr Chris Beament
3 Mrs Jill Geddes
4 Mrs Sharon Heather
5 Mr Peter Medway
6 Mr Stephen Murray (July 16)

General Church

Meeting Reps. Mrs Mary Knapman
to Church Mr John Hart
Council Mr Peter Moles
(Till 10/17): Mrs Kim Schofield
Mrs Victoria Williamson
Mr Peter Medway
Mrs Charlotte Mckernan

Local Preachers' Mr David Hobbs
Rep

Connexional Link Person: Church Office

Church Mr Martin Howarth
Treasurer:

Roots on Sunday Co-ordinator – Vacancy
REACH:

Leaders Mr Tom Donoghue
Vacancy

Pastoral Committee:

Chairman

Secretary Vacancy

Property Committee

Chairman Mr Chris Beament

Secretary Mr Jeff Gooding

Finance Committee

Chairman Mr Keith Aldred

Representatives to Circuit Meeting

Mr Martin Howarth
Mrs Anne Spong
Mr Stephen Murry
Mr Peter Medway

Organist:

Mr Malcolm Bell

JMA Secretary:

Mrs Sharon Heather

Action For Children:

Vacancy

Butterfly Club

Mr Tom Donoghue

Editor of Grapevine

Mrs Anne Jones & Mrs Kim Schofield

Baptismal Secretary

Mrs Mary Knapman

Church Staff:

Office Manager

Mrs Glynis Reeve

Admin Assistant

Mrs Linda Brede

Communications Officer

Mrs Melody Larg

Co-ordinator of Family and Children's Work

Mr Tom Donoghue

Creative Arts

Mrs Jenna Thorne

Coordinator

Wesley Café Manager

Mrs Selma Alcantara

Safeguarding Officer

Mrs Kim Schofield

Minister's Preface

This is my story, this is my song
Praising my Saviour all the day long

The amazing song *Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine* was written by Frances Jane van Alstyne (1820-1915), and to my surprise, her biography described one of the most honorable attitudes in humankind. She was thankful for her life and her relationship with God. Fanny J. Crosby, as she was known by her friends, lost her sight when she was just six weeks old, through the negligence of the attending physician. However, in spite of this severe affliction, she has always been noted for her cheerful and happy disposition.

This background helps me to understand the deep spirituality in her hymn and that it has inspired millions of people all over the world. It is by being close to Jesus Christ that she found meaning in what the apostle Paul encourages us to take heart in Philippians 4.6:

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

The Annual Church meeting is an amazing opportunity for the church to look back not only through the report, but also through the incredible amount of experiences gained by the different services, deeds, actions and encounters by the various church groups.

What kind story has the church aggregated to its own experience?

Frances Jane inspires us to be thankful for everything, even more to praise the Saviour all day long. There are many reasons that the church might celebrate as you look back and see God's mission being developed creatively by faithful people.

Last year 2016-17, was an incredible time for God's blessing upon your church, as you can see the church reaching out in a wide and a broad perspective. From the installation of the new heating system to 30th Church Anniversary celebration; from the meaningful and thoughtful evening services to a very creative and interactive Messy Church; from creative arts activities to inspiring children to lead a fantastic nativity service; from an efficient and friendly church office to the beautiful outreach in Wesley Cafe; from singing carols to raise funds for Action for Children to Christian Aid Week, from abundance giving to Whitechapel Homeless Project, to LMC's youth trip to Bosnia.

Above all these, you can also see people being transformed by the Holy Spirit. Disciples of Jesus Christ who are willing to take step forward of serving others by offering to preach, to lead Messy Vintage, to sing, to cook, etc.

I hope you can see these around and sing: This is my story, this is my song...Praising my Saviour all the day long.

May God bless you all in your ACM.

Rev. Oseias Da Silva
Former minister

Development Plan Progress Report

October 2017

Introduction

It is now two and a half years since we conducted a survey of our congregation through a questionnaire, and two years since we prepared a Development Plan based on the comments. This report sets out what we have achieved, and makes some proposals for further action.

The report is set out using the four sections of the Development Plan. I

Each section sets out

- the summary of the survey results
- the objectives as set out in the plan
- a summary of achievements corresponding to each objective
- proposals for the future.

Section 1 - Reaching out

Survey results

“We are good at activities for children, but increasing the number of children and young people should be our top priority.

Our ageing congregation is a challenge, and we should recruit new members.

We are a very welcoming Church. Being open and welcoming to new members is a priority.

We are good at reaching out to the community especially through Wesley’s. This should be a priority for development, especially by responding to the needs of the community.

We are good at supporting external charities, and should continue to do so.

We need to develop communication to the community about our activities.”

Plan objectives

Find different ways for our church and congregation to engage with young families, young independent adults and teenagers, welcoming newcomers in approaches that everyone finds relevant and supportive.

Enhance our outreach, and LMC’s profile within Loughton town, by reviewing the quality and range of our current provision

Enhance our external communication systems with the local community

Encourage and value the supporter of our extensive range of charity work

What we have done

Young families, young adults

We have started Messy Church. Attendances exceed 100, with a lot of people new to the church attending

We have started a Contemporary Worship service fortnightly on Sunday evenings. This has particularly attracted young people and young adults

We tried to recruit a youth intern, but were unsuccessful this year.

Two young people went on a mission trip to Bosnia trip.

The FACT Trip was slightly down in support this year

Roots and Reach continued, but finding enough volunteer leaders has been a problem

We have started an after school drama group
We have held Art for All events, particularly attracting families
We have redesigned and relaunched Holiday Club

Outreach and profile

We have shared in Creative Loughton and Loughton Art Trail events with the community
We have some new attenders at 10.30 service, but few new attenders have become members
We have appointed a manager to Wesley's Café developments with manager, increased the custom and improved the atmosphere
We have held monthly Coffee nights which have attracted some young adults
We have run art projects for schools and disabled groups

Communications

We have employed a Communications Officer

We have installed a screen in Wesley's showing rolling adverts for events

Charities

Support for external charities has continued to thrive, with strong support for Action for Children, Christian Aid, Whitechapel Mission, PALS projects, Spark, and many other causes

Future action

We will continue our successful activities with young families, children and young adults.
Our contacts with people new to the church need consolidating so that they feel more committed.
Our welcoming to services could be improved
We have started Messy Vintage for older people for a trial period
External communication needs review and improvement

Section 2 - Nurturing our faith

Survey results

" We have a variety of forms of worship, which is appreciated. There are many ideas for change, but in different directions.

We should have more teaching, through house groups and other means.

We should help members to develop their faith and spirituality.

Our pastoral care and fellowship is good.

We should acknowledge and keep in contact with the elderly and housebound

Technology to assist worship should be improved. "

Plan objectives

Review the variety of worship style we offer, to support our whole church community

Encourage the development of our study, prayer and fellowship groups

Develop more opportunities and different ways to expand the teaching ministry at LMC

Find new ways to ensure that everybody including the housebound, or those living away from home can still feel part of our church community

Explore greater use of music, arts and technology in our worship

What we have done

A review of our worship has not taken place, but there have been developments in our worship offering for young people and families (as noted above)

Progress on groups has been limited, but there have been recent groups on James, linked with themed preaching, and 'Messy Mums has started as a spin off from Messy Church.

No action on teaching ministry

No action on housebound and away

We have made good one off use of the arts & drama in special services

We have invested in a new sound and vision system. This has been used across a range of services and activities.

Future action

Reviewing our worship will be difficult during interregnum. We can use this time to see the attractiveness of different styles to different people

We will be looking at different ideas to expand our teaching ministry and encouraging groups.

Section 3 - Enriching our resources

Survey results

We have good premises, which are well used. They need to be kept up to a good standard and where necessary improved.

Finding the money to support our activities is a challenge and a priority.

Committed people who work hard to run things are much appreciated.

Finding more volunteers and leaders is a priority and a challenge "

Plan objectives

Establish a three---year Church Budget, in order to enhance, and secure our planning for the development of our ministry

Review the current property budget, and develop a rolling plan of action for maintenance and refurbishment; decorations and furnishings.

Encourage members to review their giving of time, talents and money

Upgrade and improve access to, and use of, new technology on site

What we have done

Three year budget has been established, which reveals that ministry developments are dependent on a few large donations which are secure for two years but not guaranteed beyond the medium term.

Property maintenance and development is keeping up with need. A generous donation towards the new heat pump and two legacies have enabled necessary work to be funded and planned for the next few years. Some more planning would be helpful.

Efforts to encourage members to increase their giving have been unsuccessful. Church finances are heavily dependent on a limited number of people.

Some areas of activity, in particular Messy Church have attracted volunteers, but other areas have struggled.

Technology has been enhanced both for worship and administration

Future Action

Keep financial and volunteering needs in front of the congregation in a low key way.

Make specific appeals for volunteers for particular (new) activities

Section 4 - Developing leadership and organisation

Survey results

There is a need for a clear vision and leadership, but maintaining ownership of and involvement in, decisions by members.

We should develop internal communication

We should be open to change.

We should act and not just talk

Plan objectives

Revise and publish our church organisation and management structures, to ensure these will support and work towards delivery of this Development Plan, and meet the needs of LMC in 21st century

Review the roles of paid staff so that job descriptions support delivery of the priorities identified in this Development Plan

Develop a structure/system that coordinates the work of volunteers and paid staff, in order to deliver the priorities identified in this Development Plan

Enhance our internal communication systems, so that our vision and activities are shared across all our supporters

What we have done

A revised management structure has been developed and introduced – then adapted to deal with interregnum

A changed in the role of stewards allowed vacancies to be filled

Paid staff have objectives and targets aligned with development plan and report regularly to Church Council

We have employed a Communications Officer

We have regularised and expanded the Midweek email newsletter.

Future Action

Further improvement in internal communication is under review

Keith Aldred on behalf of the Development Group.

Office Manager's Report 2016-2017

I continue to enjoy my time as office manager with many different challenges presenting themselves during the past 12 months.

The office continues to build on good relationships with all our users, from people coming in to use our facilities, joining in with the many activities or just sitting and chatting in our Wesley Café.

Regarding our many hall hirers, the correct paperwork is now in place including safeguarding forms and public liability insurance. There are no outstanding rentals from hirers and hiring is showing an increase on last year's figures.

The cleaning contractor has proved to be very successful. In addition to keeping the premises clean and tidy (not always an easy task), they are now emptying two new nappy bins and the 'smokers' bin on a monthly basis. They are still flexible regarding the weekend clean and have also completed their second spring clean of the church.

In April 2016 Mel Larg joined the team as our communication officer on a part time basis. Mel is responsible for the LMC branding on all documentation, keeping the TV screen in the welcome area and the church up to date and producing the many documents that are needed for the activities that take place in our church - including Messy Church and Messy Vintage, Holiday Club, Grapevine, mid-week email and the many of the concerts and services that take place.

The office is continuing to produce the following documents:-

Mid-week email

The Week

Quarterly rota for church services and volunteers for those services

Sending out information for the weekly services

Communal notice boards- this being updated weekly.

We have also changed our Broadband supplier and increased the range of Wi-Fi to cover all buildings.

The office continues to look at prices and products seeing if we can improve on the price and looking at contracts when they are up for renewal.

Wesley Cafe continues to flourish, being used during the week by a number of regular customers and many visitors who we hope will become regular clientele.

Selma as cafe manager continues to build on her role, always ready to listen and to serve excellent drinks. Her bubbly and caring personality has been a real asset. We still have a number of themed days with regular piano playing on Thursday lunchtimes, which is very successful.

This year Selma reduced her hours and the running of the cafe has been covered using volunteers (not always easy to find) and we are grateful to our regular volunteers and Linda Brede in making sure that the café is a welcoming friendly place for all to use.

Although volunteers have been, at times, very hard to get, Selma manages and runs the cafe very efficiently. We have increase the number of homemade cakes being bought in and sold to help maintain the income.

I am looking forward to continuing this work next year.

Glynis Reeve
Office Manager

Stewards Report 2016-2017

This has been a memorable year for the stewarding team and the church as a whole, as our minister Oseias Da Silva and his family moved to a different position in the circuit, however we were unsuccessful in recruiting a new minister through the stationing process, but then a Supernumerary part time minister was appointed with responsibility for Loughton for the next twelve months, Rev Armstrong Fumme, who we have welcomed and are pleased to support.

Resource

Following the last church annual meeting in November 2016, four new church stewards were appointed, three commencing straight away, Sharon Heather, Jill Geddes and Peter Medway, and one commencing in July after he retired, Stephen Murray. Therefore, the church stewarding team was then boosted from two stewards to five stewards initially and then six stewards, including Chris Beament who was Senior steward in 2015/16 and Anne Spong, who was Senior steward during 2016/17. In November Chris Beament will have completed his term as a Steward. He has made a significant and valuable contribution to the team and will be missed. However, we are pleased that we have an applicant to become a new church steward, Jane Gooding who has passed the Safe recruitment process. So we will continue to have a full compliment of stewards.

The new Sunday stewarding role has proved popular, with people liking the clearly defined role and responsibility being limited to specific Sunday services. Two of the former Sunday stewards are now church stewards, so it is also a stepping stone to becoming a full church steward. We now have a team of nine Sunday Stewards, who each support the Church Steward at the 10.30am services once or twice a quarter.

Strengthening the stewarding team has enabled us to expand the services the stewards cover to also include the contemporary evening services, Messy Church and Messy Vintage.

Events

As the Circuit Diversity service was held at LMC on the 11th June, the stewards organised the refreshments for the service and organised the taking of photographs and writing of reflections by members of the congregation. It was a successful event which was well supported and which celebrated the diversity across the circuit.

The stewards participated in the BBQ for newcomers, to make them feel more welcome and part of the church. This was initiated by Tom Donoghue. It was a successful event.

The stewards organised the leaving gifts for Oseias and his family and the BBQ on the 16th July after Oseias last morning service to celebrate the time he and his family had spent at LMC. Live music was provided by Shern Hall Youth Steel band. We had good feedback, and Oseias and his family were pleased.

Focus:

Safeguarding: The first meeting of the new stewards had safeguarding as the key item, so Malcolm Bell who was then LMC and Circuit Safeguarding officer joined the meeting for this topic, to bring the stewards up to speed on safeguarding at LMC, their responsibilities and some specific safeguarding issues.

Pastoral care: the second meeting of the new stewards had Pastoral care as the key item, so Pauline Boorman, chair of Pastoral Committee joined the meeting. The principal purpose was to discuss how stewards can help support pastoral matters and help ensure that new people are welcomed into the church.

Steward's role: The job description for the Church and Sunday stewards was agreed and the job descriptions signed as required for safeguarding purposes. As the role has changed to a certain extent following the church organisation structure review, it was also reviewed at a meeting with the Church development steering committee. The appointment length was discussed and it was agreed that stewards appointments would be for an initial period of 3 years which can then be extended for a second 3 year period if the steward wishes to, was agreed to be included in the updated job description which was proposed and agreed by church council.

30th Anniversary: the stewards met with Chair of the 30th Anniversary steering group, to ensure that we were clear on what contribution we should make to make the weekend run smoothly. The 30th Anniversary weekend was a special time of celebrating the 30 years in our 'new' building, and we were pleased that Lord and Rev Leslie Griffiths was able to return to lead the service when the church was completely packed.

Bible Month: The April meeting of the stewards had Bible Month and also a prospective welcome lunch for newcomers as the key topic. Therefore, Tom Donoghue joined the meeting for this item. Sharon Heather and Anne Spong, had attended the Circuit away-day on the Bible Month initiative along with Revd Oseias Da Silva.

Stationing

Chris Beament led the LMC Stationing team in the process for 2016/17 when sadly we were not matched with a new minister, due mainly to a shortage of ministers across the country and there being a lot of ministers that year in wanting to work in other parts of the country due to family commitments.

The stewards along with other representatives then met with the Acting Circuit Superintendent Nigel Cowgill, whose permanent position is as one of the London District Chairs and then with David Jebb to discuss how the church would operate over the year ahead and what circuit support could be provided. Then once Rev Armstrong had been appointed, the next two meetings in August and September principal focus was to meet with him, and plan ahead how each aspect of church life in terms of worship planning, pastoral care and support, staff ministerial support and Development Plan implementation would work in the future. Other relevant people were also invited to the August meeting to reduce the number of meetings required to get everyone briefed and up to date.

A Supernumerary part time minister, was appointed by circuit to have Pastoral responsibility for Loughton. We collaborated to ensure that there are structures in place to reduce the Ministerial workload to reflect the fact our new minister is part-time. The stationing process is now in progress again. The profile for LMC has been updated, and we are working with the circuit stewards to fill the vacancy from September 2018.

Conclusion

The stewards are looking forward to supporting Rev Armstrong Fumme and helping the church in general, and worship in particular, continue to run smoothly, over the year ahead.

I would like to thank all the Church stewarding team for all the support they have given me over the last year, as it is through teamwork that we can achieve so much more for God. I would also like to thank all those involved in so many different ways in our church, as it is by sharing the responsibilities and using the gifts God has given us that we can continue to be a growing and thriving church. I have finished my year as Senior Steward which has been a challenging and rewarding time, but will be a steward for one more year and look forward to Sharon Heather being the new Senior Steward.

Anne Spong
Senior Steward.

Property Report 2016-2017

The main purpose of our buildings is for worship and mission.

In order to be effective in our objectives we need to keep our premises clean, tidy and in good order. Our contract cleaners continue to do a good job on a daily basis.

Our premises continue to be extensively used by many different groups each week. The outside hires generate valuable income and allow the church doors to be open daily and present an opportunity to share Christ's love in the community.

Apart from the busy routine maintenance, there have been many enhancements, and the list below indicates just some of the 'behind the scenes' activity. (no order of priority).

1. The new heating system, for the main church block, was installed and has been working efficiently for 12 months.
2. We have moved to a green energy supplier for our electricity.
3. The front wall of the Worship Area was repainted.
4. The moveable partitions between the Worship Area & the Church Hall were repaired and raised.
5. WiFi upgrade completed. 100% coverage in the main block. Also the Broadband is now being controlled & monitored with priority to staff.
6. New blinds were installed in the Tower & Rank rooms & Lifeworks workroom.
7. Bollard protocol was introduced to maximise protection of the Church Office.
8. New waste pipes installed in the Gents toilets.
9. Annual Fire Risk assessment completed & evacuation procedure introduced and publicised.
10. A considerable amount of time & effort has been spent communicating with planners & developers on
 1. The Old Royal Mail Sorting Office
 2. The flats to the rear of 268 – 278 High Road, particularly regarding the access to our car park. An independent Surveyor has been appointed to negotiate on LMC's behalf. I am truly grateful to the sub group for their continued diligence and hard work.

Currently we are looking to replace the carpet in the Worship Area and the Church Hall. Early indications are that this will cost around the £16k mark. Once this project is complete we will concentrate on upgrading the main church toilets.

There is no room for complacency and we still have challenges that crop up on a regular basis.

We continually need help to maintain and improve our premises so if you have the enthusiasm and a little time to lend a hand then please let me know.

If you can offer a small amount of time each month to sweep the forecourt, or Car Park, weed the block paving, wipe down tables, or maintain the Worship or Welcome Area chairs, I would love to hear from you. Also if you are up for a bigger challenge I would be keen to initiate a painting party once or twice a year. Any offers?

The Booking System is an essential tool in maintaining the balance between church and community usage. It is therefore important for church members to notify the Church Office, at the earliest opportunity, of any premise usage.

The Church Office keeps a Property Maintenance Book to record things that require attention. It is there for everyone to use when they find something that needs attention.

Finally my thanks go to Peter Medway and all the other members of the Property Committee for their sterling efforts and contributions to keep things in good working order.

With every blessing
Chris Beament
Property Committee Chair

Loughton Methodist Church - Charity giving in the financial year 2016/17

As part of the Church Development Plan, the Outreach Committee was disbanded in the summer of 2015 and therefore has not met in the last financial year. I was asked by the development/leadership group and Church Council to continue to coordinate our charity giving and this report summarises the giving from the Church and other groups.

LMC donated a total of £4,560 from Church funds which includes the annual donations that we make each year and the separate discretionary giving which are one-off donations. The amounts are: -

Annual Church Donations

Methodist Relief & Development Fund	300
Overseas Mission	300
Home Mission	300
LWPT (Leaders of Worship and Preachers Trust)	135
Methodist Homes	300
NCH Action for Children	310
Whitechapel Mission	700
Christian Aid	400
Bosnia - Lighthouse Mission	155
Christian Solidarity Worldwide	175

Discretionary Fund

Shoebox	250
Traidcraft	235
Joshua Dhobe School	100
Bible Reading Society - Messy Church	200
Do your part - refugees	200
Tough Talk	100
NewWAY	50
Student Christian Movement	350

Total	£4,560
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In addition, various amounts were raised by the congregation for worthy causes and these were processed through the Church accounts and passed on to the relevant charities.

Charity	Fund-giving Occasion	
Grenfell Tower appeal	Retiring offertory	1,569
Haiti - MRDF	Retiring offertory	341
MHA	Envelopes	167
Spark	Bazaar	1130
PALS (for ABCD)	Bazaar	1130
East Africa Appeal	Retiring offertory	613
World Mission Fund	Easter offertory envelopes	125
Whitechapel Mission	Christmas post-box	583
Teams4U shoebox	Christmas services	500
Foodbank	Christmas services	500
Action for Children	Donations	82
Total		£6,740

These amounts do not include the Action for Children and Christian Aid activities that are organised and supported by people in the Church and paid directly to the charities.

- Action for Children - **£4,687**
- Christian Aid - **£2,655**

We therefore donated a total of **£18,642** to various charities in the last financial year which is a significant amount and a tremendous effort by the congregation.

There will be other charities that people have raised money for that are not included here as well as money donated at funerals held at LMC that go to charities.

If you would like to discuss any of our charity giving, please contact me, **Steve Perry**.

Roots on Sunday September 2016-2017

Roots on Sunday group continues to be a lively group of children age 3 -18 years.

Beginners (3-5 age) Hydrate (5–7 age) Branches (7-11 age) continue to meet together as one group. There are around 20 – 25 children on the register in this group with anywhere between 6 and 15 children attending each week. (Up to 20 including visitors, particularly when there is a christening)

Each week there continues to be two leaders and one supporter who plan and support in each session for the 3-11 age group. The leaders continue to use the Mustard Seed bible teaching material.

The Reach group (11-18 years) continues to meet separately and Victoria Williamson has been an excellent leader of this group. Victoria stepped down as leader in August 2017 and we would like to thank her very much for her excellent hard work and dedication to this group.

Currently Reach is being lead jointly by Tom Donogue, Chloe Purchase and Charlotte McKernan

The 3 – 11 aged children continue to enjoy games, songs, crafts simple bible study and life application based around a bible story using the Mustard Seed material. The children also continue to collect for JMA each week and do drama, acting out a bible story with Jenna Thorne (Lifeworks Coordinator) on the fifth Sunday each month

As Roots on Sunday coordinator I have continued to enjoy supporting the leaders in the 3-11 age group and in Reach the 11-18 group. However I have decided that due to my work and family commitments, after two years it is time for me to step down. It has been a pleasure to serve in this way and especially to serve alongside all the leaders and supporters who give up their time to care for and nurture the children as they grow up both in years and in their Christian faith journey. Thank you so much for their hard work and dedication as they work to bring the Bible alive and help the children to apply it to their everyday lives.

Between September 2016 and September 2017 there were also the following activities:

- November: 3generate- a small group of 11-18 year olds attended Methodist youth weekend
- December: Ice skating trip with Reach 11-18's and leaders
- December: 3-11s and 11-18s took part in the Nativity service
- June: Big Breakfast organised by Reach to raise money for Youth Mission trip to Bosnia
- July: FACT- (Fellowship Afloat Christian Trust) weekend away with 11-18's and leaders
- July/ August: Youth Mission Trip to Bosnia

Future Needs:

As mentioned above Victoria Williamson stepped down as leader of Reach 11-18 age group. Thank you again for all her hard work, enthusiasm and dedication. May God continue to bless her
We are therefore looking for a new Reach coordinator.
We are also looking for more supporters and leaders for the 3-11 age group.

If you are interested in any of these roles or interested in becoming Roots on Sunday coordinator please let Tom Donogue or myself know.

As I have said before I would thoroughly recommend helping in any of the groups. The children bring a freshness and life to Church and it is always worth spending time with them. If you are interested in joining the fun, please speak to Tom Donogue or myself

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to Tom Donogue (Coordinator of family and children's work) for all his hard work and dedication to this role at LMC and for his huge commitment to nurturing children and families in their Christian faith journey. It has been a pleasure to serve with him and I pray that God continues to bless him in the future.

God bless

Caroline Duke Roots on Sunday Coordinator October 2017

Reach – Annual Report 2016/2017

Aims of Reach: To enable young people to explore their faith. To enable them to share their views and concerns. To enable them to come to a living faith. To discipline them as they grow in faith. To become involved in service within the church.

Every Reach session is grounded in 3 areas:

Reach UP – to encounter God and grow closer to Jesus (John 14 v6)

Reach IN – building meaningful and welcoming community (John 13 v34-35)

Reach OUT – engaging in mission, evangelism and social action (Matthew 22 v37-38)

2016/17 Summary

There are 32 people currently on the Reach register

Attending any one Sunday morning Reach session we have 5-14 young people aged 11-18. We share breakfast and fellowship followed by a bible study and time to think about what it means to us and how it is relevant to our lives.

In 2016/17 we covered a variety of themes including Christmas, Easter, the Psalms and activities to engage in the 30th Celebration.

We had a Christmas trip - ice skating at the Tower of London in December 2016

Once again we had a summer trip to Fellowship Afloat Charitable Trust (FACT) in Tollesbury in July. It was a weekend of outdoor pursuits including powerboating, high ropes and archery, as well as having the opportunity to hear the testimonies of the volunteers working at the Centre.

The evening service has become popular with the 11-18s (and their families) as it leads straight into the Sunday Night Youth Fellowship (SNYF) sessions. The young people have become increasingly involved in the evening services – helping with projection, doing readings, interviewing guests and helping to co-lead the services.

In 2016/17 Sarah King re-joined the team as a helper.

The sessions are now run on a rota basis with Victoria Williamson, Chloe Purchase, Tom Donoghue and Charlotte McKernan leading, and supported by Caroline Duke and Sarah King.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Victoria Williamson for all her hard work in the role of Reach Coordinator. We appreciate her time and efforts in helping the youth work to grow and develop and ensuring a fun and varied programme for the young people, including excellent trips and weekends away.

We would love to have your support at Reach. We need more leaders and helpers to support the sessions. This is becoming essential as Chloe and Tom pursue their calling to Local Preaching and the other leaders are also running other ministries.

We also need someone to fill the Reach Coordinator role who can take oversight of the rota and represent the youth work on Church Council.

Tom Donoghue – Acting Reach Leader 2017

Coordinator of Family & Children's Work Report 2016-2017

I have now been working with the church since January 2016 and the year September 2016-2017 has been an interesting and exciting year!

Evening Service

Our contemporary service has continued to meet twice a month. We enjoy the opportunity for this service to be innovative and different as we worship with modern contemporary songs led by the church band. We are regularly joined by guests and enjoy the format of activities and interviews as well as a short talk after the bible passage. This service is attractive to teenagers although we see a huge age range attend from 8-80. It is a great opportunity for young people and young adults to explore leadership roles in church.

This year we followed 2 themes the first was an exploration through Mark's Gospel using the Christianity Explored course and also a series we called 'Build Your Kingdom Here.'

This term we will begin with a series on the Reformation 500th Anniversary of Luther's 95 Theses. This will be based on the Five Sola's.

SNYF

This runs after the evening service 7:30-9pm and is a social group for the teenagers. It is well attended and relaxed time on a Sunday evening. The majority of SNYF attend the evening service (15-20) with others coming only to SNYF but we have seen young people journey from attending SNYF to coming to the evening service.

Reach and Roots on Sunday

Reach has had a good year with 5 -14 young people attending on any Sunday morning. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Victoria in her role as Reach Coordinator. We are now looking to fill this vacancy. As well as to build the team of leaders and helpers.

It has been a pleasure to work with Caroline as Roots on Sunday Coordinator and the team of leaders. Caroline is stepping down as Roots on Sunday Coordinator at the GCM. We need to now fill this vacancy. Thanks to the team who all lead one session a month. We need more leaders and helpers to continue to make this possible.

Supporting Church services

I have the opportunity to lead many church services at Loughton. We also now need to provide many of the Children's Addresses in the 10:30 service. We therefore require more people to offer to do these and need a volunteer to take responsibility for this rota as this is now a regular requirement.

Toddler Church

This service is always great fun and is an important part of the church's ministry with 20-30 toddlers attending each week. We always have great fun with the toddlers and sharing the good news of God's love with the community of Loughton. We have an excellent team and would always welcome more people to join the team.

Butterfly Club

We have many children on this register with around 20 toddler and babies attending each week. It is good to spend time with the the parents and some carers who appreciate an afternoon toddler group. It is a small team of me and only one volunteer. We would love more people to join this team.

Messy Church

Messy Church has continued to meet each month and is attracting a large number of families who would not otherwise come to a church service.

A big thank you to all the volunteers. There are many people making this a great success. Thank you to everyone who cooks a meal, runs a craft or activity at the service and to everyone who is building friendships with the families.

We have lots of regular families and it is good to see them looking very comfortable now at church. It's very exciting to be part of something that continues to grow in numbers and this presents a huge opportunity for our church.

It is exciting to see the development of this with discipleship beginning and also the start of Messy Vintage which we are piloting for Bible Reading Fellowship for 6 months.

Holiday Club

Messy Science was a great 4 days at the end of the summer holidays. We had 90 children on the registers. The majority of the children were from outside of the church and it was a great way to engage with the community and share the gospel with Loughton.

We continued with the new format which worked really well. Games, craft, and break time which included science experiments. The volunteer lunch after each morning was a wonderful time of fellowship and reflection. It also served as great for the team to make new friends and grow together as church.

Pastoral

I enjoy supporting LMC families and wish that there could be more time to do this. You are always in my prayers and please feel free to contact me at any time for any reason – even to pop round for a cup of tea! I have enjoyed visiting some families for dinners and just popping round.

Schools and Colleges

Staples Road School going forward I will be taking 4 full school assemblies a year.

Epping Forest College I am supporting their Equality and Diversity Calendar 4 times a year. And other projects to help support the college.

Connexion

I am supporting a Connexion project to help develop a 'Family Ministry Toolkit' which will run until July 2018.

Tom Donoghue

Coordinator of Family & Children's Work

LifeWorks Annual Report.2016 –.2017

LifeWorks has accomplished most objectives within the projected timeline, including:

- Vision development in line with LMC development plan (*LifeWorks' mission is to connect people with Christ, build Christ-centred community and serve Loughton through the creative arts*). This year a strong focus has been on building community.
- Development of a LifeWorks policy to ensure best practice and outcomes
- Improved standard for hirers (enhanced cleaning, curtains in work room)
- Creation of LifeWorks Hub (a social, reflective and artistic space to exhibit local artwork) – aim to be completed/launched in January 2018)
- LifeWorks' sign (window decal) on front window of LMC
- Ongoing programme evaluation
- The Hub as a visual space to share what is happening in LW
- Development of regular quality arts programming and weekly courses (sketching, photography, sculpture, creative arts classes, After School Drama)
- A comprehensive database of LifeWorks' attendees and volunteers
- Partnerships with other organizations for community arts projects (ex: Loughton Art Trail)
- Working together with other community organizations for funding
- Working together with artists and other community organizations to host LifeWorks exhibitions (New Year and Summer)
- Working together with CDRC to fundraise, increase visibility and increase volunteers and engage with the community through forum evenings
- Implementing faith growing activities (ex: weekly Bible study) open to all, especially new people and those coming to LW events
- Building faith growing initiatives by using activities such as After School Drama to build community and teach the Bible to young people, continual with church ministries that use creative arts, such as Toddler Church, Messy Church and Evening Services
- Building on community connections and sharing the word of God with young people through school visits (storytelling)
- Building on community connections, promoting the well-being and key skills building of young people, and being an educational arts resource through school workshops.
- Promoting strong presence online through websites, social media and email newsletters
- Seeking out and developing leaders through training, mentoring and personal faith development (all volunteers are leaders)
- Restructured Family Art Days -> Art for All

Over the next year LifeWorks seeks to:

- Assess regular LifeWorks events and activities for young people (20s and 30s) which engage them with the church (ex: Coffee Nights)
- Ensure that volunteers are regularly being trained, and are continuing to grow and develop their faith – disciplined/disciplining others
- Continue to focus on building community and growing faith
- A stronger social media presence
- Develop a clear plan for the future of LifeWorks as a building and its potential growth
- Develop and grow LifeWorks Hub to meet the needs of the community with a team
- Add to Creative Loughton courses
- Market the Creative Loughton as part of what LifeWorks does in the Community of Loughton
- Develop Creative Loughton team/task group

LifeWorks will evaluate all programming every 6 months to ensure that it feeds into LifeWorks and LMC vision, and is making solid and lasting relationships with the community

Jenna Thorne
Creative Arts Coordinator

Pastoral Committee Report 2016-2017

The pastoral visitors continue to give their usual high standard of service to the congregation of our church.

Safeguarding training has been undertaken and updated as necessary.

During the year we have had two excellent talks by Paul Webster – one on depression and one on dementia which were felt to be very helpful and I know Paul is keen to share his knowledge of dealing with these conditions to a wider audience.

Despite a few changes in personnel we have now managed to have cover for the whole membership

I am now standing down as pastoral secretary and would like to take this opportunity to thank all the pastoral visitors for their sterling service and particularly to the sub-committee who have given me such enormous support during the last four years.

Pauline Boorman (Pastoral Secretary)

Christian Drama Resource Centre 2016-2017

Ruth Soundarajah has now been managing CDRC for nearly a year. Although, for technical reasons, she is employed by CDRC rather than LMC, we continue to build closer links with LMC, in particular Ruth is working closely with Jenna (LMC Creative Arts Co-ordinator) in Lifeworks.

Profile

Ruth has raised the profile of CDRC immensely through social media and, with Jenna, organised an evening event 'Creative forum' for school heads of drama and the arts, church leaders and community group leaders. This was very constructive in exchanging ideas for future work opportunities, fundraising and raising the profile of CDRC further. In her presentation Ruth stated that, despite the continued rise of media and technology, statistical projections point to creativity being one of the main skills needed in the next five to ten years, showing a continued need for the work of CDRC and LifeWorks.

Volunteers

Although all the team leaders remain as committed as ever and work very hard, there is cause for concern in the area of volunteering as three of the volunteers have now gained permanent jobs. So they have had to either leave CDRC or drastically reduce their hours at CDRC. The fact that volunteers get jobs after working at CDRC is a kind of success story for CDRC, but this has left CDRC very short on some days and with no leeway for organisation. Ruth has put into place volunteer recruitment possibilities but without success as yet.

Although many areas of the volunteering sector are having difficulty in recruiting volunteers, we believe that the power of prayer will make the difference for CDRC. Ruth has been invited to join the church employees' prayer group and we request the LMC congregation to pray so that the valuable work of CDRC continues.

Finances

Finances are steady and rising slightly, although not to the extent hoped for. The modest fundraising efforts this year were steady, although the strawberry tea made less profit than in previous years. There are plans for two major fundraising events in 2018: an historical costume Catwalk presentation in the spring and a Saturday night live style concert in the summer.

Resources

The resources continue to be updated and improved by our loyal band of volunteers. It was suggested at the Creative Forum that a digital list of resources, in particular costumes and props, should be prepared and available, particularly for schools whose staff are very under pressure themselves. Ruth is working on this but it will take time.

Encore

'Encore' is the new improved CDRC newsletter: an exciting and accessible review of our work produced each term. Copies are in Wesley's café and available at services and we would encourage everyone to pick up a copy. Our next fundraising event is the Christmas Coffee morning on Saturday December 9th. Please come and bring your friends!

Andrea Moles (Chair of Trustees)

Family Committee Report 2016-2017

In the context of the recent and ongoing fundamental review of LMC's structure and organisation, Church Council agreed on 2nd February 2017 a report setting out a revised organisational structure of LMC which meant the Family Committee would no longer exist. As the joint chairs of Family Committee were unable to attend that meeting, (being out of the country), this aspect of the report was agreed subject to consultation with Family Committee.

This was fully discussed when Family Committee met on 6th April 2017. The joint chairs had previously expressed concern about some aspects of the original proposals. However, in the light of subsequent development of those proposals, the meeting felt that it was now right to work within the new proposals. We agreed that it should be easier to get people to join a working party, or 'task group', with a specific purpose of finite duration, and able to co-opt members with appropriate skills and talents.

Therefore, the Committee RESOLVED unanimously that, in accordance with the decision of the Church Council on 2nd February, the FAMILY COMMITTEE WILL NO LONGER MEET AND WILL CEASE TO EXIST as from this meeting.

Significant issues during our joint chair-ship have been:

- Revitalising Wesley's Café has been a major project, in particular employing a café manager (Selma) with enthusiasm and commitment and innovative ideas which increased footfall.
- Improving communication within LMC, e.g. encouraging current Grapevine editors (usually Kim) to attend and pick up on input and run with any opportunities.
- Our meetings were often enlivened by input from Tom, and also Jenna, presenting ideas for outreach and family growth with drive and imagination.
- Encouraging and supporting house groups, with limited success: our aim of an agape meal was not realised. There is scope for more to be done on this, possibly by a task group.

As a final act we thought about possible subjects for future task groups, which could perhaps include:

- Bible study groups
- Welcoming newcomers
- Getting people on the fringe more involved
- A regular meeting, say quarterly, for sharing news and in particular for praying about church concerns, with all church people invited. Whilst those in leadership roles, e.g. house group leaders, would be invited, the rest of the congregation would also be encouraged to come and share news and prayer.

Andrea & Pete Moles
Joint Chairs