

# Annual Report and Financial Summary 2017

Annual report and financial statements of the Parochial Church Council of St Stephen's Church, Canonbury, for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017.

## Introduction and administrative information

St Stephen's is a Church of England Church in the London Borough of Islington in the Stepney Episcopal Area of the Diocese of London. The correspondence address is 17 Canonbury Road, London, N1 2DF. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is registered with the Charity Commission, registered Charity No. 1131839. The method of appointment of PCC members and all issues of governance are set out in the Church Representation rules. All regular attendees are encouraged to register on the Church Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

In 2017 PCC members have been:

Rev. John Beauchamp – Vicar and chairman

Rev. Margaret Evans – SSM

Suzanne Roberts - Church Warden

Janice Emslie - Church Warden (from 23<sup>rd</sup> April)

Fola Faleti – Deanery Synod member (from 23<sup>rd</sup> April)

David Ainger – Deanery Synod member (from 23<sup>rd</sup> April)

John Wilson – Diocesan Synod member (until 23<sup>rd</sup> April)

Lindsay Newcombe – General Synod member

Ralph Dunham – Treasurer and elected representative (from 23<sup>rd</sup> April)

John Creyke – elected representative (until 23<sup>rd</sup> April)

Basil Woodd-Walker – elected representative (from 23<sup>rd</sup> April)

Rufin Batota-Mpeho – elected representative (from 23<sup>rd</sup> April)

Timothy Muller - elected representative (from 23<sup>rd</sup> April)

Elizabeth Ainger – elected representative (from 23<sup>rd</sup> April)

Elizabeth Evans – elected representative

Sarah Strang – elected representative

Len Chalkley – elected representative

Katie Melville – elected representative

John Woolf – elected representative

Natalie Beauchamp – elected representative

Anne Cartwright – elected representative (Until November)

## Activities and objectives

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent to promote in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, social, evangelistic and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibility for the Church building and halls. When planning our worship and activities the PCC and incumbent take into account the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, specifically the guidance for the advancement of religion.

The PCC takes seriously its duty to safeguard children and vulnerable adults within all of its activities and to report any suspected or disclosed abuse appropriately. The PCC complies with its duties under the 'Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016' and strives to make the church a 'safe' and inclusive environment for all who attend.

## Church attendance

In 2017 there were 138 people on the electoral roll. The average Sunday attendance was 64 adults and 14 children. We also welcome children for baptism, read the banns of marriage for couples from the parish and, when invited, conducted the funerals and marriages of parishioners and those with a connection to St Stephen's.

## **PCC meetings in 2017**

During 2017 John Woolf has been PCC Secretary.

The PCC met 9 times during 2017 and spent a day away. Agenda items have included:

- 5-year strategic plans for Manna and Urban Hope
- Building issues: relocation of church office; installation of sound and video system; rebuilding of Church steps; Quinquennial Inspection and schedule of work; renewal of hot water and heating control systems; Church storage cupboards; other repairs and building issues.
- Formation of an 'Environmental Responsibility Group'
- Preschool childrens work project
- Forming an elders group
- Pastoral care strategy
- Mission Action Plan review
- Adopting a safeguarding action plan
- Financial reports and annual accounts

As regular items on the agenda we have received:

- Quarterly management accounts and approved a budget for 2018
- Reports from Manna and Urban Hope Management Committees
- Reports from Deanery Synod representatives
- Health and Safety updates
- Safeguarding reports
- Reports from other sub-committees – Mission Giving, Staffing, Buildings
- Reports from Vicar and Church Wardens.

All meetings include an opportunity for PCC members to raise safeguarding and health and safety concerns. The required PCC policies are reviewed and updated at regular intervals. Minutes of all meetings are taken and approved, and copies displayed. The PCC appoints members to its sub-committees, both from within the PCC and the wider congregation, and requires them to report regularly to the full PCC. Terms of reference are set out for sub-committees. The PCC offers its grateful thanks to Suzanne Roberts and Janice Emslie for serving as church wardens during the year.

## **Vicar's report**

2017 has seen some significant achievements, a number of disappointments and some new beginnings as we have once again tried to be the church that God is calling us to be here in Canonbury. Our core life of worship and ministry has continued Sunday by Sunday and in Manna and Urban Hope, with some 400 or more people each week connecting with what St Stephen's is able to offer as a place of prayer, support, sustenance and solace. This though is a demanding ministry to maintain and it is only the dedication of staff and volunteers that make it possible for St Stephen's to be the consistent presence that it is in the community and the lives of individuals. So thank you to all of you who contribute to the life of the church both through your prayers and in your actions.

Every vicar needs supportive Church Wardens and I have been delighted to have this in Suzanne Roberts and Janice Emslie during this year. My thanks go to both of them. I also thank my ministry colleagues, Margaret Evans, Stuart Evans, Fola Faleti and the many others who lead and speak in our services. It has been a delight to work with our talented children and young people again as they have led many of our festival services during the year. Thank you to you all for your enthusiasm and willingness to do this. And thank you to all of you who do so much – musicians, readers, prayers, welcomers, Len and others on sound, coffee makers, flower arrangers, furniture movers, our church, Manna and Urban Hope staff and the many volunteers who make all our work possible. Thank you also to the PCC and to John Woolf as secretary and Ralph Dunham as treasurer. The PCC has engaged in thoughtful and prayerful discussion and debate during the year covering a vast range of topics and has discharged its responsibility as church council and charity trustees with grace and good humour. And, by no means least, my thank you to Natalie for all she does for the church and to support and enable my ministry here.

As a church family we have journeyed together through the year sharing both the struggles and joys of our lives. Praying for each other in times of illness and disappointment and celebrating together at times of joy. Two particular highlights were the weddings of Basil Wood-Walker and Aimee-Jane Lee in May and Ian Carson and Sarah Strang in September. We continue to pray for them and wish them well as they celebrate first anniversaries in 2018.

It has been good to see some new initiatives begin to take shape as the year progressed. The Mission Action plan highlighted the need to make better provision for preschool children and their families. In October we were successful in gaining a grant from The Bishop of London's Mission Fund for 2 years funding towards a preschool childrens worker and Lois Gallagher took up this role. Her report outlines what has already been achieved and what plans we have for 2018. In the autumn I talked about forming an elders group to be a centre for prayer and support for Margaret and myself in our ministry and for the whole ministry of the church. This group took longer to discern than expected but I am excited to begin meeting with 7 elders in January. The Mission Action Plan also highlighted the need to offer a new programme of social events for the church and wider community. In 2017 games nights, quizzes, concerts and more brought us together. In 2018 we will be building on this programme. We have begun to become more environmentally aware as a community as during the year our new 'Environmental Responsibility Group' encouraged us to think more about Fair Trade and we marked 'Creationtide' in September. CanonburyReflects has continued to develop a role as a forum for reflection, community cohesion and seeking social justice and has attracted people from across the Canonbury community.

It has been gratifying to see some building projects come to completion this year. The relocation of the church office has produced an administrative hub for the building and its activities and a comfortable and confidential space for Manna key work. The new church sound and video system is now installed and we are enjoying getting used to how to operate it. We were also able to install a new hot water system and heating controls as well as having some major roof repairs done to tackle some long-term leaks and many other general repairs. Towards the end of the year a leak was discovered in pipework under the floor in the vicarage ground floor. Extensive repairs were necessary, but this has resulted in a much improved working and meeting space for me. In 2018 we will be undertaking repairs highlighted in our quinquennial inspection report, installing a new fire alarm and fire prevention measures and working to reduce our 'carbon footprint' with funding from Richard Cloudesley's Charity. Our biggest frustration though has been our failure to progress the rebuilding of the front steps and the inclusion of equal access ramps. We will continue to work towards achieving this in 2018.

As well as identifying what it is possible to achieve it is also important for a church to be open about what it cannot achieve. This is why 2017 will be the last year that St Stephen's and Urban Hope will be the home of 'CONCRETE', the learning and support project for Christian youth workers begun by Ben Bell and James Fawcett 4 years ago. CONCRETE is growing and expanding its work across the UK and St Stephen's cannot offer the governance or management necessary for its £250,000 budget, so CONCRETE is moving to The Salmon Youth Centre in Burmonsey where we pray James will be able to expand this work to enrich Christian youth work nationally. In 2017 we pursued an aspiration to increase our administrative team by employing a Communications and Lettings Administrator to manage both the letting of the building and all aspects of communication, physical and digital. However, it became clear during the year that this would stretch our expenditure beyond its current limits, so we have had to reduce our aspirations in this area and find a way to manage as best we can.

2018 brings us new possibilities and new challenges. The Mission Action Plan has been reviewed and we have tried to focus our aspirations and goals for the coming year. Amongst these goals we hope to:

- Develop further our social programme and music and arts events in the Church.
- Launch a new pastoral care strategy and appoint pastoral assistants.
- Support the development of CanonburyReflects and find new ways of working for community cohesion and social justice.
- Increase further our environmental awareness and encourage greater environmental responsibility.

- Encourage church members to become more involved in community groups and issues.
- Continue to see the preschool childrens work project develop and attract new children and families to St Stephen's.
- Support all our childrens and youth work to grow young disciples who will grow into a new generation in St Stephen's.
- Explore new ways of offering Christian nurture and discipleship opportunities.
- Establish new small groups and encourage church members to join.
- Build a team of volunteers to help make our communications more effective.

There is however one overarching aspiration that we all need to own and contribute to in 2018 and beyond. We need to be more missional and evangelistic in our approach. We need to see St Stephen's grow as a worshipping community and we will only see this if we can learn to share the Good News of Jesus in new ways across the parish. Learning as individuals how we can tell the stories of faith to family, friends and neighbours and discovering as a community how we can witness to the radical and different way of life that Jesus calls us to as his church.

At the end of Acts 3 we read about the new Christian community in Jerusalem:

They continued to meet together. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

And in Romans 10 Paul says:

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone telling them?

The statistics about church attendance in the UK speak for themselves and don't need to be repeated other than to say that for 100 years they have traced a pattern of decline until today we live in a nation where the vast majority of people have no connection to the church or knowledge of the Christian faith. This means that our task is no longer to reawaken faith, as it might have been 20 years ago, but now it is to re-establish faith. To tell the stories of faith and share the Good News as if for the first time in our nation, our city and our parish.

What all churches need, and what we need at St Stephen's, is a new sense of mission and understanding of the importance of evangelism. Mission that witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and evangelism that challenges people to accept Christ in their lives and reshape their lives as disciples of Jesus.

The challenge is to see that this is not the job of the vicar or a group of 'ministers' but rather the calling of all of us. It is when we all 'break bread together with glad and sincere hearts' and when we all find our voices to tell the Good News we have discovered in our lives, that God will begin to 'add to our number those who are being saved.'

So, let's pray that 2018 will be a year of growth here at St Stephen's and let's pray for ourselves that God will equip us and inspire us and challenge us to respond to his call to mission and evangelism and give us 'glad and sincere hearts' as we break bread and praise God together.

**John Beauchamp**

## Urban Hope

Over the past year Urban Hope has continued to build on new relationships and partnerships developed in 2016 and has had the privilege of watching a substantial cohort of older Hopefuls reach adulthood and the end of their journey with us.

Over the course of the year we supported 206 different young people (112 young women and 94 young men), mentored or provided one-to-one support to 19 young people and, altogether, ran 222 sessions. We also ran three residential trips, taking a total of 30 young people on trips out of London. These trips continue to be a crucial part of what Urban Hope does, taking young people outside of their usual setting and giving them the chance to face new, positive challenges in a safe environment.

In summer 2017, we said goodbye to Tanya who moved on to a role based nearer her home. Tanya led girls' work at Urban Hope in the two years that she was with us and her departure leaves us without a female youth worker at present. We have secured funding for a new full-time female youth worker and plan to recruit in 2018. Despite these changes, it has been a delight to watch the small but close-knit girls' group create positive change in the community. Their activities this year included planning, advertising and holding a second-hand clothes sale to raise money for the local community. The proceeds of the sale were used to buy supplies for the local Solace women's shelter for whom the girls put together welcome packs for new arrivals and bought duvet covers and family games.

Joel continued to lead our work with young men in 2017, supporting a particularly hard-to-reach group of Hopefuls through a combination of mentoring, clubs, day trips and ad-hoc support. He also led our first ever residential trip for Junior Club (our youngest Hopefuls), which worked really well, and developed a fun-packed summer programme through which we worked with twelve new young people.

Our ongoing work with local schools has included running lunchtime clubs, responding to requests for mentoring, and supporting children who are struggling with the transition to secondary school and are at high risk of exclusion or school refusal. This transition work, now in its second year, has been done in partnership with local educational psychotherapy charity The Caspari Foundation.

There are many other stories we could tell, of support that doesn't fit into any of the categories above: walking door to door with young people to hand out CVs, help with university applications, Maths revision, learning to use 3D printers & teaching young people how to do a food shop.

A bittersweet aspect to the year was saying goodbye to 15 older Hopefuls who turned 18 and 19 in 2017; one of the biggest groups we have seen leave in a few years. Many of these young people have been coming to Urban Hope since the start of secondary school and we have accompanied them through all the highs and lows of that period. They will no doubt come back and visit but, all being well, they won't really need us anymore, and that is as it should be.

**Joy Faulkner and Alex Elliot – Urban Hope Codirectors**

## Concrete

Concrete has continued to work to fulfil its core aim to support Christians working with young people. This is done in a number of ways, including:

1. Think Tanks: These are small groups of people working in youth work who meet to explore and expand their knowledge in different areas and about different issues affecting young people today. Current Think Tanks are: Theology; Gender – working with young men; Gender – working with young women; Interfaith working; Working with young people; Urban thinking; Engaging young people on-line; Spiritual and emotional wellbeing of the youth worker; Mental health. The Think Tank's learning and reflection is then shared with a wider group through the Concrete website.

2. One-to-one mentoring: James has contact with many youth workers across London offering support, encouragement and advice about their work.
3. Strategic work with the Diocese of London: James works with the Diocesan youth and childrens team to provide advice about youth work strategy and has supported the establishing of a new £2 million youth initiative in London.
4. 'On the ground work' through the Diocese of London: James has visited many youth workers and youth projects across the diocese to give advice and offer support and expertise in his capacity as diocesan youth consultant.
5. Seminars: Concrete has organised a number of seminars during the year, including: mental health of young people; resilience of youth workers; using sport. These have been well attended and have resulted in very positive feedback about the learning experiences they have facilitated.
6. Partnership working: Concrete seeks to develop fruitful partnerships with other youth work organisations, particularly: Youthscape; Diocese of Birmingham; Salmon Youth Centre; Youth for Christ; Diocese of Southwark.
7. Chaplain role at St Mellitus training college: James works specifically with youth ministry students in training at St Mellitus, helping support and encourage students to think theologically and reflectively about their learning.
8. Concrete Conference: In July, 50 people involved in the work of Concrete and others gathered for a day of exploration and reflection. Bishop Karowei spoke and it was a very positive and worthwhile event.

Christian youth workers who have attended Concrete events have said:

*'This is really good, space to think and chat about what I do is amazing.'*

*'This has made my work with young people better.'*

*'This Think Tank has completely changed how I think about my work'*

*'There was space to reflect on my current practice, I learnt some new things that I'm taking back, it was good!'*

Evaluation:

In November evaluative research was commissioned about Concrete and particularly the 'Think Tanks.' A quote from the conclusions is:

*'There was clear narrative evidence that the aims and objectives of Think-Tanks were translated into the day to day practice of youth workers. There were good and clear examples of a direct link between Think-Tank reflection and learning and the world of young people..... It was noteworthy that there was also clear evidence of the impact of Think -Tank aims and objectives rippling beyond the practice of CONCRETE participants and into the work of colleagues and other professionals who did not attend Think-Tank meetings.'* (Pg3/4 EVALUATION OF CONCRETE AND THINK-TANKS (NOVEMBER 2017), Dr Richard Slade Dr Madeleine Mosse)

The results of the Evaluation were extremely positive CONCRETE is clearly making a difference in the lives of Christians that work with young people up and down the country.

Future plans:

CONCRETE was born in St Stephen's and Urban Hope and has a deep sense of loyalty to the people and the place of St Stephen's. This vision casting and vision holding has been incredible, and James and Ben are so grateful to the PCC and John Beauchamp for sustaining this. In 2018 Concrete will be seeking a further £250,000 in funding to expand nationally and it has been concluded that St Stephen's and Urban Hope could not offer the administrative support or governance necessary for the expansion of the project.

In light of this, CONCRETE has negotiated with the Board of Trustees of Salmon Youth Centre, who have agreed in principle to host CONCRETE in the way that St Stephens has for the past 4 years. At the end of February 2018 Concrete at St Stephen's will close and Concrete at the Salmon Youth Centre will begin. Funds held by St Stephen's for Concrete will be transferred to the Salmon Youth Centre in accordance with the Concrete and St Stephen's terms of reference.

**James Fawcett – Director, Concrete**

## **Manna**

The rough sleeper count tripled in Islington in 2017 - The Manna is needed now more than ever. It is St. Stephen's response to local homeless and excluded people, running three drop in sessions a week (providing food, showers, laundry, postal service, one to one advice work and wellbeing groups).

We have fantastically knowledgeable staff and a huge team of 50+ dedicated volunteers. We have people who regularly donate to The Manna and ad hoc volunteers. New to 2017 we have a strong dedicated team of Manna client volunteers. The Manna sees 150-200 clients a week on average, with new faces presenting new challenges every week.

The Manna continues to run small activity groups for client wellbeing. These are of enormous value to our clients, particularly the regularity of these sessions and the continuity they bring to often chaotic lives. Our gardening group is taking off with our new Gardener Sam Lewis. Timothy Muller has come in this year to lead our Manna Singers – they sang at the Manna Memorial Service, Christmas dinner and other Manna events/services. Art is going strong with Eva Bachmann our Artist. Poetry is also provided each week by the very talented Stephen Watts. We run a monthly Women's Group and weekly wellbeing outings on a Thursday with trips to museums and group walks.

The Manna has been a leader in its field in 2017 through the introduction of the Day Centre Forum, a small gathering of similar projects who meet once every two months for mutual support and discussion around a range of useful and relevant topics.

Key Work – Disability Benefits. Project Worker Kate Moore and Anne Cartwright continue to provide emotional support and concrete advice to many clients and continue to encourage those suitable back into work. Kate, (with some help from Emily Thornberry MP) has successfully secured more suitable benefits for a number of our clients in the past year and is having weekly successes with initial assessments and appeals. Anti-Poverty work – Personal Independence Payments. Kate is enhancing the wellbeing of vulnerably housed clients affected by the bedroom tax and fuel and food poverty.

Tuesday Sessions and New Sessional Worker Hired. Both a success and a challenge in 2017 were the huge numbers The Manna saw on a Tuesday evening. There were concerns over capacity and 'Floor' Management that have been much improved in the New Year by the MMC and the staff team. In October 2017, Lukasz Fila was hired as a Tuesday Sessional Worker to provide support for Rachel and Kate during the drop in, and Kate, Rachel, Anne and Lukasz, alongside some tough and dedicated Floor volunteers, are re-establishing the respect that is required for peaceful sessions on a Tuesday evening.

Manna Partnerships – The Mitsubishi Financial Group came on as a Manna Corporate Supporter and provided a Christmas Dinner for 169 clients, are improving Manna publicity and helping Sam Lewis and the Gardening Group in spring 2018. The Manna's Key Work staff continues to work in partnership with charities such as CARIS Islington, Shelter from the Storm, St. Mungo's Broadway, The Pilion Trust and Islington Council's Housing Team as well as more widespread London charities. We continue to work with CASA Alcohol service to provide one to one alcohol rehabilitation support.

We would like to thank the MMC, the PCC, our partners, staff team and volunteers for another year at The Manna and for all the support given to us as a project. May we continue by God's Grace.

**Rachel Woolf, Kate Moore, Anne Cartwright**

## **Preschool Childrens Project**

St Stephen's pre-school children's project officially began on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2017. The project is in its early days but is progressing steadily. So far:

- Seven families have been interviewed face-to-face regarding their experiences of St Stephen's with young children, and to consult on ideas for the project
- We have run one Messy Church service and have two more fixed for February and March
- Approximately 40 people, including 15 young children, attended our Crib service on Christmas Eve
- We have had one First Sunday service (Epiphany) where child theology was explored, with two more planned
- A twice-monthly under 5's Sunday school group is underway, the first having taken place on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January
- We have been working to set up two weekly mid-week groups which will begin in the next few weeks: one a parent and baby group, and the other a Messy Church Café for young children and their families
- Based on consultation, we are making changes to the space provided for young children in church services, including bringing in new toys, moving bookcases and chairs which are hazardous, and providing soft chairs for breastfeeding.

Some of the findings from the consultation that has taken place so far will be presented to PCC on 5<sup>th</sup> February.

The services and events that have been delivered so far have been well received by families already connected with the church, as well as families who have more tenuous connections or who were visiting for the first time.

It is challenging to become a church that truly welcomes families with young children, especially those who are not used to attending church services. Many issues arise, such as the appropriate use of space and what kinds of behaviours might be expected of children and their parents. Can we really offer what we claim to when it means our familiar ways of being are disrupted?

It is also challenging for St Stephen's to take on another project for ministry when to do so means having to provide support through the valuable commodity of time. We have had many generous acts of support for our activities so far but will need a higher level of commitment from volunteers when the regular mid-week groups begin. This issue will be a point of focus in the coming weeks, as we seek to inspire church congregants to invest their time in the project, and also consider whether to seek support from volunteers in the wider community beyond those who regularly attend church services.

We aim for this pilot project to benefit more of us than just those who currently have, or are, small children; our hope is that we will all be enriched through the learning and enjoying that goes on in and with small children, with their unique perspective on life.

**Lois Gallagher – Preschool Childrens Worker**

## **Deanery Synod Report**

February Synod was held at St Clements Kings Sq. Bishop Ric spoke about the Bishop of London vacancy. He went through the process for appointment of the next incumbent, and the time-table required. DA gave an update on the motion about Fossil disinvestment. DA also gave an update on Richard Cloudesley 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary grants, and that the beneficiaries now include Parishes South of Islington. He reported that Dr Karowei was to be consecrated the Bishop of Woolwich.

The June Synod dealt with an Islington Deanery motion on Fossil Fuel Dis-investment with a presentation by Brian Cuthbertson. Tania Witter gave a short talk on Islington FF Get-together. The Synod then said good-bye to the Dean who was moving to St. Paul as a Canon.

The Synod for November held at St Andrew's Thornhill Square on 22 November 2017. The main item was Cloudesley and its 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary. A team from Cloudesley made presentation about the governance, Health and Welfare, Grants, Church grants, the Anniversary, the Sustainable Church Buildings Projects and Charity Commissions examination of Cloudesley's Board diversity.

Melanie Griffiths reported that there is an annual budget of £450,000 available for Health and Welfare and £450,000 for Church Grants. The (H&W) grant can be accessed through 'Crisis Grants' or 'Cripplegate Foundation.' There are two application rounds for Church grants - Autumn and Spring. As part of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary there has been an additional grant-making of £1m with each church receiving £5000.

The Sustainable Church Building Project is run by Cloudesley, London Diocese and Islington Deanery. The AECOM report, conducted for churches for energy audit and is expected at the end January 2018, and will enable a grant of £10k or £50k for projects of environmental benefit. The meeting then elected a new Deanery Standing Committee with Jess Swift as Chair and Area Dean; DA as Sub-dean; Jill Courtnell as Lay Chair; Fola Faleti as Treasurer and Jules Soanes as Secretary.

David Allen proposed a revised dis-investment motion and this brings our motion in line with that of the Diocese of Oxford. Jess gave her inaugural address as the new Dean. She mentioned her appreciation and admiration of the collaborative nature of the Islington Deanery hoping that this would continue to flourish.

**David Ainger and Fola Faleti**

## **Church Weekend Away**

During 2017 we have been making plans for the church weekend away in 2018. We are thrilled to have been able to secure John Bell from the Iona Community to lead a weekend on 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> October 2018. Unfortunately, though this time was not available at Ashburnham, so it was decided to move the weekend to High Leigh Conference Centre in Hertfordshire instead. John Bell is well-known across the world as a speaker and worship leader. He is particularly skilled at inspiring congregations to rediscover singing in worship and known and respected for his message of social justice and compassion for all. The weekend will include groups for children and young people, worship together, sessions with John Bell and free time and fun for all. High Leigh offers comfortable family, single and shared rooms which are mostly en-suite. It has 40 acres of grounds to enjoy along with games facilities and excellent food. Early booking is recommended for what we are sure will be a popular weekend.

**John Beauchamp and Margaret Evans**

## **Church Wardens Report**

After a year with only one church warden it was with much relief the 2017 annual meeting saw Janice stand for election and join Suzanne in post as church warden; we think we make a good team. As well as having a significant pastoral role within our community Janice has done a lot of work looking at the cleaning and running of the church buildings, including improving the use of storage within the church, and reinstating refreshments after Sunday morning services.

Suzanne's focus was to prepare for the Archdeacon of Hackney's visitation in October. The visitation is something like a mini "Church Ofsted" when our practices, procedures and record keeping across a wide span of church administration are reviewed. We are expecting a report from the Archdeacon's office early

in January 2018 with a number of “to do’s” but overall, we came out of the visitation with the understanding that most aspects of our church administration are at least on track. Thank you to everyone who helped with supplying all the information we needed to have to hand on the day.

With respect to our buildings, 2017 saw the church office move to the new central location in the old store-2 and a new sound system installed in the church – both of these are great assets. We do, however, remain disappointed that faculty permission to improve the stepped access to the church has not (yet) been granted but trust in God’s good time it will come right.

Finally, we would like to say how grateful we are to the very able team of welcomers, who support us in ensuring services run smoothly and to the many other people who assist with our worship, our services, hospitality and the maintaining and improving of our buildings, all of whom make the job of Church Warden far easier than it would otherwise be.

**Janice Emslie and Suzanne Roberts, Church Wardens**

## **Safeguarding**

As Church Safeguarding Officer I continue to be grateful for the Diocese of London Safeguarding Policy which gives a clear framework and direction for this work and to the PCC for being supportive of the implementation of the good safeguarding practices. Throughout the year St Stephen’s has continued to support vulnerable children and adults in the church, through The Manna and through Urban Hope and we have ensured appropriate procedures are being followed and records kept.

As in previous years, the new PCC in May 2017 adopted the Diocesan parish safeguarding policy as our own with a copy of the statement on display on the church and hall’s noticeboards and re-appointed the Church Safeguarding Officer (Suzanne Roberts) and Children’s Champions (Joy Faulkner, Rachel Owens). The Diocesan reported annual Parish audit was completed in July 2017 and the subsequent action plan informed the ongoing work for the year. The main areas of work have been to ensure the church and hall hirers have good safeguarding practices in place, that our buildings have appropriate risk assessments in place (see also H&S report) and that we keep up with DBS renewals for staff and volunteers every 5 years. These elements of work are in place and ongoing at the end of 2017.

**Suzanne Roberts, St Stephen’s Safeguarding Officer**

## **Health and Safety**

Rose has maintained a general oversight of Health and Safety for our buildings and Suzanne and Janice, as Church Wardens, have continued this during services and church events. We are pleased to report there were no significant incidents this year.

In September 2017 we had an external fire safety inspection conducted by the London Fire Brigade (LBF), which highlighted a number of areas for immediate action and some larger pieces of work needed to bring our buildings in line with current fire safety legislation. These bigger areas of work included a full fire risk assessment to be carried out by a qualified assessor (completed December 2017) and the need for a linked fire alarm to include the maisonette and vicarage, with fire doors in the maisonette. The LBF enforcement notice gave us 6 to 9 months to implement the required work identified by them and by the fire risk assessment which is now underway and scheduled for completion in 2018.

Smaller pieces of work started in 2017 are risk assessments for the different church areas e.g. Manna Office, Urban Hope Room, Kitchen, church office etc and these are underway and will be completed in the first quarter of 2018 in time to report to the 2018 AGM. Implemented in 2016 and ongoing is the new procedure for regularly checking and re-stocking, if required, the church and church kitchen first aid kits. Thank you everyone for keeping a level of safety awareness and reporting any concerns in order to keep St Stephen’s a safe place to work and worship.

**Rose Mwesigwa H & S officer; Suzanne Roberts Church Warden.**

## **Buildings**

During 2017 we are pleased to report that we have seen several projects completed:

### **Relocation of church office**

In April the conversion of what was Store 2 into the new church office was completed. With the inclusion of extensive desks and shelving and built in cupboards, the remodelling of the front of the room to include a window and wider door, and completion with decoration and carpet, this has created an ideal space to be a home for Rose, an administrative hub for our activities and a confidential key work space for use by Manna. The work was financed with a 50% grant, 50% loan from the Stepney area. Over the next 2 years just over £8,000 will be repaid to Stepney for this work.

### **Installation of new sound and video system in the Church**

In August the new sound system was installed and in January 2018 the new projection system was added to this. The sound system removes the unreliability of the old system, gives far more flexibility to provide more microphones and foldback for musicians, gives a much clearer and well projected sound, and means we can make much better recordings for posting on the website. The projection system gives us a large central screen that can be hidden when not in use and a high-quality projector that will work in all light conditions. We are immensely grateful to Richard Cloudesleys Charity for providing over 95% of the funding for this work.

### **New heating controls and hot water system**

We have installed a new hot water tank and heating controls to ensure that there is an ample supply of hot water for Manna sessions and that we can be confident of the heating operating when required.

### **Roof repairs**

For many years the hall roof has had several serious leaks. Extensive work on the roof to repair damage and improve drainage has eliminated these.

### **Quinquennial Inspection**

During the year Mr Andy Burrell from Carden and Godfrey Architects carried out the Quinquennial Inspection of the Church and halls. His report has highlighted a range of repairs that will need to be carried out over the next few years. Mr Burrell has drawn up a schedule of works in 2 phases and Richard Cloudesley's Charity have agreed substantial funding towards the first phase which will be carried out during 2018.

### **Showers and toilets**

Unfortunately, further repairs have been necessary to the hall showers and toilets. A grant was obtained to refurbish the small shower cubical with new tiling and improved ventilation; taps have been replaced at the sinks; work has been done to improve the drainage from the mens toilet; lights have been replaced. We are hoping that these improvements will mean that the facilities will now be fit for purpose for several years.

### **General repairs and improvements**

Following damage during a break-in in 2015 the replacement of the River Place door was finally completed during 2017 with the addition of suitable locks and bolts. The outside lights along the Church driveway were replaced. Many other repairs and replacements were carried out in order to keep our buildings safe and functional for all who use them.

### **Richard Cloudesley's Charity 'Sustainable Churches' funding**

During 2017 Richard Cloudesley's Charity launched an anniversary grant fund to support projects that will reduce the carbon footprint of Stepney churches. Grants for smaller and larger projects are available. We have been investigating: replacing the boiler, installing LED lighting, improving insulation and draught

proofing, installing solar panels. It is hoped that some of these ideas will become projects that will be carried out during 2018.

### **Fire safety**

During 2017 St Stephen's was inspected by a Fire Safety Officer who highlighted a number of issues about our fire prevention and early warning provision. In order to comply with current regulations, we will need to install a fire alarm and improve fire safety provision in the maisonette. Plans are being drawn up for how to achieve this and quotations sought. Again, with the help of a grant from Richard Cloudesley's Charity we hope to carry out this work in 2018 and be fully compliant before the end of the year.

### **Storage cupboards in the Church**

It is proposed to install some storage cupboards in the Church in the front left-hand corner where there are currently open shelves. The PCC supported this idea and plans have been drawn up and faculty approval gained. At a cost of £4,500 these are expensive, but the design has to match existing fixtures and fittings in the Church so significantly increasing the cost. When this can be afforded we will carry out this work.

### **Church steps**

Unfortunately, we have not been able to complete the Church steps project that has been on-going for the past few years. We have a great design that will greatly improve stepped access and equal access ramps and enhance the Church frontage in its setting, but the project has stalled over some design details to do with handrails and balustrades. We are determined to move this project to completion in 2018 and are immensely grateful to Richard Cloudesley's Charity for keeping this funding available to us despite the many delays.

**Stuart Evans on behalf of the Buildings Committee**

## **Staffing**

The Staffing Committee and the PCC are deeply appreciative of the tireless work done on behalf of all of us by our staff members. They keep the day-to-day life of St. Stephen's, with The Manna and Urban Hope (guided by their respective Management Committees) on track.

At the end of 2017, The PCC employed 8 paid members of staff (2 full-time, 6 part-time), as follows:

**Administration:** Rose Mwesigwa (Administrator - Finance and Buildings Management)

**The Manna:** Rachel Smith (Manna Project worker), Kate Moore (Manna Project Worker), Kemi Buraimoh (Manna Catering Co-ordinator)

**Urban Hope:** Alex Elliot (Co-director Admin), Joy Faulkner (Co-director Youth Work), Joel Williams (Youth and Community Worker - male), James Fawcett (Project Manager - Concrete/Urban Hope consultant).

Staffing changes during 2017:

- In January, Rose Mwesigwa agreed to change her role to become the Administrator (Finance and Buildings Management).
- The post of 'Administrator - Communications and Lettings' was advertised, but no appointment was made. This post is being held vacant due to budget constraints.
- Tanya Battams (Youth and Community Worker - female) left in August 2017.
- Bisi Fadiora (Cleaner) left in November 2017. Cleaning duties have been carried out by several volunteers for which we are very grateful. We hope to contract someone to deliver cleaning services in the very near future

The following posts are currently vacant:

**Administration –**

- Cleaner for church and halls - post currently being advertised

**Urban Hope –**

- Youth and Community Worker - female - pending review by UHMC.

We are grateful to Natalie Beauchamp who continues to do the job of Lettings Manager on a voluntary basis. This work brings in valuable revenue from external hirers

Will Smart, resident in the maisonette, agreed in January to take on a range of care-taking duties on a voluntary basis.

Staff salaries are funded as follows:

- a) Administration and cleaning, from the PCC General Fund.
- b) The Manna staff through grant aid, fund-raising, a contribution from PCC general fund, and individual giving.
- c) Urban Hope staff through grant aid, fund-raising, a contribution from PCC general fund, and individual giving.

The new church office, with space for 2 work stations, was completed in the summer.

On behalf of all church members, I would like to say a huge thank you to our staff, and all those who do so much on a voluntary basis, for their continuing commitment and hard work.

**Katie Melville, Chair, on behalf of the Staffing Committee**

## **Mission Action Plan**

At the APCM in 2016 a Mission Action Plan for the next 5 years was presented after approval by the PCC. This highlighted things we wanted to achieve in 5 key areas.

- Church family and social life
- Social and community engagement and involvement
- Working with children and young people
- Spiritual development and nurture
- Church buildings

Over the past 2 years we have worked in these areas, finding some things easier to achieve, some new things emerging that have become priorities and some things that it was felt were not necessary or not a priority to focus on after all. We have of course continued to do the 'stuff' of ministry in Manna, Urban Hope and across the church community. Particular things highlighted in the MAP that we have achieved are:

- A programme of social events and a growing concert programme
- Plans for a church weekend in October 2018
- Exploring the principles of mapping
- Establishing an 'Environmental Responsibility Group; marked 'Creationtide'
- Recruiting a preschool childrens worker and beginning this project
- Starting 'Messy Church' and an early years Sunday ministry
- Running several 'What's God got to do with it' series
- Relocating the church office
- Installing a new sound and video system
- Completing the Quinquennial Inspection

At the 2018 APCM a revised version of the MAP will be presented to help us focus our aspirations and measure our achievements over the next 3 years. In this a new area has emerged – 'Administration and Communication.' This represents a recognition that good communication lies at the heart of our effectiveness as a church in mission and ministry and sets some key goals for improving this.

**John Beauchamp**

## **Elders**

In September 2017 John Beauchamp spoke about plans to develop a group of Elders at St Stephen's. This is to be a group of 8 or so people who are committed to praying and listening and supporting those involved in ministry within the church. A group who are a 'beating heart of prayer' in the church and model and encourage prayerful reflection on all that we do and seek to do as a church community. All church members were given the opportunity to nominate people they felt had the gifts required to be part of this group and over the following months John and Margaret worked together to form a team that represented the diversity of age, experience and background that is present in St Stephen's. This group took several months to 'emerge' but in January 2018 John announced that the group is to be: Bo Shepherd, Susan Mokogwu, Will Smart, Lizzie Evans, Rufin Batota-Mpeho, Joy Faulkner, Janice Emslie, along with John Beauchamp and Margaret Evans. The group began meeting in February 2018 and look forward to an exciting adventure with God in the months to come.

**John Beauchamp**

## **Pastoral Care**

St Stephen's has a number of people who offer pastoral care to church members in times of need and illness. In the past people belonged to a formal pastoral care team but more recently it has proved difficult to sustain this group. During the year I took a proposal to the PCC to seek to appoint a number of 'Pastoral Assistants' that are recognised by the church as people who are gifted and trained to offer support within the church community and the wider parish. In 2018 we hope to put this plan into action and so ensure that we can offer appropriate pastoral care in all circumstances. I would like to thank all of you who take the time to look out for, talk to and visit church members. The quality of a church is measured in the quality of welcome and care that people experience, something that is the responsibility of all of us, not just a few. I look forward to working to improve the care we offer to one another and to our parish during 2018.

**John Beauchamp**

## **Sunday School**

Sunday morning activities for primary-school-aged children at St Stephen's are run by a small team of volunteers. Some of the parents are volunteers themselves, who begin helping when their children are small and continue as they grow. Sometimes, in the case of Jane Thurlow at least, they continue when their children become adults. As Jane prepares to step down after 18 years of Sunday School duty, we'd particularly like to thank her for her massive contribution to our children and our church life.

The average age of Sunday School children took a dive in 2017 as some new children came of age (started in Reception) and became established in a group which had previously been full of children growing up fast. The average size of the group was around 7 – for one baptism service we had more than 20 children.

Sunday School leaders rose to the challenge of involving children aged 4 and 11 in the activities by making the sessions particularly creative this year. We explored stories of Jesus' preparation for ministry through temptations and baptism and in the run-up to Easter we worked together to produce artworks inspired by the stations of the cross, which provided a backdrop to our Holy Week activities.

We took a closer look at aspects of our worship at St Stephen's – examining the Bible, the Peace, Baptism and Communion. As we celebrated Harvest time, we did another series of messy sessions producing artworks inspired by the story of creation.

One of the highlights of the year was the Sunday School summer trip to Broadstairs. It was a chance to spend some time together and also mark the end of an era for a couple of the children who had grown up in Sunday School and were preparing to move on to Dreams.

Over the coming year we will be losing a couple more long-serving leaders as Simon and Rachael prepare to move to Belgium – so we will need the church's help to find new leaders to keep the group thriving.

**Dave Titmas, on behalf of the Sunday School team**

## Dreams

This year at Dreams, 17 young people have participated in our Sunday morning sessions. Together we've explored themes like: 'What does the Bible say about mental health?' and learning about practices like 'lectio divina'.

We've studied books and stories of the Bible, for example, after a dreamer asking how Israel went from being led by Moses to being led by Kings like Saul and David,. We did a whistle stop tour of the beginning of the Old Testament. In the end we spent a long time studying the themes & stories of the Book of Judges, *there were lots of stories the group had never come across before, and the theme of constantly needing to let God guide us felt like a good one to really sink our teeth into.*

We also spent a term discussing Confirmation and what it meant, focusing on the words of the service and what they mean when applied to our day-to-day life. In 2017, we had two children and young people's lunches after church, which 18 children and young people attended.

Highlights of Dreams 2017 have been:

- Cecelia's Confirmation
- Exploring the stories of Ruth, Deborah and Jael as part of our series on the Old Testament

It's been wonderful this year to watch the group grow up together, share experiences and reflect on where they might see God at work in their lives. Their fresh insights on Bible stories I thought I knew inside out never fails to impress and challenge me.

**Joy Faulkner**

## Mission Support Group

The role of the MSG is to advise the PCC on the spending of the church's annual giving from the general fund and on the choice of causes for St Stephen's three seasonal annual appeals, which the group organises.

The PCC's allocation for 2017 was £9,000. £2,000 was given to Tim and Rachel Green working with Interserve in Kuala Lumpur and £3,000 to Caroline and Geoff Shave working with Agape in Cape Town. ALMA was given £1,500 towards primary school education in Angola. The PCC also contributed £500 to the Islington Life Festival. Another £2,000 had been allocated to a Bible College in Nepal but the project did not go forward and in September the PCC agreed to hold the £2,000 in reserve.

Our Lent Appeal raised £500 for Clean Sheet – a Christian charity that helps to set prisoners free from a cycle of reoffending through practical help, prayerful befriending and carefully tailored courses.

The Harvest Appeal raised £706 towards Tear Fund's agricultural project in Malawi which provides equipment and training to enable families and whole villages to manage their resources for a sustainable future.

The Advent and Christmas Appeal raised £1,320 to be shared between two charities that support refugees. The Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group befriends migrants and asylum seekers held indefinitely in immigration centres. GDWG also run the outreach project Refugee Tales - an annual walk in solidarity with asylum seekers and migrants. Safe Passage works to unite unaccompanied children and vulnerable adults with their families in the UK helping them to access their legal rights.

**Margaret Evans on behalf of the Mission Support Group**

## Music and Musicians

Things to celebrate and be thankful for: a great group of lovely volunteers giving their time on a regular basis, a new sound system with foldback, Lizzie and Rufin drumming regularly. Things to pray for: some new volunteers, ideally an extra pianist or guitarist who could lead, some additional instrumentalists, and more diversity in the team.

The team of musicians at St Stephens has continued to provide worship in the morning and evening services on a Sunday. Lois Gallagher, Rachel Lindley, Katie Melville or Timothy Muller chooses the songs and plays the piano, and are joined by singers Rachel Woolf, Sandy McClure, Libby Senez, Georgina Maude and Katy Evans, and drummers Rufin Batota-Mpeho and Lizzie Evans. Some new songs have been introduced through the year, and the aim has continued to be the inclusion of at least one traditional hymn in each service.

The format tends to include a time for collection between the 2nd and 3rd songs in the 'block' of worship, and the inclusion of a child-friendly song and a traditional hymn. It is a great group of musicians and some of the less experienced singers have grown in confidence.

The new PA system has meant that it is possible to have foldback, so musicians can hear themselves, which is great, although we are still getting to grips with using the equipment to its best. The amount of time to practice with the sound system is sometimes quite short as it is set up while musicians are rehearsing and then it is preferred to be turned off while people are arriving. This means it is sometimes quite difficult to rehearse fully for a meaningful length of time where singers can hear themselves and each other.

The evenings have been more difficult to cover, with Timothy the only regular musician, and Lois is going to reduce her involvement in music in the morning services, given her increasing commitment to the under 5s. Do please support us in prayer and/or by joining us over the next year. If anyone would like to be involved do speak to Timothy Muller or Rachel Lindley.

**Rachel Lindley**

## Sidespersons

There have been no major changes to the team over the last year. The team continues to provide a great welcoming service to new and old members attending Church services on Sundays-and sometimes other events ie. Weddings, Concerts etc. I think we all recognise the importance of keeping a watchful eye over the congregation, particularly trying to make visitors feel at ease and welcomed as much as possible. This is particularly the case on First Sunday's -when the layout itself may be confusing to newcomers. It really helps when the team can recognise that a brief explanation will help people understand what is going on, and possibly introduce them to other friendly faces.

Our team at the moment consists of the following people: Vernon and Fran; James and BO; Stephen and Stephen; Mary and Marion; Jide and Bod.

My thanks go to all these faithful helpers, and also to Sylvester who has been a sides person for a number of years but due to ill health is no longer able to help. His wonderful cheerfulness and gracious presence is greatly missed. Also, thanks to Justina and Peter who helped out during the past year but have now returned home to the Caribbean

**Bo Shepherd**

## **Maisonette Fellowship Group**

The fellowship group currently has five regular members; Angela, Sevi, Patricia, Karin and Marion. A number of other valuable people have visited from time to time. The overall atmosphere for the evening is very informal. The evening starts at 7:30pm where we aim to eat together and catch-up as friends before, at around 8:30pm, looking at a passage in the Bible and discussing the impacts of it in our own lives. Bible study finishes at around 9pm - giving some time for fellowship, if people can stay, before the evening finishes at 10pm.

It is really enjoyable to be a part of St Stephen's Bible study group, making new friends and supporting friends that I have come to know. The group is a safe place for people to find out more about God, to ask questions, talk about fears or challenges and find support in prayer and friendship. I find that I learn a lot from the questions I get asked and from the Bible passages we look at. We are currently studying 2 Corinthians and learning about the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort and the light and momentary affliction of this world in comparison to the eternal weight of glory in the one to come.

**Will Smart**

## **Coffee Shop**

The Coffee Shop continues to be enjoyed by all who attend - though the numbers do fluctuate. The team, Jaynee, Pauline, June and Val still believe we are where God wants us to be and will carry on sharing with people that we have befriended and grown to love until God moves us on. This year has seen the Coffee Shop supply refreshments and support the following: Urban Hope/Local Community Fun Day; Cross Street Baptist Church Fun Day; and the Carol service. These were all held at the Almorah Community Centre and were well attended, including quite a large number of Coffee Shop regulars!

In November we held a Coffee Shop quiz night with fish and chips which was well attended and enjoyed by all. We were allocated £200 from St Stephens to cover costs - though we did recoup a lot of the expenditure by people paying for their supper. We also held the traditional Coffee Shop Christmas Party with many local people and children attending. This was kindly supported with a grant of £100 from the centre committee for which we are very grateful

We have seen some new people joining us, which is encouraging. But although we would love to see the walls heaving under the strain of even more, we try not to get discouraged - so often too much emphasis is put on numbers don't you think?

Its lovely to see John and Natalie (and Nelson of course!) coming along and being supportive. The carol service in itself underlines the fact that we are Christians. It would be lovely if, in addition to Len and Sarah, people from the church popped in on occasion, especially those who live in the vicinity.

Finally, its becoming more and more difficult for all four of us to be at the centre for various reasons. This puts quite a strain on those remaining when it comes to setting up and putting away heavy furniture. Therefore, we would be most grateful if members of St Stephens would pray and consider helping out as and when necessary (it wouldn't be that often and you wouldn't be expected to stay for the duration, unless you wanted to of course!)

We are grateful for St Stephens support and for the grace of God we see in action through Coffee Shop.

**Val Bull and the team**

## Finance

(This is a draft report. Figures may be amended following the Independent Examination. Summary and full accounts will be available before the annual meetings.)

The total income for the year 2017 was £477,330. This income was made up of restricted funds of £279,870; £88,254 of donations and grants to support the work of the Manna and Manna Welfare, £136,943 to support the work of Urban Hope and £36,750 for Concrete. Other donations and grants were for specific projects and improvements within the Church. Unrestricted funds incoming amounted to £197,459 principally Church Giving and fees earned from property and Church activities.

Expenditure for the year 2017 amounted to £505,272. Spending was £279,876 of restricted funds (a deficit against income of £530) and £225,396 of unrestricted funds (a deficit of £27,413).

The financial position at year end was £278,069, made up of £198,370 restricted funds and £79,699 unrestricted funds.

The Manna (including Welfare), Urban Hope, Concrete and the General Church fund are all within their stated reserves policy of 3 months expenditure, with the General fund holding at year end 4 months reserves, Manna 6 months, Urban Hope 9 months and Concrete 19 months reserves.

Budgets have been approved for 2018 by the PCC and management committees of each of the ministries. The Manna will need to secure significant Grants and donations in order to meet their deficit budget. This risk has been understood by the PCC. Urban Hope continues to be successful at attracting funds and expects to maintain a healthy financial position.

The General Fund budget was revised and passed by the PCC in January 2018 and now continues to provide financial support for both Urban Hope and The Manna but at a slightly reduced level compared to 2017. However the Church will continue to contribute £70,000 to the common fund (87% of Parish Standard Costs), and this year will also fund a Pre-School children's worker with support from The Bishops of London's Mission fund. Funds have also been budgeted for Quinquennial repairs and for the installation of fire alarms in the Church, as well as repaying the loan provided to move the Church Office. This budget is expected to return a small deficit but for the reserves policy to be met at the end of 2018.

The Finance committee in 2017 saw the retirement of John Tasker (Treasurer) and John Wilson (Financial Accounts) and I would like to thank them for their service and for their help facilitating a smooth hand over to the new team. The finance committee now comprises John Beauchamp, David Coffey (Gift Aid), Timothy Muller and Libby Senez. I would like to thank them for their help and support over the last year and for the coming year. The rest of the support team within the Church comprises Rose Mwesigwa (Church Administrator and Bookkeeper), Anne Cartwright (Manna Treasurer), Kate Durkin (Urban Hope Treasurer), Alex Elliott (Urban Hope Operations Manager) and Katie Melville (Staff). Thank you so much for all your work this year. I am also very grateful to you all for welcoming me in my first year as Treasurer and for supporting me as I learn what is for me a completely new and unfamiliar role.

**Ralph Dunham**  
Treasurer