

Holy Trinity Claygate

Following Jesus Together

Annual Review 2007



*more followers of Jesus
deeper followers of Jesus
closer followers of Jesus*

April 2008

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Annual Review

INTRODUCTION AND VISION

'Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will'.

Romans 12:2
verse for the year 2007

Introduction

2007 was an important year in our life as a church. Throughout it we made it our aim to discern what God's will was for the future of Holy Trinity Claygate. We started with **prayer during Lent** and then came together for the **Church Vision Meeting** in April to think together about the questions we face as a church seeking to be faithful to the Bible. The message was that as a church we have an inspiring past, but also an exciting future. The PCC and other leaders worked further on the vision during the first part of the summer and then we summarised our vision the **Next Chapter Sunday** in June as

- *More followers of Jesus*
- *Deeper followers of Jesus*
- *Closer Followers of Jesus*

For the second half of the year the PCC has been having significant discussions on how to turn this vision into reality. Discussion papers have been made available to the whole church so that everyone can feel involved in the process.

Of course, the year was not just about the vision process. This Annual Review sets out the many things to give thanks for in another full year, as well as helping us pray for the future and reflect on the ways we can be involved.

As you read it, we hope you will agree that Holy Trinity is an **inspiring and humbling community** to be part of: inspiring because of what God is doing in and through so many people; humbling because of the

sacrificial way so many people are living out their Christian faith in serving and building up others.

This annual review also reflects the new structures in the **Ministry Team**, and we want to record our thanks to them for their oversight of church life in the past year. As ever there have been comings and goings during the year, and it is right to thank those who call has taken them elsewhere, and those whom God has called to join the team at HTC.



Give thanks for

- the unity throughout the vision process and a clear vision for the time ahead
- a shared sense that we can move forward together as a church
- important PCC discussions on small groups, new congregations and leadership structures
- the faithful ministry of Asa Humphreys, Doreen Griffiths and Stuart Wright who all moved elsewhere in 2007
- the new ministries of Andrew Cowie, Tom Darwent and Maureen Webb who have joined the team

Prayer

- for God to continue to guide as we all turn the vision into reality in 2008 and beyond
- for a commitment to step out in faith as we try new things
- to see more, deeper and closer followers of Jesus

Ways to be involved

- consider standing for the PCC and be part of decision-making at HTC

*Philip Plyming
(Vicar)*

*Penny Alpass & Richard Gordon
(Churchwardens)*

EVANGELISM

Aims

Evangelism is central to what Holy Trinity is about. Our first vision aim is to *see more followers of Jesus*. We therefore have the following aims:

- for every person in Claygate to have the opportunity to hear about the good news of Jesus
- for the gospel to be presented in ways that are accessible and relevant
- for Sunday services to include an evangelistic element.
- for all evangelism to be supported by faithful prayer

Features of Ministry

The Alpha course remains central to our evangelistic focus. We ran one course in autumn 2007, which was a great success with 30 guests attending. Many guests came from one of the three **baptism courses** in the previous twelve months, and these continue to be a helpful first step to exploring the Christian faith. We seek to ensure that Holy Trinity's profile at **village events** is high, so that people feel happy to approach their local church. Our aim in all of this that our outreach (and all ministry) is rooted in **prayer**.

Give thanks for

- the number of guests on the autumn Alpha course and how God worked in their lives, with many making professions of new or deeper faith. This was the largest Alpha course for many years, and also had a younger age profile than any previous Alpha course. One guest also came through bereavement visiting which was great
- the testimonies that Alpha guests shared at services before and over Christmas – evidence of the Holy Spirit working in individual lives
- the success of the baptism course in encouraging people to think further about Christian faith – 20 couples did the course in 2007, and feedback remains overwhelmingly positive
- increased prayer during the lead-up to Church Vision Meeting, and via the Ukraine blog (on average 50 hits a day)

Prayer points

- for wisdom about how to use best the opportunities afforded by being a village parish church, including events such as Flower Show and Christmas Lights
- for the Sunday services to be attractive to people exploring faith
- for a greater desire to support ministry in prayer. Attendance at Together in Prayer is still patchy and causes concern about how much we are really trusting our plans to God
- for preparations for a big Alpha supper and course in autumn 2008



Ways to be involved

- invite a friend to Alpha in September 2008, and come with them
- come to Together in Prayer and support the ministry in the best way possible
- invite a friend to try out the new services in autumn 2008

*Philip Plyming
(Director of Evangelism)*

DISCIPLESHIP

Aims

Discipleship is the process by which we grow as **disciples of Christ** and implement our second vision aim to become deeper followers of Jesus. The church contributes to this in a number of ways, so we have the following more specific aims:

- for **small groups** to be more effective in stimulating spiritual growth among their members and for a higher proportion of the church to join them
- to invest in the skills and spirituality of leaders of these groups and other ministries, as well as in potential future leaders
- to ensure preaching is relevant, biblical and inspiring so that the whole church is built up in knowledge and faith
- to identify and improve every other way in which the church can support and encourage individuals in their personal walks with God

Features of Ministry

The ways in which these are put into practice are implied in the aims. **Small groups** are particularly important, and HTC currently has about 25 Small Groups representing about 250 participants overall. They meet either on a weekly or fortnightly basis, at homes around Claygate. Some are long-established, others are newer (usually emerging from Alpha courses). Most groups use central study material that ties in with the current **sermon teaching**. In 2007, that included series on Daniel 1-6, the Resurrected Jesus, some of the lesser known followers of Jesus, and an Autumn series that explored the three aims of the church's vision statement.



An additional learning opportunity for the church came with the introduction in September of our monthly **Christian FAQ events**. Training

is also vital and 2007 saw the introduction of the **Growing Leaders** course, a year long course for 20 of the church's current or emerging leaders. That course included the establishment of **mentoring** relationships for each of its participants. Plans were also put into place for regular **small groups leaders training**, beginning in January 2008.

Highlights

- working group on small groups produced report for November PCC with bold vision to substantially increase the proportion of church members involved in small groups
- end of 2007 saw substantial increase in staff investment in discipleship: Tom Darwent - Director of Discipleship, Mike Harle - Small Groups Coordinator
- Autumn sermon series increased commitment and enthusiasm for HTC's vision aims, reflected in increased attendance at Sunday services
- Growing Leaders course got off to a good start, its success ensuring it will be repeated in 2008-09.

Prayer points

- give thanks and praise for the continued ministry for Small Groups and their leaders
- pray that many more will see Small Groups as a means by which they can grow in their relationship with God
- thank God for the faithful preaching in Sunday services and pray for his continued inspiration as we seek to build up and galvanize the church
- pray for the development of Growing Leaders, small group training and other investment in the skills, knowledge, faith and passion of all those who lead and serve at HTC

Ways to be involved

- join a small group!
- re-listen to Sunday sermons and FAQ events from the website and feed back to preachers and facilitators.

*Tom Darwent
(Director of Discipleship)*

PASTORAL CARE

Aims

Pastoral Care consists of various ministries which aim to serve the needs of the church family and the parish community and also to operate in line with the overall vision of the church. We therefore strive to:

- affirm and encourage existing support networks within the church and the great amount of informal caring which takes place
- reach out into the community to all, with the aim of building relationships
- work and pray for continued growth in awareness within the church of pastoral care

Features of Ministry

- the **Bereavement Visiting Team** (15 members) follows up all local next of kin of those whose funerals are taken by HTC staff. This amounts to around one third of all funerals taken. Cards are sent out to next of kin on the first anniversary of the bereavement, and invitations sent to the May Tea and the special service for the bereaved in November. These events are also opportunities to give invitations to the Alpha Course.
- the **Bereavement Support Group**, a fortnightly therapy group led by a professional bereavement counsellor wound up its sessions in April 2007 after 3½ years, as the leader could no longer continue, although she is still available for individual counseling.
- the **Care Team** (17 members) visits the elderly and/or vulnerable of the community, forming long-term relationships. They share prayer needs on a Prayer Chain, and follow the persons they are referred to through all transitions eg to hospital or nursing home. Anyone can make a referral
- the **Claygate Credit Union** still has two fortnightly collection points, at the Firs and the Claygate Village Club. It has a small but growing clientele, 30 people on the books with 5 new members in the last year, and is very useful to those who want to save regularly and to take out low-interest loans.
- **HTC Crisis Support**, financed by pledges from church members, exists to give material aid to anyone in urgent need (referrals usually from church members). Referral numbers are surprisingly small (two in the last year).

- the **Marriage Course** has been run again in Autumn 2007 with two couples.
- **Anchor** (HTC Fellowship Group for women) takes place in HTC foyer and runs one evening a month with around 40 average attendance, with guest speakers.
- **Men's Fellowship** took the decision not to continue in its present form, and had its final AGM in May 2007, a Thanksgiving 60th Anniversary Dinner in October, and will continue to organize social events for men under the name 'Phoenix'.
- Caroline Fish, Jill Marsden and Clare Porter were approved to begin their training as **Pastoral Assistants** in January 2008. This will give opportunity for a significant rethink of the Pastoral Care leadership structure.



Prayer Points

- for the three trainee Pastoral Assistants and wisdom as to their future ministries
- for greater awareness in the church membership of the support available, and the opportunities there are to refer people to the Care Team, Crisis Support etc.
- for guidance over a possible change of venue for one of the Credit Union collection points

Ways to be involved

- volunteer to help with the Credit Union / Care Team
- take up opportunities for pastoral care within own network

*Valerie Bagley
(Director of Pastoral Care)*

WORSHIP & MISSION

Aims

Worship and Mission are two of our fundamental responses to Jesus' commandments to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength" and to "love your neighbour as yourself". We aim to encourage and facilitate all members of HTC to draw nearer to God in worship, to hear his voice and to share his love in our world.

Features of Ministry

The **Mission Team** aims to encourage all members of Holy Trinity to be part of God's work outside of Claygate through their general awareness, through praying, through giving and through active involvement. It also coordinates and promotes the support of our mission links. A major practical focus is in the **Ukraine**, where HTC has been working with four churches in remote rural villages in Trans-Carpathia, with medical, teaching, evangelistic and youth projects.



START, a small and very welcoming group meets fortnightly on Sunday evenings to worship God together, explore the claims of Jesus in a simple 'no pressure' way and to support one another.

Sunday worship is planned by members of the **Ministry Team**, in close collaboration with a **Music Team**, who facilitates our worship with a wide variety of musical styles.

Highlights

- working summer holiday in partnership with churches in Gyula, Akli and Uj-Akli in Ukraine - emphasis now on sustainability for the future
- Support for Meg Merrifield, working through CMS as Principal of Bishop Hannington Theological Institute, Mombasa where she has undertaken extensive building work and plans are underway for a new library. Meg visited us in the summer, and shared her vision for training Christian leaders in East Africa

- After 20 years, link missionaries Martin and Lucie Brown returned to the UK after serving God in Niger with SIM
- Gerard & Sarah Charles, our link missionaries in China: in 2007 the family moved to the NW Qinghai area and are focusing on Muslim Ministry to the Hui people
- the numbers of children and young people wanting to take part in All Age music has increased even further - Catherine Winchcombe and Heidi Felton have been helping
- our carol service brought together a rich variety of music, scripture, testimony and our largest choir ever, to bring the Christmas message to many in Claygate who don't regularly attend HTC

Prayer points

- for the planning of the summer trip to Ukraine; for safety and unity; for the YF members as they step up to a role within the children's mission
- for Meg: for the completion of the Bishop Hannington library and for the selection of her successor in 2009
- for the Charles family, their work amongst the Hui people and for developing stronger relationships with HTC. For issues with obtaining a visa to be quickly resolved
- for increased involvement of members of Holy Trinity Claygate in worldwide mission
- for the new pattern of Sunday services in the autumn, that it will help more people draw nearer to God; and that God will guide and lead as we look forward to meeting the needs of the autumn services

Ways to be involved

- participate in short-term mission e.g. join a 'working holiday' in Ukraine or a gap year mission project.
- commit to regular prayer for our world focus partners
- use your musical gifts to help enhance our regular worship

*Linda Morgan
(Director of Worship & Mission)*

CHILDREN/FAMILIES/YOUTH

Aims

The aims for Children, Families and Youth work at HTC is to encourage all:

- to grow in their faith as Christians, not just on Sundays at church, but at home with family or with friends
- to grow in discipleship, being confident about how to live out a Christian life
- to grow in leadership – with opportunities to lead and serve others
- to grow in fellowship, building friendships within groups and the wider church family.

Features of Ministry

Over 100 children regularly attend one of **7 children's groups** on Sundays, and 100 leaders and helpers are signed up to help lead groups, normally on a rota basis. Groups often organise socials as well. **MegaMix** provides a praise party format on a monthly basis for Jumper through to Trekkers.

YF meets on Sunday evenings where on average twenty young people come for bible study, praise, food, talks, and reflection. **Eternal** is a social event held monthly, with games consoles, karaoke, snacks and Rob Bell DVDs for all the HTC Youth, as well as Trekkers. **The Hub** meets weekly on Thursday evenings, for food, worship, and interactive Alpha based talks. Twenty-five teenagers attend this 6 month course.

Holiday Club provides children's outreach – with drama, craft, games, and Bible based talks is very popular with local primary schools. This year were able to offer more than 250 places by running two one-day holiday clubs in the summer and autumn as well as the four-day half term club in February, and more than 170 different children attended a Holiday Club event. The **Shine party** provides a Christian alternative to Halloween, with two parties catering for different ages. This year our aim was to give the children more sweets than they would get trick or treating!

Jigsaw Pre-School provides a play-based curriculum for 35 children aged 3 & 4 years old in a loving environment including a focus on the key

Christian festivals. A recent OFSTED report reflected the improvements that Jenny Wilkinson, the Jigsaw manager and the Jigsaw staff have made.

Toddlers' Praise offers songs and stories for pre-school children and their parents or carers in a relaxed friendly environment including fresh coffee and cake. Toddler's praise has grown in popularity, with up to twenty children attending.

The **Family Time** course teaches life skills focused and making time to focus on the family, and to encourage family values. This is the first time we have run this course at HTC with 15 people attending.

Key Events

- the **Family Time** course ran for the first time, focusing on life skills for young families and creating shared values.
- Last summer we celebrated those who provide leadership across all children's and youth groups at a **Thank you BBQ** attended by over 100 in the vicarage garden.
- Sunday children's groups changed to mirror schools with a **September based intake**. Scramblers, which had grown to over 30 children attending weekly, split to form Jumpers in order to keep groups to a more manageable size.
- **YF** had a great **camp at Dalesdown** where we were blessed with wonderful weather.
- **Hub discipleship** ran as a course in the summer for those who had completed the Hub 1, and wanted to go deeper in their faith.
- **Hub 2** ran over 6 months with **25 children** from the Claygate community, many of whom heard the Gospel clearly explained for the first time.
- **Gill Lowe** stepped down from Scramblers after over 15 years service. **Asa Humphreys & Stuart Wright** moved on to pastures new.
- **Holiday Club** ran two additional **one day holiday clubs** in the summer and autumn holidays that saw 170 individual children attend.

- the vision process identified **Messy Church** as a way of encouraging those who come to holiday club to more regularly attend church.

Prayer points

- give thanks for all those who help with children's and youth work
- Messy Church would be a successful new venture
- for Drew Waller, our new Director of Youth Ministry as he starts in the summer; and for his wife Emma and young son Thomas as they prepare to move to the UK
- Eternal would continue to be an opportunity for children and Youth to bring friends to HTC
- wisdom for the future of the Hub in 2008.

Ways to be involved

- sign up to be a children's group leader
- become part of the Messy Church team
- get involved in helping in a Holiday Club
- commit to pray for the children or for one of the children's groups

*Andrew Cowie
(Director of Children & Families Ministry)*

CENTRAL SUPPORT

Aims

As our new name suggests, our role is one of support and enabling, working with the staff team and members of HTC to ensure that the necessary forward planning and communication is in place, to allow our vision of more, deeper and closer followers of Jesus to be fulfilled. We also try to live out this vision in our contact with visitors.

Features of Ministry

Whilst **Administration** may seem the obvious focus of Central Support - and this year it has continued to expand, including putting our main services into MediaShout ready for projecting - it also incorporates a number of areas of ministry which are vital to HTC.



During 2007 the **Building Management Group** took over the care of all PCC owned property from the old 'Fabric Team', including the upkeep of the churchyard and gardens.

The **Lettings** of HTC premises, managed by Chris Greaves, continues to provide a valuable source of income (10% up on 2006) and a good use of our resources.

The **Bookstall** encourages us all to deepen our faith by promoting recommended titles and the **Fairtrade Stall** prompts us all to make ethical choices wherever we shop.

After 13 years as editor of **Insight**, Jon Davey announced his intention to retire. We give thanks for the outstanding job Jon has done in putting together our parish magazine.

Our **Website** has further developed during 2007 and the number of visitors has continued to grow.

The **Catering Team** who, in various guises, come together and help make a success of church family events



Highlights

- the 70+ volunteers who work in a myriad of Monday - Friday jobs at HTC, who were invited to a 'Thank You' Tea in the summer
- a total 4100 visits to the website when a sermon was downloaded!
- the acquisition of a colour laser printer which has transformed our internal and external communication
- the success of 'Come Home for Lunch' Sunday in helping us to become closer followers of Jesus

Prayer points

- give thanks for the numerous volunteers who ensure that the 'operations' side of HTC runs smoothly
- for volunteers with 'handy-man' skills to help with the increasing workload of the Building Management Group especially as we take responsibility for the upkeep of Emmanuel Hall
- for HTC News, our new bi-monthly replacement for Insight, which starts in May
- for flexibility as the vision process continues and we sense where God is calling His church in Claygate
- to keep our focus on God and not to get bogged down in the busyness of doing the job

Ways to be involved

- offer to help with one of the many teams which are an essential part of HTC - we can always find a job to suit you!

*Janet Watkins
(Director of Central Support)*

TREASURER'S REPORT

Accounts

Total income in real terms for the year to 31 December 2007 at £469k was very similar to 2006 although, inevitably, there were a number of unusual items. These included a **legacy** from the estate of the late Sidney Hall of £7,000 and £11,000 rent from the letting of 4 Denman Drive. After accounting for the costs arising from the unexpected but highly welcome arrival of our curate, Tom Darwent, and the depreciation charge on the audio-visual equipment (the balance will be written off over the next three years) our total expenditure increased by 5.5% to £458k. The **final result** was a £12k surplus which has been set aside to meet unexpected costs arising from the Vision.

Process

During the year we received £22,000 to meet future expenditure on **Emmanuel Hall**, a special donation of £25,000 to be used at the vicar's discretion on the **Vision Process** and a surplus of £10,000 of donations over costs expended in the year on the **Ukraine Mission**. These items are held as Restricted Funds and are not available for the general purposes of HTC.

The full accounts for 2007 are included in the "Annual Report and Financial Statements" document which is available from the Church Office. This details the PCC's transactions, discloses its financial position as at 31 December 2007 and includes a record of assets and liabilities. A separate "user-friendly" version of the annual accounts – including the PCC approved budget for 2008 - has been prepared specifically for the church membership and is available from the foyer.

Other matters

Following the re-organization of **Structures and Staffing** in the autumn the budget process was revamped to respond to the new situation. In the budget for 2008 – which includes provision for the employment of a **Director of Youth Ministry** and a welcome increase for training needs - there is a new, hopefully self-explanatory, heading called "Challenge to Fund"; this represents the income required over and above the normal, formula based, estimate of members' giving.

Sarah Quest (Church Accountant) and Brian Howells (Pledge and Gift Aid Secretary) have continued to manage the day-to-day transactions and, thanks to their efficiency, Gift Aid tax is recovered within two months of the receipt of the gift. Jean Southwood monitors the gifts received through the envelope system and a small army of men and women, headed by Dennys Wheatley and Gordon Raney, now operate on a rota system to look after the gifts received at our regular services. There are a number of small but regular tasks that might suit someone with office experience. Please contact me if you are interested.

*Jem Salter
(PCC Treasurer)*

STATISTICS: ATTENDANCE AND ELECTORAL ROLL

Two important ways of measuring a church's health are Sunday attendance and the Electoral Roll.

Church Attendance was generally static in 2007 although there was a slight decline at 8am and 6.30pm. Spread across the year the average number of adults in church was 308 (compared to 323 in 2006) and 82 children/young people (79 in 2006).

The Electoral Roll points in a different direction. Formally it is a legal requirement of all parishes and officially entitles people to attend the **Annual Meeting** and vote for the **Parochial Church Council**. However, it also provides us with a list of worshippers, which is an indication of the strength of support at Holy Trinity. It is updated every year to reflect new members, those who have moved away and those who have died during the course of the year.

As of 30 March 2008 there are 503 names on the Church Electoral Roll, compared with 482 last year. This represents a rise of almost 5%. 132 of those are resident outside the parish.

This trend of static attendance and rising electoral roll is a continuation from previous years. One obvious interpretation is that the church has more members who are coming less frequently than in the past. This is certainly the experience of other churches where more detailed research has been done.

Part of the challenge going forward is to increase both membership and a commitment to regular attendance. This is the aim of the vision process and the resulting new congregations.

Philip Plyming
(Vicar)

John Smith
(Electoral Roll Officer)

PCC

The **role** of the PCC is to co-operate with the incumbent in promoting the church's mission in the parish; it has ultimate responsibility for the finances, is employer of all staff other than the vicar and curate and has the duty to maintain buildings and property. Most of its 'business' responsibilities are, in fact, undertaken by the Treasurer or delegated to specialist teams and groups, leaving the PCC largely free to concentrate on **strategic issues** and planning at its meetings.

As part of the '**Vision Process**', the Council has in the past year received and discussed papers and presentations on virtually every aspect of HTC's ministry and taken a number of decisions – reached by consensus - on the way ahead. The most important of these papers have also been made available to all church members. Every topic was important, but the most significant were: all aspects of children's ministry; youth ministry and its resourcing; encouraging mission; small groups; new congregations and the structures and staffing needed for each of HTC's ministries. The quality of the papers on each of these subjects was outstanding and well worthy of their importance.

Members of the PCC are acutely conscious of the responsibility and privilege of **representing the whole church membership** in this way and devote part of each Council meeting to prayer for God's guidance in

their deliberations and decisions. The past year has been one of planning – the year ahead will see these plans implemented. Please continue to pray that God’s hand will be on everything done in His name by your PCC.

Andrew Stroud
(PCC Secretary)