

Annual Report 2019



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Alpha

Over the last year 21 people attended Alpha at St Giles. We ran courses in the autumn and spring terms. For our spring term course we tried running it outside of the church building, using BK Studios. It was great to run Alpha in a church members' workplace. I am very grateful to Belinda and Jonathan for enabling this to happen. We have seen the team grow again this year, and are always looking at how we can adapt and change the way we run Alpha to keep it fresh.

Tim Smith

Bible School

In June/July 2019 we ran a six week course entitled "Hebrews Plus". This focussed mainly on the study of the Book of Hebrews in the New Testament but also included one week looking at how to study the bible and another week considering the theology of mission.

In November we ran a four week course on the Book of Ezra, an Old Testament book that tells the story of the return of the people of Israel from exile and how they set about rebuilding their national and spiritual life.

The feedback from the sessions was very positive and appreciative as we sought to study the Bible in more depth and grow in our relationship with God and one another.

My thanks to my fellow speakers for their hard work, to Harvey Fryer for designing our publicity, to Paul Cooper for editing the talks for the website and to Denise and her team of helpers in providing such wonderful refreshments to sustain our concentration and fellowship!

Simon Bridgens

Children and Families

Last year we spent some time seeking God for how we should be moving forward as a fellowship of friends following Jesus and this led to some new things!

Our wonderful children's ministry team had some new leaders who have joined in the fun!

In September we introduced a new teaching programme (we had been following the same themes as the adults) and we are guiding the children through God's big story in the Old Testament, learning together through games, stories, discussion, craft, prayer and worship.

We have been hosting termly parties which have provided opportunities for the wider community linked to St Giles through Toddle In, Together and our uniformed groups to join in.

In the summer term, we hosted a monthly Parent Forum group which was a helpful space for learning and sharing together. After a break this group will start again in 2020.

We were sad to say goodbye to Emma, Denise and Cameron and want to thank them for being amazing 😊

Jo Smith

Churchwardens' Report

As church wardens we are elected by the church members and responsible to the Bishop. It is our duty to provide support to the vicar in every way possible and ensure that nothing stops the delivery of our regular services of worship. Over the year we have sought to encourage Steve, the staff team and other ministry leaders in the fellowship as they have adjusted to staff changes and movements. We are always available to hear your views, thoughts, ideas and feedback and are happy to hear from anyone who can offer time to join the many church members who serve faithfully each week in a variety of roles. We'd especially like to thank the team of deputy wardens for their support and hard work in ensuring that all our services run smoothly.

David Lidbetter/Alison Steele

Mission on our Doorstep

This year has seen the formal re-naming of the Home Mission group as "Mission on our Doorstep", still aiming to keep local mission needs in the congregation's mind as well as supporting (by prayer and financial gifts) a number of national organisations which we have contact with as a church and who supply us with support and resources.

A leaflet with brief descriptions of all organisations supported was distributed in the autumn and further copies are available.

At Harvest and following a focus in the morning services in November, donations to Food Bank and the Eve Christmas toiletries appeal saw a substantial increase in gifts which was much appreciated. We continue to explore practical ways of supporting the local organisations we have contact with.

Carol Halliday

Music and Worship

2019 has been another year of change in the Music and Worship Ministry as we saw Cameron marry his Hannah and leave for new pastures, and we have gained Daniel Woods as a new worship leader, joining Phil, Jez, Tim and myself in heading up our various worship groups – God is good.

We have also embraced a new venture in the New Wine monthly evening celebrations, inviting musicians from other churches in our New Wine Circuit, including Christ the King (CTK) Kettering and Kingdom Life Church (KLC), to join us in leading worship at these events, which has been a real blessing.

A highlight of this year was our Carols by Candlelight Service, bringing St Giles worship team members of all ages together in leading the congregation in sung worship at this special Christmas service.

And now, our Ministry looks forward to being part of the St Giles YOBL 2020, for, as Luther wrote of the Scriptures, we need to "read it, preach it, live it and sing it"!

Elizabeth Allenby

Pastoral Prayer Team

We have continued to offer prayer ministry in our Sunday morning and evening services. In May prayer ministry was very much a part of the “Restored” series and this was well received. A particular encouragement was to see so many families coming up for a blessing in our worship together service. We continue to offer more in depth prayer ministry during the week when requested. We meet regularly as a team every other month and a small group of us meet to pray and plan ahead. We also meet to pray before special events.

Denise Bridgens

PCC

The PCC met six times during 2019 with an average attendance of 18 voting members. Issues discussed and dealt with at these meetings included:

- Resource Church
- Annual accounts
- Bringing the Vision to Life
- St Giles Mission Priorities
- Our finances going forward
- Prayer regarding our Mission priorities
- Ministry to people in need, including Wellbeing Café
- 2020 Budget

Regular reports were received from the following committees: Exec, Finance, Property, World Mission, Mission on Our Doorstep, Collingtree and Safeguarding. Minutes from Deanery Synod meetings were shared when received.

The most recent PCC minutes are displayed on the notice board in church.

Renee Dixon

Property Committee

Maintenance work, some planned and some responding to unforeseen issues, has continued through the year to both the church and parish centre. The entrance area and the Hughes Hall have been redecorated and new flooring installed. We are very grateful to Keith Lewis and all who assisted with this work. We have also replaced the external doors to the parish centre.

Proposals for refurbishing the main dais area in the church have been progressed and we hope to undertake this during 2020.

We are very grateful to Mike Holmes and Bob Alderman for the ongoing maintenance works that they undertake, which is hugely beneficial in keeping our buildings in good order.

Duncan Halliday

Schools

This year has seen some development in our work with schools, as we have continued to build on our relationship with Abington Vale, and have made links with a number of other organisations who connect with schools in Northampton.

In May we began some early conversations with Youth For Christ about the possibility of extending their schools work to Northampton.

In November we held a meeting with the Lighthouse trust, a local organisation which provides Christian assemblies and lessons in schools around Northampton. This meeting was to gather those in Northampton who go into primary schools. It was very encouraging to see how many schools in Northampton are reached through the work of this group.

Beth Whaites

Scouts

2nd Northampton (St Giles) Scout group has enjoyed another active year!

Several of our leaders have undergone further training to gain new permits which will expand the range of activities we can offer in the group.

Highlights this year include the Cubs' summer camp when they enjoyed a watermill, windmill and walk all in one day! The Beavers had fun at a sleepover in the Centre. The Scouts have been learning about maps and using their map reading skills while out on night hikes.

The Group was shocked and saddened by the sudden death of Kay Maybin who was the Chair of our Executive Committee and had been involved in supporting the Group in different ways for more than 10 years. Her enthusiasm and passion for young people and the outdoors will be greatly missed.

Jo Smith

Senior Ministry

This year the Seniors Ministry has been one of St Giles Mission Priority areas. We spent some time as a team reviewing our key opportunities for mission. We have been encouraged since the Redeeming Our Communities (ROC) conversations to be aware of local isolated and lonely older people. As a result we designed and delivered an invitation card to all homes in the parish to our Hymns of Praise and Saturday for Seniors events. We have welcomed new guests each term as a result and raised the profile of these events in the community. We have welcomed new team members across our teams. The Christmas Hymns of Praise was well attended. This term Nicola Aylett has joined us and will oversee the care homes and Thursday Service and Lunch Club ministries. .

Maggie Kelly

Home Groups

We have 13 home groups including three for Young Adults offering weekly study notes based on our Sunday teaching. We have used a variety of materials to help resource our home groups, some produced in house and some bought in. Maggie Kelly oversees the running of The Hub as an open group with a particular emphasis on building relationships and welcoming newcomers. This was very

well received by those who took part in the autumn. The Pop Up Bible Study, run by Serena Yong continues to meet weekly, offering a study going through a book of the bible. Home group leaders have met termly, alternating between meeting all together and one to one with Tim, giving opportunity to share how each group is going and sharing best practice. In 2020 we hope to expand our offering of small groups at St Giles.

Tim Smith

St Giles' Men

The majority of the year has seen a combination of traditional favourites like the January walk, the monthly second Saturday full English breakfast with inspiring speakers, a curry night and pub meal. These events provided an opportunity for men to come together in a relaxed atmosphere over good food, enjoy fellowship and be challenged and encouraged in their Christian walk.

We have felt God inspire us to try a more varied programme in the later part of the year and into 2020 with a good number, including men who had not been before, enjoying the "Boys and Toys" evening.

The activities are open to all men. Look out for events on Church Suite, Notice sheets and church announcements.

Roger Hampson

St Giles' Women

During 2019 women's ministry at St Giles underwent something of a renewal. With the departure of Ruth Hampson who had been the backbone of 'Be' since its inception it was an opportunity to form a new team and framework.

As a new team we have felt led to shift our focus to building strong relationships with one another through small scale activities. We have felt the need to commit ourselves to deepening relationships between ourselves and other women in the church in the hope that by actively and purposefully knowing, supporting and loving each other we will be able to effectively help to build God's kingdom here.

To this end we have shifted away from large scale events to a consistent monthly programme. We have tried to balance evening and daytime, prayer and social activities in the hope that there is something 'doable' for everyone!

Although we are currently putting our resources into these small activities and practical support for each other we did run our own 'women's retreat day' on 29th June. This was completely free of charge and featured inspirational testimony from Sue Donnelly and opportunities to reflect and respond.

Vikki Beale

Students and Young Adult Ministry

2019 has continued to be a year of growth within the student and young adult community at St Giles. We continue to meet weekly in a pattern alternating between larger meetings altogether and smaller home groups, one of which is explicitly student focused. Some of the themes that we have looked at this year are 'Everyday Supernatural', 'Controversial Jesus' (big issues in society and faith) and

'Mission in the World today'. One big change this year in the ministry was Natalie Williams moving on to a new role. We are really grateful for all she brought to the ministry and individuals that she served. One highlight of 2019 was our Student and Young Adult weekend away, in which 25 of us spent 3 days at the Cefn Lea Conference Centre, exploring the theme of Holiness.

Tim Smith

The Wellbeing Cafe

The Wellbeing Café has continued to open, each Monday afternoon, in church. We aim to provide a welcoming space where 'It's OK not to be OK', catering especially for people with mental health or social isolation needs. Cards, games and craft activities are available each week, with optional hourly times of quiet reflection. In October 2019, Denise Evans passed on oversight of the Café and the team to Nicola Aylett. Up to 25 people have attended each week. We try to make sure each person feels welcomed, supported and accepted. We pray they may also experience the love of Jesus.

Nicola Aylett

Thursday morning communion service and lunch club

We hold a simple communion service every Thursday morning at St Giles church centre (Hughes Hall) which is particularly suitable for older people but everyone is welcome to share communion and fellowship together. After the service, we have a team of volunteers who offer an alternate week of hot meals (simple/full lunch) for those who would like to stay on and enjoy lunch together.

Serena Yong

Treasurer

Regular income has been maintained in 2019 and has been above that budgeted for thanks to the generous giving of our members. This has allowed us to balance our regular day-to-day income and expenditure budget in 2019. However, significant sums have been spent to upgrade the Centre and on maintaining the Church building. Overall, the total deficit for the year is approximately £40K and this has again been funded from our reserves. Copies of the audited accounts for 2019 will be available to view in the office and in church from March.

Derek Bish

Uniformed Organisations

Each section has embraced our new programme and is working on an age level appropriate for them from the themes: Be Well, Have Adventure, Skills for my future, Take Action, Express Myself and Know Myself.

The Rainbows (5-7 years) have taken part in: a Unicorn Challenge, Skills for my Future was to help the girls get 'life ready' and a visit to the Pinnacle Centre – just a few activities. Rainbows had a sleepover and enjoyed the whole experience.

The Brownies (7-10 years) made bird boxes as part of the Live Smart. We joined the County for a sleepover at Berzerk. We entered a team for the Brownie Challenge and came 2nd with some lovely comments on how polite the Brownies had been. The girls had a fun evening Bell boating where you

could hear them singing across the reservoir! A few Brownies have also been away with other Brownie packs and a sleepover.

The Guides (10-14 years) **and Rangers** (14-18 years) have also been enjoying all the new programme, they have also had a Murder/Mystery weekend with Magpie taking her licence to take the girls away. Parliament Week certainly was interesting for the girls with all that was going on at Parliament at the time.

The highlight of 2019 must have been all the holiday/camp opportunities the girls had. Guides and Rangers had international adventures, six guides and one ranger with two leaders joined the County trip to visit Switzerland, one of our World centres. One Ranger also represented Midlands Region on a trip to Europe in a team and came 2nd. Another four Guides went on a Midlands trip to Beaudesert for a music festival camp.

Leadership saw Joanna Poole receive her 5 years award and Helen Hayward a County Thanks Certificate for all she does in Northamptonshire Girlguiding.

Helen Hayward

World Mission

Support for our *mission partners* continued without any changes, along with support for the Persecuted Church by prayer and donation to Barnabas Fund. In October we became officially linked with a new Tearfund “Connected Church” project in Kitgum Diocese in Uganda and started regular financial contributions for this.

Mission focus series: June/July saw an excellent 5 week series on world mission with input from both guest speakers and our own members. Positive feedback was received.

Mission visits; visits were made by Alf and Hilary Cooper, Gill and Jessica Vriend, Jonathan Clark and Ann Fursdon. *The Lent Project* “Heating the house of Hope” raised funds for Vera Zhuravleva to install central heating in the house in Murmansk Vrota. It has not yet proved possible to do the work, but we are confident the goal will be achieved.

The World Mission Group (WMG) met 6 times, comprising Simon and Denise Bridgens, Lois Clark, Judy Cooper, Dave Smith, Jacqueline Wienkamp, and myself, with Alan Whaites joining in December.

Of our *budget* for the year: £33,560, £28,740 was given to partner support. From the year’s allocation for a new mission area £1050 was given to Tearfund, £2000 held over for use in 2020, first priority a need linked with the project, but may be used otherwise, £1000 added to allocations as below.

Organisation	Amount
Barnabas Fund – persecuted church	£1320
Tearfund (in addition to that given for Kitgum)	£500
Jonathan Clark, college fees	£500

Jessica Vriend DTS	£50
Bishop's charity of the year, Leprosy Mission	£500
Vera – Christmas gifts for local community	£250
To three mission partners – towards travel costs	£1500
End of year gifts to four sending agencies	£1200

Funds raised:

Lent Project	£11,228.55
Good Friday Tearfund lunch	£455.00

Liz Kitwood

Youth Work

This year the youth groups have continued to meet regularly. We started the year with Bible studies in both Just Girls and Zone, looking at the Old Testament in Just Girls, and the Prophets in Zone. We have also had a number of socials and youth weekends and activities.

In August, we took 15 young people to the last Soul Survivor, and had a wonderful time. Soul Survivor saw our young people growing in their relationships with each other and with God.

Since September, there have been a number of changes to our youth work. After a year of reviewing the work on offer, and seeking God's direction for the youth ministry we launched our new and changed groups in September.

Beth Whaites

DRAFT