

Annual Report 2018



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Alpha

Over the last year 22 people attended Alpha at St Giles. We ran courses in the winter and summer terms, but due to lack of interest we were not able to run the autumn course. The summer course took place at the Good Loaf – it was great to run Alpha outside of the church buildings. Some of the highlights of last year have been seeing more young adults involved with Alpha, both bringing friends and being part of the team, and as always seeing people meet with Jesus for the first time and join our church community.

Tim Smith

Be.

Be. is about helping women connect with each other and with God. Through our regular gatherings at The Wedgewood, women have found a welcome and chance to get to know others. The summer retreat at Launde was as popular as ever with Pam Stocker helping us to explore how we can be ‘Free to Flourish’.

The wine and cheese evening in November attracted over a hundred women, many from Breast Friends of Northampton. Kate Nicholas our speaker told her story of her search for God and her diagnosis and then healing from Breast Cancer. God was at work as people listened, shared their stories and prayed.

Diana Rees-Jones

Bible School Report 2018

In June/July 2018 we ran two consecutive three week courses on Mark’s Gospel and Basic Theology respectively.

Later in the year, in November we ran a four week course on the Book of Isaiah. An Old Testament book that has been called “the 5th Gospel” because of its many prophetic references to the coming Messiah. The talks for this series are available on the St Giles website.

My thanks to my fellow speakers; Canon Steve Kelly, Maggie Kelly, Revd Diana Rees-Jones, Revd Timothy Smith and Rob Wood for their endless hours spent in preparation and study to make these sessions so profitable and worthwhile. Thanks also to Denise Bridgens and her team of helpers in providing such wonderful refreshments to sustain the concentration and fellowship.

We aim to present a new course in June/July 2019.

Simon Bridgens

Children and Families

A fellowship of friends following Jesus

On Sunday mornings the children continue to meet in their Network groups, learning more about who Jesus is and growing in faith through times of worship, reading the Bible, crafts, games, cooking, times of quiet, prayer and friendship!

There have been some changes too, Beth joined us in August and together with Cameron and Emma we are seeking God for what is next as we seek to move on and grow.

Follow and Friend are two new names for our groups, Scramblers has become “Connect” and our older group are called Vine. Our group names reflect growth, connection and direction all things we want to see happening in our ministry!

Our midweek groups continue with Toddle In, Together and our uniformed groups welcoming children throughout the week. In October we had lots of fun at our first Pumpkin Party, welcoming 50 people to share in games and food.

Jo Smith

Christmas Experience

This year, we have had the privilege of welcoming over 150 schoolchildren through our doors to take part of our Christmas Experience which is double the amount of children we managed to see last year! Many children in schools now have either not heard the story of Jesus’ birth in full, or have never heard of it at all... so it was huge privilege to deliver this message in a fun, engaging and informing way. The team all did brilliantly and I have heard of many great stories and lovely feedback from the children and staff from the various schools.

Cameron Benoy

Church Warden 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! 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

Guiding - 19th Northampton St. Giles

Rainbows (5-7 years)

The girls have learnt about guiding around the world and worked on badges which included crafts and cooking. They did a Messy Challenge badge and of course got messy!!

We joined brownies and guides for an evening of fun on Abington Park, been swimming and joined in a water evening where we got very wet and we loved our trip to Gallones Ice Cream Parlour where we cooked a pancake for our friend. We went ice skating, bowling and have made Christmas cakes in a bean tin for our Good Turn.

A new programme was launched in July so we have been working on some of the skill from that.

Another fun packed year with lots going on.

Kingfisher. (Val)

Brownies (7-10 years)

World Cultures which included an Irish evening and craft for our mothers started the year. Roller skating, swimming is also a fun evening. Tawny Owl taught and challenged us all about plastic, everyone is now trying to reduce how much plastic we use. It was also a bit of a shock to find out what things contain plastic.

We also went to Gallones, Abington Park and had a water fun evening. A team of 5 girls represented us in a Division competition and we won!!

The Ivy Poole trophy was presented for the first time in July, then December for a Brownie who has stood out in her enthusiasm for brownies.

The highlight of the year was to join the County on a camp in the New Forest, 4 girls and 3 leaders. What great fun we had with new challenges completed.

Brownies have also been on 2 brownie holidays with other brownie units and had great fun, if a little sleep!!

The new programme is now being worked on and the girls are learning new skills. A trip to the Derngate for the panto saw us finish the year.

Guides (10 – 14)

Guides have certainly had a fun packed year. We entered two teams for a trophy and they played a Northampton version of Monopoly that 2 guiders had done. Both teams managed to get to Gallones for an ice cream!! They had a bus pass to get around the town and send photos on phones to gain points as to where they were. They certainly learnt about Northampton!! There was a lot of laughter when they arrived back at the church centre.

The County Camp to the New Forest. 4 Guides certainly enjoyed themselves and had a smile on their face when they came for food, as I was on the catering team! New challenges accepted and completed.

One girl represented the County on a Midlands Guiding trip to Iceland. What an amazing time she had. The Ivy Poole trophy was presented in July and December for an outstanding Guide. We also have been ice skating, sailing and to the Big Gig. A very busy year of fun and laughter.

Rangers (14 – 18 years)

Rangers have been promoting positive mental health called Me in Mind. Vote 100 challenge, 100 years since women got the vote and taking part in UK Parliament week. Fairtrade and cooking with Fairtrade ingredients.

From the new programme the theme of Know Myself has challenged us all.
Briony – Leader

All this is just a snapshot of what guiding does on a Tuesday night in the centre and enjoying the outdoors.

Helen Hayward

Home Mission report

We aim to keep the profile of “Mission on our Doorstep” in the congregation’s minds.

We support local organisations involved in “Mission on our Doorstep” by prayer, practical help (gifts of toiletries and craft materials for Eve, donations of items to Food Bank and Baby Basics) and financially.

We also support (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.

We continue to support in prayer and financial gifts those training for ordination.

Carol Halliday

Men’s Ministry Report

The year started with a winter walk around the countryside round Braunston. The main activity of the Men’s Ministry through the year has been the breakfast, held on the second Saturday of each month. The breakfast provides an opportunity for men to come together in a relaxed atmosphere to enjoy fellowship and good food. A (very) full English breakfast is followed by a speaker. 2018 has seen a variety of topics covered encompassing various aspects of Christian lifestyle which have provided both challenge and encouragement. In October the annual Momentum men’s conference was held at Rock UK with three speakers on the theme of mentoring.

The activities are open to all men. Contact the parish office to be included on our regular email news of forthcoming activities.

Duncan Halliday

Music and Worship Ministry Report 2018

In January 2018 we developed a Music and Worship Ministry Vision and Values Statement on which our whole approach to music and worship here at St Giles is based. (Copies can be made available on request.)

The Worship Group Leaders continue to meet regularly to seek God’s heart for our worship.

In March we had a whole team training event led by Jonny Dade, looking at various aspects of our worship as shared learning and development.

Our new PA system was installed and has greatly improved the quality of the overall sound in our services, thanks to the Sound Tech Team undertaking ongoing training to use this to its full potential.

A small group of us attended the Mission Worship Conference in Eastbourne in November for a time of teaching as well as encouragement in our ministry.

And God has been gracious in His provision as we have lost some team members and gained new ones, though a couple more drummers would be good for 2019!?

Elizabeth Allenby

Pastoral Prayer Team

We have had an encouraging year praying for people every Sunday morning and evening. We have also received many requests by email for prayer. Some members of the team are able to offer prayer ministry during the week.

Last February we held a joint training session with St Mary's Rushden, led by Rev. Philip and Pauline Thomas. This was well attended by the two pastoral prayer teams as well as by people from a number of churches in Northampton.

We meet regularly as a team every other month and a small group of us also meet to plan ahead.

We are currently involved in planning and praying for a 3 week series at our Sunday services in May called "Restored."

We would very much like to place on record our grateful thanks to Diana Rees-Jones for all her kind support and wisdom as the elder responsible for the team.

Denise Bridgens

PCC Report

The PCC met six times during 2018, with average attendance of 19 voting members. Issues discussed and dealt with at these meetings included:

- GDPR
- Accounts 2017 and Auditors Report 2017
- Outreach, Resourcing Every member Ministry and LL123
- Finance, Stewardship, Parish Share and Resource Church Funding
- Being a Truly Intergenerational and Inclusive Church
- Finance and Stewardship – Next Steps
- 2019 Budget and Additional Property Budget

Regular reports were received from the following committees: Exec, Property, Personnel, World Mission, Home Mission. Also from the Vicar and Deanery Synod reps.

A leadership summit was held on 16/02/18.

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

Renee Dixon

Property Committee Report

Maintenance work, some planned and some responding to unforeseen issues, has continued through the year to both the church and parish centre. The parish office has been refurbished (new ceiling, lighting and electrics, carpets and decoration) and the staff office has had upgraded electrics, improved ventilation installed and been redecorated - both areas long overdue. We are very grateful to Keith Lewis for the decoration of the Staff office area.

Proposals have been developed for upgrading the Hughes Hall and main entrance area. A grant application was made in respect of these and other works, which was not successful. Proposals for

refurbishing the main dias area in the church were also commenced. It is hoped that both projects can be undertaken in 2019.

We are very grateful to Keith Boddington and Mike Holmes for their ongoing maintenance works to our buildings throughout the year.

Duncan Halliday

Schools

We lead regular Collective Worship for All Saints and Abington Vale Primary School, whilst also developing links with Kings Meadow Primary School and Collingtree Primary School too. Opportunities like this allow us to share God's love for all through the gospel, as well as celebrate seasonal events from a faith perspective like Christmas, Easter and Harvest. It's a great way to share God's truth and have some fun at the same time! We are also in contact with a few other schools, particularly through the Christmas and Easter Experience, and are hoping that these will emerge into mutually beneficial relationships.

Cameron Benoy

Scouts

It has been another busy year for the St Giles Scout Group! 2018 has seen our leadership teams more established and working well together.

A big change for the Group came in September when Scouts moved their meeting night to a Thursday (instead of Wednesday) so now all the sections meet on the same evening. This has helped our Scout Group to grow in numbers as the Cubs can transition through more easily.

Highlights of 2018 for the Beavers was the sleepover at the Church Centre which included tea at a fish and chip shop and enjoying the Christingle Service the following morning! In the summer, Scouts had fun at a traditional patrol camp at Overstone and Cubs went to a County camp. We all enjoyed a Family Day at Stanwick in September.

Jo Smith

Seniors

At the recent ROC conversations, social isolation and loneliness was identified as the top issue faced by people in our communities. It's an issue particularly for the elderly. In our ministries to Care Homes, Venton Centre, Hymns of Praise, Senior Fellowship and Saturday4Seniors we seek to reach out with God's love and care. It's been good to see God at work in the contacts we've made and the relationships that we are building. God is at work in the buzz of conversation and the enjoyment of activities and entertainment as well as services that proclaim God's truth.

Diana Rees-Jones

Small Groups Report

We have 12 groups including three for Young Adults offering weekly study notes and followed a The 'Prayer Course' during the summer term. We run The Hub as an open group with a particular emphasis on building relationships and welcoming newcomers. This was well received by those who took part in the summer term. We explored Live Life 123 last year and are about to start the Grace Course.

Home group leaders have met termly for support and training and this including a session on Hearing God's Voice. As a result of LL123 support was made available to anyone interested in taking this forward and the Website continues to offer information and resources for LL123.

Maggie Kelly

The Wellbeing Café

The Wellbeing café opened in October 2017 and meets on a weekly basis, on a Monday afternoon in the church. The aim of the café is to provide a welcoming atmosphere where individuals, particularly those with mental health or social isolation issues, can enjoy social contact with others, whilst undertaking a variety of card and board games or craft activities. There is an opportunity for quiet prayer and spiritual reflection at regular intervals during the café but this is optional and takes place in a different part of the church. Currently we have about twenty regular users of the café and our team excel in engaging with others in conversation and activities. One person who regularly attends the group commented that it is the first time she felt that she belonged anywhere and another said that she enjoys the laughter as this isn't something she has at home living alone. We pray that those who would benefit from the group will hear about it and that those who attend will find support, acceptance and the love of Jesus. ~ Denise Evans

Denise Evans

Treasurer's Report

Regular income from standing orders for the year 2018 has fallen but overall our income was above that budgeted for. It is important to emphasise that almost all the work of St Giles is funded by the generous giving of our members. However, our long term commitments to ministry staffing and Parish Share continue to put pressure on our finances. The overall budgeted deficit was slightly exceeded at £27K. This will be funded in the short term from our reserves. Copies of the audited accounts for 2018 will be available to view in the office and in church from March.

Derek Bish

World Mission

Mission Partners: During the year we continued to support Ann Fursdon in Chad, Ruth and Izaias de Assis in Brazil, Peter and Gill Vriend in Thailand, Alf and Hilary Cooper in Chile and Vera Zhuravleva in Russia. There were no major changes to their areas of ministry or issues to address. In March Richard and Francis Jones moved, under God's leading, to Hungary. We agreed to support them as associate mission partners, i.e. in prayer but not financially.

The situation of Jonathan and Anna Holmberg, working in the UK International Headquarters of their mission drew very careful consideration. Following the breakdown of their marriage Anna had

withdrawn from the mission but Jonathan continued. The decision reached by PCC was for our support for them to cease at the end of September; a final gift was made to each.

Organisations: as previously, we supported the persecuted church by prayer and giving, and relief and development through Tearfund.

Mission visits: We were pleased to welcome Vera in February, Ann in March, Alf and Hilary, and Ruth and Izaias in May. Engagement with small groups proved particularly helpful. At Harvest we had a Tearfund speaker who gave an excellent presentation.

Our Lent Project featured a Barnabas Fund project to build safe homes on church land for a displaced and impoverished group of Bangladeshi Christians.

A period of mission focus, and a congregational questionnaire, as discussed at the end of the previous year had to be postponed, with plans being made for 2019. In discussion with Steve we agreed we will seek a new area of mission interest, and the budget for 2019 was set to include this. No decision has been made yet on this.

The Church Christmas card was not produced due to poor take up the previous year but can be resumed if there is sufficient interest.

WMG group comprising Simon and Denise Bridgens, Lois Clark, Judy Cooper, Dave Smith, Jacqueline Wienkamp, and myself met 5 times. Steve Kelly joined us for one meeting.

Of our budget for the year: £34,940, £28,725 was given to partner support. Other giving:

| Organisation | Amount |
|--|-----------|
| Barnabas Fund-persecuted church | £1320 |
| Tear Fund | £750 |
| Farewell gifts to Anna and Jonathan Holmberg | £1500 |
| Vera - Christmas gifts for local community | £250 |
| End of year gifts to 5 sending agencies | £480 each |

Specific events:

| | | |
|---------------|-------------------|---------|
| Tear Fund | Good Friday lunch | £ 400 |
| Barnabas Fund | Lent Project | £10,000 |

Liz Kitwood

Young Adults and Students Ministry

This year has been a year of growth within the young adults and student 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.

The new academic year brought change as the university campus moved. We have been able to meet a large number of students, a small number of which are now members of St Giles.

We have begun praying together at 7am on Tuesday mornings and this has been a real encouragement to all who have come and we have seen God work and answering prayers.

We are entering 2019 with a sense of excitement for all that God may do in the year ahead.

Natalie Williams

Youth Work

Since August there have been a number of changes to our youth work, with me and Cameron joining the team.

We are currently doing a review of all of our youth work, seeking God's direction in this new chapter of youth work at St. Giles. We have already made some small changes and have been consulting the young people to find out how they want their youth work to look in the next few years.

In November, 15 of our young people took part in the Mean Bean Challenge, and raised almost £500 for Tearfund to combat world hunger. We had a great weekend of fun and fellowship as we took part in the challenge. Thank you to everyone who sponsored us, and well done to everyone who took part!

Beth Whaites