

# LORTON STREET METHODIST CHURCH

Reports for the Annual Church Meeting  
May 20<sup>th</sup>. 2009

The Annual General Church meeting gives an opportunity for the whole church to come together as one body; therefore I would like to encourage you to read the following reports which enable us to get an overview of the whole spectrum of work which takes place on our premises and to attend the meeting where you will be able to be involved in discussions relating to the work and mission of Lorton Street Church.

Blessings

*Sue Edwards*

## PROPERTY

Last summer we refurbished some floors and fitted a loop system in the main hall. We also repaired plaster work in the hall and rebuilt the external wall of the vestry. We installed the new island unit in the kitchen in memory of Doreen Dickson. In the autumn the vestry was redecorated. We are pleased that Peter Sealby has joined the committee and he kindly did some redecoration work in the Garden Room. A number of minor electrical repairs have been carried out, a new vac cleaner has been purchased and a new thermostat has been fitted to the boiler. We are trying to see how we might do work to stop down draughts at the back of the church.

In addition to new windows in the hall, the 2009 summer projects include painting the Pardshaw Room, church office and toilet (volunteers please), external paintwork on the Abbeyfield side, and new shelving in the main store room. For Pre-school, we hope to install a child level wash hand basin in the Blindcrake Room.

We would like interest groups to help us to reduce the number of notices stuck on walls, windows and doors. We have ample notice board space in the hall, the entrance area and the church foyer. Please use the notice boards and remember we do have a weekly notice sheet to publicise events.

*Keith Rushton (Chairman)*

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All these must be recorded and I have the wherewithal to send this report in. I also have a long list of books and music that are possible to use. It does include Songs of Fellowship and Hymns and Psalms. Failure to do this could incur a huge fine.

Our licence also lets us have performances in Church but not in the hall.  
Our licence fee is £335.09 per year.

*Heather Rushton*

THE MUSIC GROUP.

“Born in song”, says the hymn, and Methodists are renowned for their love of singing in worship. We in the music group hope to contribute to that. We are few in number but very enthusiastic and enjoy being part of worship. Most of the time our contributions are from Songs of Fellowship, or worship songs of a similar type. We hope thereby to broaden the range of music offered in worship. Do let us know if there are favourites of yours we’ve yet to offer. We aim to practice the first Monday of every month at the home of Janice Westley (our thanks to her for her hospitality). We liaise with preachers regarding the choice of songs, the theme of the service etc.

If you feel led to join us, please do! No previous experience is required, neither do you need to be able to read music, though of course it helps! Also, we would warmly welcome those who play instruments – guitar, violin, flute and clarinet have featured in the past.

*Sudrey Allen*

## PRAYER

Our prayer board is still in use at the back of the church. This is for you to write prayers for yourself or others so that we can all pray together for the more immediate concerns. Prayer of thanks can also be written.

*Heather Rushton*

## FLOWER LADIES

There are seven Ladies on a rota to arrange the flowers for the Sunday Service, and on special occasions we all get together to decorate the Church, usually baskets of flowers so we can distribute them to the sick and housebound. After Sunday Service there are at least 2 bunches of flowers to give out to whoever is in need of them. It would be a great help to the flowers ladies on a Sunday if pastoral visitors or anyone, could tell us who might appreciate some flowers.

*Wendy Rust*

## MARY PLATT METHODIST PRE-SCHOOL

An important focus this last year has been preparation for the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage to our pre-school setting. A lot of our staff time has been devoted to this, much on an unpaid basis.

We have purchased some tables and equipment for storage and display. Also, we now have our outside sign and notice area incorporated into the church notice board. This summer we hope to fix a child level washbasin in the Blindcrake Room and a sheltered play area in the garden.

We have had some staff changes. Most notably, we lost Heather Bell, who had served us for many years, the last three as leader. Her successor only lasted three months with us.

We have now appointed two existing members of staff to be joint leaders as from this Summer Term. These are our former Deputy, Mrs Jackie Wilkinson and an existing assistant, Miss Laura Johnson.

The Pre- school continues to be popular and numbers are on the increase. We are now open on Monday to Friday mornings and Thursday and Friday afternoons.

We have a first class committee who do a lot of work behind the scenes.

*Keith Rushton (Chairman).*

## ACTION FOR CHILDREN

This is the new title for NCH. Action for Children will be 140 years old in July. They are the main providers of Children's Centres in Cumbria and it is hoped that in the near future a centre will open in Cockermouth. Since January through donations and collections from funerals £800 has been raised at Lorton Street. Soup and Sandwich is our main fundraiser each year. Action for Children Sunday will be 12th July and the Morecambe Bay Sponsored Walk is Saturday August 1st. Thank you for all your support.

*Wendy Rust*

## THE WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The Fellowship meets each Wednesday at 2.00p.m. in the Garden room. We have some very good speakers. We could do with an extra person to play the piano. Ladies Sunday was brilliant. The District Network Fellowship day was held in April. Thanks to everyone who helped on this occasion.

*Ann Roberts. (President)*

## TODDLERS

The Toddlers has been resurrected and meets in the Hall each Thursday morning. It is a large happy group and thanks are given to the helpers.

*Heather Rushton*

## COMMUNION STEWARDS.

Mabel Stephens has stepped down this year. Her services in the past has been very much appreciated. Thanks go to Mabel for her involvement.

Communion Stewards now are:- Jean Robinson, Catherine Sealby, Ivy Duddle and Barbara Butterfield. Reserves Anna Verghese and Bill Stephens.

*Ivy Duddle*

## HOUSE GROUP

The House Group that met for many years now meets fortnightly at White Gables, the home of Margaret and Norman Howarth. We studied the gospel of Mark in some depth and now are studying a Leprosy Mission course entitled "Gods upside down world ". The topics covered are Suffering, Loneliness, Affluence, Conflict, Fear and Death. They are giving us much food for thought, light and serious.

*Margaret Howarth*

## RESOURCES

In the Foyer is a host of books to borrow and lots of leaflets and prayer manuals on the information table. Only a few cards are to be found now due to the good selection at 'The Word' bookshop. Also available by ordering are the following Bible study booklets:-

'Light for our Path' which is published each January,

'New Day Light' published January, May and September,

'The Upper Room' published every 6 months.

Each September we have available the Methodist prayer Handbook.

*Heather Rushton*

## ANNUAL FINANCE REPORT

The church needs income to:

A) Pay the ministers and maintain their houses, pay for the training of new ministers and pay

for the District (Cumbria) and national (Connexional) Methodist organisations. This is called the circuit share.

- B) Heating, Lighting and maintenance of the church buildings.
- C) Administration costs such as printing and postage, organ tuning and Junior Church resources.
- D) Make donations to various charities. These are mainly Methodist run.

Last year i.e. up to 31 August 2008, these costs were:

A) Circuit share	£39400
B) Heating, Lighting etc	£16695
C) Administration etc	£ 3542
D) Donations	£ 5140
TOTAL COSTS	£64777

The income to meet these costs came from:

a) Weekly Collections and Gift Aid refund	£42569
b) Lettings of Church Rooms	£22319
c) Weddings, Funerals Fees etc	£ 1684
d) Bank Interest	£ 1893
TOTAL INCOME	£68465

There was a surplus of Income over expenditure of £3688. We had reserves of £38909, which is in line with the Central policy of aiming to have 50% of the annual expenditure in reserve.

#### The Future

We face a challenging time financially. We have substantial essential expenditure pending on the Hall windows. Maintenance costs are mounting; the central heating boiler alone has cost us in excess of £1100 since September 2008. Our circuit commitment for the current year is £44000. Utility costs continue to increase particularly with the Water charges and Surface Water Drainage costs. Whilst our Reserves look healthy, they will be eroded over the next few years if income does not increase.

The weekly cost per member to satisfy the Circuit share alone is almost £6, which is not being satisfied from collections.

#### Donations.

The following Donations were made from Church Funds during the year up to 31 August 2008

Fund for World Mission	£1850
Home Missions	£ 330
Property Division	£ 380
Auxiliary Fund	£ 330
LWPT	£ 90
Relief & Development Fund	£ 840
MHA	£ 200
The Reef	£ 320
Bible Society	£ 130
Leprosy Mission	£ 130
NISCU	£ 540
Total Donations	£5140

These amounts are from Church Funds and therefore separate from other amounts raised by Church Members for other causes throughout the year.

*David Collins*. (Church Treasurer).

#### JUNIOR CHURCH REPORT

We continue to see a decline in the number of children attending Junior Church. The Youth Group remain steady with up to four attending each week as does the younger group. Both groups follow

Scripture Union teaching material.

Most of the young people have moved up from the junior side but as they are not being replaced there must be a real concern for the future of Junior Church.

There are currently 12 members of staff involved in Junior Church. My thanks go to them for all the hard work they have put in over the past year.

We have continued to take a very active role in the Nativity Service and the Junior Church Celebration, but due to the fall in numbers in Junior Church the format of those services will need to change this year.

This year has seen all staff CRB checked and Tony Naylor has taken on the role of Circuit Safeguarding Officer.

**Stephen Walker** Junior Church Co-ordinator

## FOCC

Friends of Chernobyl's Children hosted 12 children from Belarus for 4 weeks and had a varied programme. We thank the Church for making room for these children.

*Heather Rushton*

## TRAIDCRAFT

Fairtrade products are sold after morning worship on the second and fourth Sundays of the month (usually), by Michelle or myself. The goods are bought from the charity 'Traidcraft.'

While Traidcraft's overall sales are similar to last year, sales from stalls like ours have declined slightly. As Fairtrade products have become more widely available, it is more challenging to grow sales particularly in the current economic climate. But sales from stalls like ours can have a great impact, not just because more of the sales go to support producers and pioneer fair trade developments, but because each sale gives the opportunity to share the message. So thank you to all those who purchase from the stall.

**Anne Crozier.**

## MORE

Other facets of Church activity not mentioned in this report:- Pastoral committee, Leprosy mission, Walking group, Soup and Sandwich events, Kenyon connection, film and scrabble nights.

## HIGHLIGHTS

Visit of the Pasadena Choir and our two weeks of reflection.

Christmas services.

Easter Sunday watching the Cross come alive with flowers.

Church Anniversary which was purely inspirational.

## CHURCH STEWARDS

Church stewards are appointed annually at the Church Annual Meeting and begin their year of office in September and serve for no longer than six years. They form the leadership team of the Church along with the Minister and meet together every two months.

The present stewards are David Hambley, Pauline Headford, Heather Rushton, Pam Mellor, David Collins, Paul Allen and Sylvia Noble. David Hambley retires this summer.

On behalf of the stewards I would like to thank everyone for their reports and all of you for sharing your talents in the life of this church.

*Heather Rushton*

*April 2009*