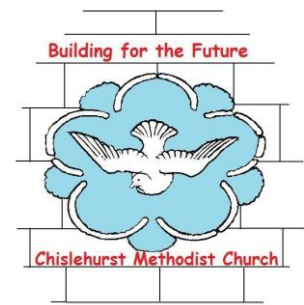


Chislehurst Methodist Church

Refurbishment Scheme

Stepping Stones



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From the Minister

We are already beginning to see how the new life of the church will emerge – because it s already emerging! We take the example of one of our latest ventures - Messy Church.

The spark for Messy Church was ignited at the Church AGM in March when we reflected together on Fresh Expressions, a joint initiative of the Anglican and Methodist Church. In society today there are no absolutes, no wish to be lectured, no one size to fit all, and many institutions are being shunned. This makes it necessary for the church to reach out to people in different ways rather than expecting them to come to the traditional services on a Sunday. Messy Church is one of the very successful Fresh Expression initiatives.

A small Messy Church leadership team was set up, headed by one of our ‘young mums’ Catherine Sittas. Many helpers came forward to offer practical and prayer support. In June we were prepared for our first messy Church and chose for our theme Noah’s Ark. Balloons and bunting were put up, there were workshops for adults and children such as animal masks, icing animal biscuits, quilting a dove motif and origami for the adults. One mum, from a Hindu background, said she had never fully understood the story of Noah’s Ark before, and she and her boys are really looking forward to coming again. Messy Church is aimed at young families, both parents and children, and we hold it from 4 – 6pm on a Saturday once a month. After the workshops we have a time of worship – story and dram, singing and prayer, and our time together concludes with a shared meal. One young satisfied customer was heard to say ‘Cor, I’ve never eaten chips at church before!’ Over 40 adults and children attended the first Messy Church – half our own church families, half ‘new comers’, and everyone went home having had a lot of fun.



Messy Church Workshops

In July our theme was Biblical seashores. The worship focused on Jesus calling the fishermen and the younger members marched around the room singing ‘We are marching in the light of God’, but with additional verses such as ‘We are fishing in the love of God’. Messy Church is but one illustration of how our newly refurbished church will contribute to the diverse worshipping life of our church community. I am really looking forward to taking Messy Church into the church for our worship time. The new warm floor, moveable seating, welcoming entrance doors and beautiful, spiritual ambience will be wonderful for Messy Church worship.



Jesus talking to Peter in his fishing boat

Work Update


In the last year we have installed a new kitchen and toilets, double glazed them and the hall, and transformed the Upstairs Room for the Chislehurst Society. In the ‘New’ Vestry in the church we put in a proper staircase to reach the room above used for church storage and refurbished the vestry to serve also as the Church office. We are just putting the finishing ready for our Church Administrator to take up his appointment 1st September.

Church Administrator

We interviewed four very good candidates for the position of Church Administrator, all offering a range of experience, skills and talents. At the end of the day we had a very difficult choice to make. However we are delighted to announce that we have appointed Anthony Faulkner. Earlier this year Anthony took early retirement from the Civil Service. In his working life Anthony had years of experience in administration, service delivery, conferencing and developed excellent communication and IT skills. Anthony lives in Chislehurst but at his own church in Shooters Hill he has played a very active part. Anthony has been responsible for producing a Parish Profile, for running and liaising with community groups and served as treasurer of 'Friends of St Mary's Church', a group aimed at expanding the place of the church in the community. He has had considerable experience over many years as the hirer of community halls, both of putting on events and of addressing issues that arise in hall administration. Anthony was excited about the potential of our church. He had immediately grasped something of the vision of our refurbishment plans as we seek to give glory to God as an open, welcoming, worshipping community. We felt too that Anthony, with all his experience of administration and communication, will be able to help us develop these plans for serving the wider community as an inspiring venue in South East London for exploring faith and spirituality through the creative arts, for conferencing, and as a popular venue for local community groups.

Plans and Funds

As in all major projects there comes a time when you have to 'cut your coat according to your cloth'. At a recent meeting of the Refurbishment Team we made some very important decisions prioritising the work to be done. These are the priorities:

- 1. The Church Floor.** We have decided to go for under floor heating. The cost of breaking up the existing floor, laying all the pipes, new boilers, pumps, zoning (so different areas of the church can be heated at different times) time switches, new floor screed and retiling will come to £100,000. This is obviously a very large sum of money but this work is essential. We need a new floor anyway; under floor heating is much more efficient and will decrease our fuel costs. It is the only form of heating that will be suitable for all the different uses of the refurbished church. In addition we have an exciting plan to lay a labyrinth in the new tiling of the floor. Pictured is Jacqui's cloth labyrinth laid out on top of the pews. We are planning to have the same beautiful design marked out in a contrasting colour of floor tile. Not only will a labyrinth be a wonderful addition to our worshipping life but it will also be a great attraction to churches, groups and individuals far and wide for quiet days and workshops. We have had one or two offers of personal gifts from people who would like to contribute to the extra cost of the labyrinth.
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- 2. Fitting and Furnishings.** We will be replastering the lower walls, rebuilding the Chancel platform, decorating and cleaning. There will be new lighting and sound system, a new screen and data projector and of course new chairs. (all our side pews have been sold and there is demand for the middle pews too!) The cost of all fittings and furnishings will be in the region of £100,000.
 - 3. The new entrance** through the side chapel. Imagine coming out of the New Vestry/Church Office door into the church. The new entrance door will be immediately to your left. The double glazed doors will open into the new foyer. An imaginative idea is to position the stained glass windows which will need to be taken out for the new entrance doors in the false window alcove by the

balcony. Positioned here, at an angle with a light behind, they could look quite stunning. We cannot put these beautiful windows either side of the entrance door as we had first hoped for safety reasons. The cost of this part of the work will be in the region of £50,000.

4. **An accessible toilet.** With a new, wide entrance door through the side chapel, access to the main church toilets and the accessible toilet at the end of the hall will be so much easier. The architect's suggestion, to move the wooden and glass panels at the back of the church forward to be positioned directly under the front of the balcony to provide room for an accessible toilet, kitchen, flower room etc is prohibitively expensive. We have therefore decided to leave the back church divide where it is. However we still hope to install an accessible toilet in the unused north wall entrance foyer.

We have sufficient funds to pay for the work mentioned above. What we do not have sufficient funds for at present is the cost of the entrance foyer.

5. **Entrance foyer.** This is the infill between the hall and the church. This area roofed over, with new flooring, decoration and equipped with café style tables and chairs, will provide a welcoming, social space for coffee time on Sunday and for all our church and hall users during the week. New glazed doors will provide a shared entrance for those going to the church and those using any of the ancillary rooms. It is an essential part of the whole project and we are working hard to raise more funds and seek further grants. Our estimate is that we need another £60,000. If you are in a position to make any further financial gifts to the Refurbishment Project they would of course be very gratefully received.

One of the joys of the '*Building for the future*' project is working with the Refurbishment Team. We have benefited enormously from, and do not know how we would have managed without, the support of the Advisory group, namely Tony Sawyer, Peter Hicks, Philip West and Thomas Cowie. They are now firmly embedded in the Refurbishment Team. At our meetings we all work together so well, discussing different options, but with a clear sense of direction and purpose. There is a shared excitement as we move forward and begin to realise the potential for our church, to catch a glimpse of what God has in store for us all.

The Way Ahead. We had thought to move out of the church for the work to begin at the end of August. However, in order to be out of the church for the shortest time possible, we have delayed our removal until Christmas. This gives us five months to get everything in place – building regs., contractors, detailed design decisions, fabrics and furnishings. We will be arranging a small display in the Autumn for everyone to view the drawings and plans, one or two alternative chairs, floor tiles, paint colours etc. This will enable everyone to be involved and give some feedback. In the New Year work will begin and we will move into the hall for Sunday worship until the work is finished.

Let's celebrate!

Plans need to be made well in advance so please make a note in your diary that we are planning a celebration weekend for our newly refurbished church for the first weekend in October 2011. An exhibition of the Methodist Modern Christian Art Collection is booked from 17 September to 29 October 2011 and a weekend of celebration with a festival on Saturday 1 October and Rev'd Dr. Inderjit Bhogal, a past President of Conference, leading worship on Sunday 2 October. We hope as many members and friends, both present and past will be able to be there. More details will follow. In the meantime, we join in the universal prayer: *Your kingdom come.*

Barbara Calvert