**May 2016 – July 2017 Minister’s Report for the Annual Church Report**

**Taking the inside out to bring the outside in**

****

Leigh Wesley has been a place of worship and community involvement for 120 years, and the church turned to the community when it heard God’s call to renew its mission focus. The sanctuary was a beautiful Victorian Arts and Craft interior, with raised pews and heavy wooden entrance doors. Though beautiful, the vision was to remodel to let the light and people in, remove the pews and so facilitate a multi-purpose space.
In August 2015, the Connexional Grants Team, fine-tuned the mission focus, and awarded a generous grant of £100,000 towards the £500,000 refurbishment. Work began on 1st July 2016 and five months later, on time and in budget, the project was completed ready for the Christmas celebrations. In January 2017, when the church hoped for a rest, God challenged them to make the space work, promoting the inside out and the outside in!
Some things were straightforward. The glass doors enabled the beautiful, back lit, stained glass panel of The Last Supper, to be visible to the community both day and night. Other aspects however, required promotion: nursery, school, and dance academy concerts; art exhibitions and community Fayres; a space for Fusion Youth Club and U3A.
But its most innovative use has been to facilitate Memory Worship, for people with and without dementia. Following an inclusive pattern of worship, carers and NHS dementia specialists break out into a carers support group, while service users enjoy art, craft, and games. Everyone comes together for hospitality. As the programme is facilitated in one space, service users’ anxiety is reduced, as they can see where they are to go next, and their carers are always visible to them. With 36 regular attenders already, Memory Worship has been nominated this year for a Community Participation Award on Premier Radio!

Finally, we have seen new people come to join us on a Sunday for worship and following an innovative idea of a Family Alpha programme, 12 people, including both adults and children from one extended family, were baptised by full immersion on Sunday 2nd July. What a joyful and rather extraordinary day for Wesley that was. We look forward to the next 12 months, steadying the ship, preparing for handover, and seeing where the Spirit takes us next. All in His name.
Rev Julia July 2017

**Reports from the Leadership Team -WESLEY METHODIST LEADERSHIP TEAM 2016/7.**

 At the end of the year Anne Lane retired and we shall miss her contribution at Leadership Team, as a lay worker across the Leigh Section.

**Team members**

Rev. Julia Monaghan.

Isobel Wratislaw Steward

Sue Hockett Worship

Ian Lowe. Service

Gaye Greenway Evangelism

Eileen Simmons Learning and Caring

Anna Wratislaw Communications

Judith Taylor Safeguarding and Church Secretary

Eileen Simmons 31.7.17.

**Learning and Caring.**

At Wesley, we have organised our Leadership Team around the four callings of Methodism. The reports that follow show that we have worked effectively together; supporting and complementing the work individuals have innovated, whilst still working jointly “to keep the show on the road”. There is obvious overlap in the callings. The 40 acts of kindness during Lent was led by Eileen Simmons, lead for Learning and Caring, but when her article appeared in the Methodist on line magazine BUZZ, it appeared under the heading EVANGELISM

**Service – a place in the community, a place for justice**

One of the four callings of Methodism is **Service** – a place in the community, a place for justice.

Here is an update on some of the activities in the Circuit and wider community that the folk of Wesley are actively supporting.

**1) Night Shelter**

This year’s shelter in the winter months started with low client numbers (10) across the town, but picked up to 20+. A request to the Circuit to provide camp beds was very successful, raising £800 against a target of £400. The extra funds were used by the Night Shelter. Options are being explored with churches and bus companies to provide transport to help less mobile clients reach centres, in future. Some of our teams had challenges in terms of numbers, notably for breakfast and clearing away. After an appeal at Rayleigh, towels were made available. Managers from all the centres met with HARP and Council representatives and received excellent feedback for the work. Thanks to all those who helped and supported this cause.

**2) Southend Foodbank and HARP**

Wesley continues to support Southend Foodbank and HARP with the collection of food and clothing donations. The donation bins are located in the concourse and fill up extremely quickly - so a big thank you to you all for your donations, they are very much appreciated by both organisations.

As of 5th October, last year, the foodbank has been renamed 'Southend Foodbank' (previously 'Southchurch Foodbank'), to reflect their wider outreach in the Southend area. November 1st also saw the 2nd anniversary of the foodbank being open, during which time over 5000 people have been provided with 3 days’ worth of food. The foodbank received a fantastic amount of donations at both Harvest and Christmas from local groups, churches, and schools, including nearly 3 metric tonnes of food from a 3-day collection at Tesco in Southend. Unfortunately, this food is quickly used up in emergency food boxes; in 3 days in March this year food was given to 10 families, 7 single people and 2 couples.

Lists of most needed items for both organisations are posted above the donation bins, and we also share these on Facebook and Twitter, and on the notice sheet. We currently have 4 volunteer drivers taking the donations to the foodbank and to HARP on a rota basis, with the donation bins being emptied every fortnight. If you feel that this is something you would like to be involved with, and would be able to drive to Southend on a Monday, Tuesday or Thursday morning, please speak to Anna Wratislaw or Ian Lowe.

**3) Stationing 2017**

**Rayleigh/Hockley** – The Stationing Action Group deemed this a priority appointment and identified a potential match. The Rev. Stephen Watts and his wife, Valerie, had a successful visit to the Circuit and have accepted the invitation of our Circuit Invitation Committee.

**Chalkwell Park/Thundersley** – An American appointee from the Anglican denomination was identified. Rev. Peter Moorhouse asked that the appointment be amended to be just Chalkwell Park. Rev. Nana Thomford has now been accepted in Methodist Connexion and has pastoral charge of Chalkwell Park. Rev. Clifford Newman is willing to continue oversight of Thundersley until August 2018 and the church are content.

**Authorised Minister(AM)** – We had permission to proceed to appoint a “Preacher & Pastor” – a title suggested by the Assistant Secretary of Conference (Helen Cameron). Mr. Stephen Mayo was appointed and will have pastoral charge of Rochford.

The Circuit Leadership Team (CLT) continues to discuss a number of innovative options for making appointments and providing pastoral oversight, given the lower number of presbyters for the stations across Methodism. We are looking at how other Circuits provide pastoral oversight and will report to Circuit Meeting on the proposals for discussion and approval.

Therefore, no further action will be taken regarding the sale of the Elm Road manse and possible purchase of a new manse until the staffing position is known.

**4) Stationing 2018**

Two post are due for review in 2018 and Thundersley needs inclusion in the round:-

* 1. Rev Hannah Bucke – The Circuit will follow guidelines established for Venture FX/Pioneer Ministry reviews.
	2. Rev Julia Monaghan – It was agreed in 2017 stationing that Rev. Julia would leave at the end of the 2017/18 Connexional year. Circuit Meeting gave approval to convene a Circuit Invitation Committee (CIC) to undertake the appointment for Wesley, Belfairs, Highlands and Thundersley due in September 2018. This committee will be the Superintendent; a presbyteral staff rep; the Circuit Stewards; the (senior) steward of each church directly impacted and a rep from each of the other sections of the Circuit.

**5) Synod**

We hosted Synod on 6th May 2017 at Rayleigh Church. Thanks to all the volunteers from across the Circuit who helped in any way. Synod met for 10am to around 1pm – it is an open meeting so anyone can attend to observe and get an idea of what happens at this level of Methodism. Many people from the Circuit went and found it extremely informative.

**6) Circuit-wide Bible Study group**

This is being done via the Worship Academy Extra programme. The first event was a Synagogue visit. This was followed by a visit to the Houses of Parliament and then a session on Healing led by the Rev. Peter Meadows from Westminster Central Hall.

**7) Bible Month**

The Methodist Church identified June 2017 as “Bible Month”, part of the President’s pushto bring the church back to scriptural holiness. Each Sunday the services were based on the book of James and during the week there was opportunity to meet and study James. Two study sessions were available each week, commencing 7th June – Wednesday evening from 7pm at Benfleet and Thursday evening at 7pm at Thorpe Bay. The format was a meal at 7pm (catered by the church’s caterers at Benfleet and by provision of fish & chips at Thorpe Bay) followed by small group sessions led by Rev. Peter Moorhouse.

Ian Lowe (Leadership Team - Service)

**LEARNING AND CARING.**

**KINDNESS SPREADING LIKE WILDFIRE IN LEIGH ON SEA.**

Wesley Methodist Church, Leigh on Sea, has joined with the two other Methodist Churches in Leigh; Highlands and Belfairs to take part in the Forty Acts of Kindness in LENT. All had services based on the theme and Highlands followed up with their parade service.

It seemed to be an opportunity for new outreach and to extend local links. The Sarah Moore pub opposite Wesley already has the Age concern group going for lunch occasionally, but armed with copies of the Dementia worship leaflet and our Clarion magazine someone made a new approach and the manager was happy to offer to lay on an afternoon quiz with homemade cakes and refreshment.

Pupils from Leigh North Street Primary School have been seen opposite Wesley offering free homemade cakes to shoppers. Very popular! Each year group has their own Act of Kindness and reading the weekly website update is a delight. One group went out to the Salvation Army old people’s lunch with questions, which the older people loved.

Wesley Playgroup has done work on their KIND HANDS and every child has said what kind things they do. Wesley Zone (young people) have produced a splendid display and asked the adults to add their contribution.

 (this report was submitted to BUZZ and was published) April 2017.

**LEARNING AND CARING, Wesley Methodist church, 2016 /7.**

It is now two years since I was invited to join the Leadership Team to replace Janet Whiddett with the portfolio of Learning and Caring. What an act to follow! As I said at the last Annual Church Meeting she continues to do just as much work, probably more. Her Summer teas were a great success again in 2016. There is so much that she offers and we value.

I need to pay tribute to Viv Threadgold and her Pastoral team. Viv is tireless in her leadership and does SO MUCH pastoral care for the church. She knows the value of caring for the individual and getting to know them well over many years. Members of the team offer similar care and concern. I know how blessed I am as an individual receiving such care.

Since our last Annual church meeting I have tried to do the following.

* Continue to welcome people new to our congregation; most of whom have continued with us. The coffee buddy system introduced just before I joined continues to work extremely well and if I am away then the team ie most of you, are very good at introducing yourselves and then letting me know. I follow up with a card of welcome and get to know them.
* When we had our discussions around the future I picked out a request from the list: To organise a Pastoral Visitors’ Training course to develop the devotional aspects of visiting. I agreed with Rev. Peter Moorhouse that this would be for the circuit, hosted at Wesley and Circuit would pay for the hire. I had started to plan this with Susan Sayers, who would lead, but we have had to put it on indefinite hold recently, because of her medical condition.
* I asked Church Council last September for their support in introducing the Forty Acts of Kindness project during Lent 2017 and currently this is just snowballing. Weekly examples of involvement are being publicised via the notices and in the Clarion. I shall write this up fully later when we come to the end of Lent.
* There may have been lots of jokes about my car parking plans, but Wesley is known as being a caring church and we contacted all churches offering a booking system for disabled parking places. This was much appreciated. In all these examples Wesley congregation were so willing to respond to my requests for help.
* In November, the first WESLEY CHARITY NEWS appeared in the CLARION. This regular monthly feature aims to record and feature the generosity of our congregation in caring for others and we can be proud of the continuing record.

Eileen Simmons 7.3.17 for the Annual Church meeting.

**FINAL SECTION OF THE LEARNING AND CARING REPORT OF WESLEY METHODIST CHURCH 2016/7 ANNUAL REPORT.**

My contribution has been written in three parts and this last section is being written the day after Wesley hosted a wonderful concert given by the Allegro choir. Allegro was formed as a charity fund raising choir and we were very fortunate to secure their services. Their concert was very well received and was so popular that I have asked for them to return next year and this seems a strong possibility. As an example of caring we were able to raise money for Action for Children and the local rep. attended and talked about the work. The final amount is not yet known but a cheque for a minimum of £350 will be received. Wesley has a long tradition of supporting AfC and on AfC Sunday on July 9 th a retiring collection raised £456.13. Our treasurer is listing separately all the charity collections given this church year. TOTAL £4,508.

We continue to learn together and at our July house group, Cameo, we learned more about Stewardship. I organise the Circuit Worship Academy, which exists for the continuing professional development of Worship Leaders and Local Preachers as well as ministers. Our Worship Academy is a highly innovative development.

Eileen Simmons, Leadership team member for Learning and Caring. 23.7.17.

 (PS THE TOTAL SENT TO ACTION FOR CHILDREN WAS £425. 50 and a similar amount was put into Wesley property fund from the Allegro concert.)

**WORSHIP AT WESLEY**

On the evening of Tuesday 25th July 2017 at Informal Worship Paul McDowell introduced us to a service about change and accepting faith as a child. We began with a hymn STF 455 All my hope on God is founded over by the font in chairs set in rows. Then we moved to dressing up at the back of the church and sat in the lobby of the church, next we sat on the floor of the church and listened to part of the Handel’s Messiah, the trumpet shall sound and finally we ended over by the organ with a closing prayer entitled Liberator God and the hymn STF 503 Love Divine. All very different but all to worship God in song, scripture and prayer.

We are blest at Wesley to be able to offer a range of worship. This range includes traditional Sunday morning worship, Time for Healing and Time for Prayer, Memory Worship and the worship offered at Fusion as well as Informal Worship. May I also mention a small group of home bound members who listen to services on the radio and then ring each other and talk about them; this too is worship and study.

 As work and social commitments within our society and community of Leigh continue to evolve we should be open to new forms of worship at different times. We have been at the forefront of change but change is always happening so we need to be prepared to accept worship in many different styles and traditions not necessarily for ourselves but that others may know of Christ and may learn of all the joys and wonders of a Christian faith.

Details of all the forms of worship can be found in the notices each week.

**Safeguarding and Well Being at Wesley**

Our Safeguarding Policy was last reviewed by Church Council in Feb 2016, and a revised policy will be submitted to the January Church Council meeting for approval. There will be information added to the policy regarding PREVENT and also our reporting process.

A current Policy is hanging on up on the information board should anyone wish to read it.

**Wesley Methodist Church - Communications Report**

Wesley’s communications are constantly evolving, as we seek to ensure the church is engaging with our community in the most relevant ways. We are always looking at ways in which we can be more open, and provide clarity on the range of services and events that take place here. Through our communications we can secure a position at the forefront of our community’s consciousness, building on our central location in the town, and cementing Wesley’s place at the heart, and in the life, of Leigh-on-Sea.

Our new website has been live for approximately 18 months, and this continues to be updated with news, events and information. Both the Clarion and the weekly notice sheets are posted on the homepage, along with information about upcoming worship. Rev Julia’s newsletter is also posted on the blog, and sermons are posted when available.

 It is important that as many people are aware of this content as possible, as this is a valuable resource, particularly to those unable to attend the church regularly. I would be grateful of your assistance in disseminating this information, and will endeavour to work with the pastoral visitors on this.

Since the last annual report, we have redesigned the cover of the church magazine, the Clarion, and have a new editor, Julie Peek. The Clarion has a very wide circulation and is an important source of church news and information for many, so thank you to Julie and all those who contribute every month to the production of the Clarion. We also thank our previous editor, Joy Milner, for all her work on this over the years.

Our social media accounts have been going from strength to strength, with greater audience engagement – our Facebook page currently has 95 likes, with our next goal being 100. Both our Twitter and Facebook accounts allow us to engage easily with our community and with other local organisations, such as Churches Together in Leigh and the Foodbank, as well as national organisations including the Methodist Church. On Facebook, hundreds of people often sees our posts; the key to these being seen by greater numbers is people sharing and liking our posts, so I would encourage all those who use Facebook to continue doing this – it really makes a difference! In addition, our Facebook page has been contacted several times in the last few months by people enquiring about things such as room bookings – this is an encouraging sign that the page is working as a ‘face’ of the church that people find easy to engage with.

We have worked hard over the last year to share good news stories with the community and with the wider Methodist Church. We have appeared in the Buzz e-newsletter, which is published by the Methodist Church, three times over the past year, with pieces about Memory Worship’s shortlisting for a Love Britain and Ireland Award, our mural on the hoarding during the building work, and with Forty Acts of Kindness. The memory worship article instantly generated enquiries from colleagues across the connexion as well as BBC Radio Essex. The Service of Celebration for the redevelopment of the church sanctuary was shared on the Methodist Church’s Facebook page, and we also had photographers from two local papers at the service.

With Paul’s retirement from his role as Administrator in August, we have focused on making clear the new allocations of roles and responsibilities. These have been published as an insert in the September Clarion, and will also be clear on the website and social media. As part of this, we will be making use of several @wesleymethodist.org.uk email addresses, which will help to clearly identify roles and where enquiries should be directed.

Finally, I thought I would take this opportunity to share with you a comment that was made on Facebook by someone visiting Leigh and ‘checking-in’ at the church:

*“Coffee and tea cake in Leigh. […] Large Methodist Church beautifully modernised retaining many of the traditional features. There is a real heart for mission here with outreach to a wide range of ages and needs. The resident pre-school can be heard in adjacent room.”*

I hope we have many such reviews in the future.

Anna Wratislaw

**Evangelism Report for Annual Report**

This is a brief report to summarise the many and various ways in which Wesley seeks to share the love of Jesus with all who come within the environs of the church.

Wesley is open every morning for coffee and offers a listening ear to our visitors, the worship space is available as well as the coffee shop. This has become a welcoming haven for many guests.

Our Youth Worker, together with Michelle his wife, and his team continue to draw in 50 plus children every week. Each evening involves a vibrant worship element. A holiday club was held during the school holidays and one is planned for October half-term. Some of the helpers are older children who have been part of the club since its inception.

The Older Person’s Worker holds regular activities, which include film shows, outings and the popular” Holiday at Home” during the Summer. Julie offers the hand of friendship and support to elderly people on behalf of Wesley.

Our unique Memory Worship has been an exciting and innovative development from this work. It has become an established part of the worship here and continues to grow and bless many people, carers and sufferers alike.

The summer afternoon teas, run by Janet, continue to bring people into Wesley, offering another opportunity to get alongside the community.

Our wonderfully transformed and welcoming worship space, rededicated this year, has been constantly praised and appreciated by visitors. Over the year it has seen increased use by the community. Our response to the Manchester and subsequent atrocities was to involve the community with the display of posters in nearly 100 shops and to have a book of condolence in the church. The sanctuary was open for the Stations of the Cross involving other Leigh churches, as well as a moving exhibition for Refugee Week which included a concert. This was appreciated by many visitors who were participating in the Leigh Art Trail, in which we were involved for the first time this year.

Our Gift Day celebration in front of the church was a great opportunity to engage with the public, it followed successful plant and cake sales held outside which are always appreciated by our local community.

Our fund-raising events offer good opportunities for demonstrating that evangelism happens in all sorts of ways and in a wide variety of places inside and outside our church.

This year a family Alpha Course was held and we hope that another Bereavement Course will follow soon.

We constantly seek ways to develop our friendly attitude towards and contact with the community, increase our community involvement and effectively witness for Christ.

Gaye Greenway

**Church Council Members as from 8th September 2017**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name:** | **Capacity** | **1st Elected** | **Elected to new role** | **6 Years served** |
| Rev. Peter Moorhouse | **Superintendent** |  |  |  |
| Anne Briant | **Circuit Representative** | **2017** |  |  |
| Rev. Julia. Monaghan | **Minister (Chair of Council)** |  |  |  |
| Judy Taylor | **Church Secretary/ LT for Safeguarding** | **2007** | **2014** | **2020** |
| Sue Hockett | **Co-ordinating Steward/LT for Worship** | **2011** | **2014** | **2020** |
| Gaye Greenaway | **LT for Evangelism** |  | **2014** | **2020** |
| Ian Lowe | **LT for Service/ Circuit Rep** |  | **2014** | **2020** |
| Anna Wratislaw | **Zone Leader //Communication Representative for LT** |  | **2016** | **2022** |
| Eileen Simmons | **LT for Learning and Caring** | **2015** | **2015** | **2021** |
| Isobel Wratislaw | **Church Steward** | **2012** |  | **2018** |
| Geoff Hart | **Property Link Officer** | **2008** |  | **2018** |
| Geoff Hawkins | **Church Rep** | **2009** |  | **2018** |
| Helen Boyd | **Church Rep** | **2012** |  | **2018** |
| David Norman | **Church Rep** | **2012** |  | **2018** |
| June Childs | **Church Rep**  | **2015** |  | **2021** |
| Rupert Bertie | **Church Rep**  | **2016**  |  | **2022** |

**Advisors to CC**Tina Gowers

Julie Peek

Alan Severne

Jonathan Logan

**Mission Enabler for Older People, Wesley & Highlands Methodist Churches**

I have now reached a halfway point in this three-year post as Mission Enabler for Older People at Wesley & Highlands Methodist Churches. It feels timely to consider the journey that my role has taken me and both churches.
In everything I do I find strength in collaboration therefore with each new initiative I set out to establish partners for the churches. All of the following have come about through community networking; encouraging the sharing of common goals: -

**Staying Steady Exercise Classes**

Staying Steady Exercise Classes have been running for a full year now with many people having completed this 16 week falls prevention course for people aged 65 and over. This class is also for people under 65 whose balance is affected by dementia, Parkinson’s or who have had a stroke. It has been really rewarding to see people growing in confidence and the class instructor, Michael has become a new supporter of church activities. This class has acted as a gateway to the other new initiatives taking place at Wesley.

**Dance to Health**

The success of Staying Steady has created the need for a follow-on dance based exercise class to maintain gentle exercise. Where better to hold it than where people are now familiar: Wesley (on a Friday afternoon) The core premise of Dance to Health is to use dance to increase older people’s strength and balance and so reduce falls and falls-related hospital admissions by up to 55%.

**Monthly Movies @ Wesley & Highlands**

This activity has become an established date on the calendar for between 20-30 people a month at Wesley and Highlands. I always aim to screen appropriate and thought-provoking films and where ever possible source films that people request. This month’s film; A Street Cat Named BOB has been requested by several people at both churches who have read the books and want to see the film.

Donations received after films have so far raised money to fund musical accompaniment for MOTHs sing along at Highlands. Memory Worship accompaniment, the purchase of a Dementia clock for Wesley along with a gift for all Highlands MOTHs members at Christmas and cards at Easter. Also in November after Calendar Girls a charitable donation was made to Cancer Research UK.

**Age Concern Community Club**

Age Concern Southend have seen the success of their Community Club grow and grow since moving to Wesley in March 2016. This month they have announced that weekly meetings are seeing 40 people regularly attending and they need to move into the bigger canteen room. Closer collaboration with Age Concern Chief Executive; Lin Boulter, has brought an invaluable (dementia friend trained) Memory Worship team member. Also, the volunteer drivers at Age Concern regularly bring visitors to the Movies, Memory Worship as well as Age Concern Community Club.

**Holidaying at Home**

This successful event took place at Wesley on 4th Aug last year, bringing 32 people into Wesley for a lively nostalgic seaside day that was very well received. This event was self-funded with no additional church expenses incurred and surplice funds went back into a future events fund.

I am now planning this year’s Holidaying at Home to take place on Thurs 3rd Aug 2017.

**The Spiritual Needs of Older People and those living with Dementia**

After attending a Methodist study day in June last year entitled “The Spiritual needs of Older People and those living with dementia” my focus was drawn to the difficulties for people living with dementia in expressing and connecting with their own spiritual needs. I came away with the conviction that as churches we needed to do more.

My first step was to approach Southend Borough Council with a proposal for Wesley to join the Southend Dementia Action Alliance. I set out an Action Plan as to how Wesley could address the spiritual needs of people living with dementia and their carers and the church joined a growing number of churches with this same objective. You can read Wesley Action Plan by visiting <http://www.dementiaaction.org.uk/members_and_action_plans/5971-wesley_methodist_church>

What became obvious was that there was a real need for a church service for people living with dementia and their carers. This is why “Memory Worship” came to be. Worship can be a channel for recalling the past, creating feelings of comfort, familiarity and spiritual fulfilment. We all have a continuing need to worship and experience a loving encounter with God but for people living with dementia it become increasingly difficult to make these connections. With Rev Julia’s expertise we put together a programme of monthly services with a regular pattern of welcome, singing well-known hymns, reading familiar passages of scripture and saying the Lord's Prayer together.
On Jan 12th 2017 We held a Memory Worship team training day where all our volunteers attended for Dementia Friend training delivered by Alzheimer’s Society and "What do we mean by worship for those with and without dementia?" which addressed the issues around the spiritual needs of people living with dementia and their carers. The Memory team has been formed from my now established wider community network; Age Concern, Waitrose, carers, family members with experience of caring for loved ones and church members with a real gift for listening and caring.
To date we have delivered monthly services January through to May which have been attended by 25 - 28 people. After worship, carers have the opportunity to share with professionals working in the Memory field and meet with other people in the same situation. Everyone also has opportunity to reconnect with their own creativity by participating in art under the guidance of Anne Briant. This month I was invited by the Alzheimer’s Society to join them raising dementia awareness as part of Dementia Awareness Week (DAW) in Victoria Shopping Centre in Southend. This gave me a wonderful opportunity to promote Wesley Memory Worship in the Town Centre.
News of Wesley Memory Worship service is bringing regular visitors from other churches to see how we deliver this valuable service for the community and we have also been contacted nationally by the Salvation Army asking for advice on how to set up a Memory Worship Service. It is my hope that Wesley will act as a beacon for churches across the country to address the spiritual needs of people living with dementia and their carers.

In conclusion, I still believe the creation of this Mission Enabler for Older People role is a hugely forward-thinking step for Wesley and Highlands, however, we still have a long way to go. If we are to continue the work I have started we need to be much more front facing as a church. All are welcome needs to really mean all are welcome. – Julie Peek.

**Clarion**My first Clarion as the new editor was March 2016 so that means as I come to write this report I have completed Clarion editions for an entire church year.

Over this time there has been a conscious decision to update and embrace the changing face of communication. This has been done by using a cohesive style, consistent features and adding a colour front cover. The Clarion is also available to download from www.wesleymethodist.org.uk

Saving on cost of postage; the Clarion is also emailed out to a growing list of “friends of Wesley”, furthest of whom is in Scotland. This initiative was particularly poignant after the Rededication service when several past ministers expressed pleasure at being able to keep up to date with Wesley news simply on line. I would encourage you too to email to any other “friends of Wesley” that you think would enjoy.

We have increased the number of large print copies of the Clarion available and would encourage pastoral visitors to keep an extra few copies for people who might welcome larger print.

Lastly, I would like to thank the band of Clarion compilers some of whom have been doing for many years and some who have recently come forward because of appeal through this year. Paul and I thank you for your commitment. – Julie Peek.

**Youth Report**

**Fusion holiday club**

We held our annual holiday club at the start of the holidays in July, and we had over 45 children attend.

We had great fun and were able to use the north street playground for activities and on the day it rained we used the church space for parachute games.

**Fusion kids church**

We are now in our fourth year of fusion and we are seeing over 60-70 children regularly attend.

Fusion is re launching after the summer holidays on the 14th September and we are starting with a disco to celebrate the new term.

We have five-year nines (13-14-year olds) that have been with us since year (9-10-year olds) that have become junior helpers and prove to be a great asset.

When we start back we expect at least six year 7’s (11-12 year olds) to join the junior helper team.

This group will then start the basis of a new youth group for secondary aged children and will be grown and disciplined through serving and their own group meetings.

Fusion continues to grow from strength to strength and stands on its own two feet.

We continue to see young lives transformed through relationship and the gospel. We are also seeing parents become warmer to the gospel and are becoming more open.

**Fusion Family**

As mentioned above we have built up a strong relationship with families that support the work we are doing within the local community.

Through conversation and a little bit of research we have realised that some family’s due to lifestyle, work and other commitments don’t find coming to church on a Sunday morning easy for them and would prefer something different.

So, from November 4th once a month on a Saturday 4pm-5pm we will be trialling a new family outreach that is open to all, but is aimed at the families that we are working with and that are seeking.

The format will be a more relaxed with contemporary worship, food, and activities.

**Schools work**

I still have a very strong relationship with local schools and visit on a regular basis.

Because of my work in Hadleigh and Benfleet I am in over 15 schools.

In most of the schools I lead assemblies, chapel in St Michaels church of England school, re lessons and some chaplaincy work.

North Street primary is probably the school that I have the greatest relationship with and they look to hold regular whole school assemblies in the church including harvest festival. I pray that we can continue to facilitate their visits as it is a fantastic use of the redevelopment and a great way for the church to continue its role within the school.

Jonathan Logan Sept 2017

**Church Administrator**

After doing the job for 14 and a half years I have decided to take retirement from the end of August. So after more than a million copies on the duplicator, plus many more on various other copiers; organising the lettings, which now bring in more than £45,000 per year (£16,000 in 2003-4); sorting out the post, emails, and phone messages – the various parts of the job will be ‘divvied up’, with the property-related tasks and the monthly copying of the Clarion going to Alan Severne, and other photocopying being done by whoever needs to do it. I will carry on with contacting the preacher each week to get the order of service and distributing this to the Bible readers, projectors, sound team etc. As you will have heard in last week’s notices, the one task which hasn’t yet been allocated is the weekly notice sheet. If you feel able to do this please have a word with me or Judy Taylor. It doesn’t need to be anything like as detailed as it is at present, just a summary of the week’s important notices, but this will be entirely up to you – as simple or as detailed as you wish.

The job really has been different every day and it’s been a real pleasure to be involved more closely with the people at Wesley. I’ll still be here at the organ and as one of the team of Worship Leaders. – Paul McDowell.

**Time for Prayer**

A small group of us ranging from 1-5 meet regularly on a Saturday morning at 11.30am thinking of and praying for our Thanksgivings, individuals who need prayer, the Church, and the World. We take note of the prayers on the prayer board in the concourse and prayer tree/table in the church.We feel it is important to pray for the needs of others as they are made known to us. The power of pray and the praying with others for individuals is a privilege and one we will continue to do. If you wish to join us, please do. It would be beneficial to have another church member to lead when I am unavailable. – Jane Fulford.

**Time for Healing**

The Time for Healing Prayer Group has continued to meet over this past year, generally on the third Saturday of each month between 11.30am - 12.30pm, with a break at Christmas and in the Summer. Meetings are typically attended by six to twelve people with the majority often being from outside our usual church membership. The format usually includes prayers of thanksgiving and intercession, and occasional testimony, together with a short meditation on the theme of healing. This is followed by the opportunity for private prayer with one or more of the group leaders. So please come and join us if you can, and give, receive, or just take much needed time out. Also, following our Minister’s encouragement, the meditations are being published in the Clarion in the month following each meeting so you can read them if you wish to.

 Finally, we recently attended the Annual Methodist Healing Conference at Central Hall Westminster and this will no doubt give rise to thoughts about how we might extend or enhance the healing ministry at Wesley. If you have any ideas on this please let us know. – Terry Harper / Jane Fulford

**Pastoral Visitors**

The Pastoral Visitors have as usual had a busy year delivering birthday cards and the Clarion to our housebound and sick friends. Also making visits to Southend Hospital and local care homes to see friends who are inpatients or residents also taking them to the Outpatients Department for appointments. – Vivien Threadgold.

**Coffee Mornings**

Last year I wrote that my hope would be that we would be even busier with the refurbishment – well we are!
We are open every morning between 10am – 12 noon (excluding Sundays). Some mornings are still quiet while others are very busy with over 40 people. Quite a lot of regulars are not church attenders but consider Wesley a welcoming place for conversation and company.

I am indebted to all the ladies and gentlemen who serve the coffee and offer a welcome to all our customers whom we consider friend. I am grateful to the new volunteers who have learnt their duties very well. One aspect I mentioned last year was the ‘listening ear’. This is such an important activity as it really helps people feel welcomed and listened to. Thank you to those people who volunteer for this activity.

Thank you again to all who serve by serving others. – Jane Fulford

**CAMEO Housegroup**

This housegroup is a mixed group of members from Wesley, Trinity, Rochford, Belfairs and Highlands. We usually meet once a month on the third Wednesday in the evening. There is no set agenda for the year we decide each meeting the time before – so a mix of topics can be reviewed varying from Scripture to current local and national concerns. We number about 12 and any newcomers are welcome. – Jane Fulford.

**Post A Housegroup**

This house group meets at Wesley, usually once a month on Tuesday evenings. We have a mix of topics, most recently talking about Mother Teresa and Saints, and the next planned meeting is about where Christianity takes a view on contentious current issues. We are a small group and newcomers would be welcome. – Joan Hawkins and Paul McDowell.

**Wesley Housegroup**

We are a group of seven who meet monthly in the Quiet Room the first Tuesday in the month and have just completed ‘Prayers of the New Testament’ from the Life Builder series. We support each other and discuss many topical subjects, local, national and world wide. We missed the company of Marjorie Rockley for two meetings, due to her fall at home. Our next meeting is in July but we will have a break in August. – Annette Jarvis.

**‘Friday’ Housegroup**

The house group at Philip and Sue’s meets on the fourth Thursday of the month at 8 pm. This year we have completed a very interesting study series on the Second Coming. We would welcome anyone who would like to come for Bible Study and discussion.

**Parent and Toddler**

Parent and Toddlers meet on a Wednesday morning from 10.00 to 11.30 am during the school term. The children range from babies to 3-year olds and come with either mum, dad, grandparent or childminder. They all play well with the toys learning to share with each other and the morning always ends with 10 or 15 minutes singing time which is enjoyed by everyone. Numbers vary each week with an average of 16 plus adults.

There is an opportunity for the adults to enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and biscuits whilst having a chat together. Also, there is a continual supply of biscuits for the children, an important part of their morning. The success of the Parent and Toddler Group is due to the loyal support and help given voluntary each week by friends. I would like to extend my sincere thanks Pam Caton, Pauline Webber, Pam Woodhouse and Beryl Hart. – Marjorie Charnock.

**Talking Poetry** is a small friendly group who meet on alternate Wednesdays at 2.30 pm. We ach read our chosen poem on a given subject and then have a short discussion. We pay £1.50 each week we are able attend which is donated in full to Wesley and includes tea and biscuits. We have twelve members and our current season ends for a summer break on 28th June. We could be pleased to see anyone who is interested in joining us when we reopen in September. – Joan Hawkins.

**Wesley Theatre Group**

This has seen another eventful year for WTG, with new challenges and plans for the forthcoming year. As always, the productions have been of a high-class standard and well received by our audiences. WTG is moving into the world of social media, and we have publicity gurus to thank for ensuring we are utilising modern resources to communicate with a wider audience (Thank you Anna, Frances and George). As a group, we have challenged ourselves with a sponsored event, which was a marathon of reading. We raised a considerable amount of money and had fun along the way.

We look forward to new challenges as the group is funding raising for new lights for the stage, the current ones are many years old and need replacing. It is hoped that once the stage is equipped with modern lights/sounds, it will be more attractive to groups to hire as a working stage. We are looking for new members to tread the boards, men! So, if you are interested in joining us, small parts are available, please see any member of the group to find out more details. We would not be able to function without our backstage team, and I would like to thank them all on behalf of the actors for all they do. Finally, a huge thank you to all who come and support our productions, long may it continue. - Judith Taylor.

**Table Tennis 60+**

The Club which was formed in 2008 still meets on a Friday afternoon, during school term-time, and is progressing well. At present, we have 27 members on our register with an average attendance of 18. At the end of our 2015-16 sessions we were able to give a donation to the Church of £908. Our sincere thanks go to Mr Jim Mavin for auditing our accounts. The afternoon provides plenty of exercise, laughter, and fun with a well-earned cup of tea/coffee with cakes/biscuits at half-time. – Keith and Marjorie Charnock.

**Wesley Art Group**

We continue to meet every Monday with a break for Bank Holidays and the month of August. We were very sad to lose our tutor Ken Brown who passed away at the end of March this year. We decided to continue to meet as friends who paint and encourage and support each other. We cannot take on any new members as we are not qualified to teach. There is an average of seven members each week and we welcome any church members who wish to pop in between 10 – 11.30 am. – Annette Jarvis.

**Fund Raising Update**

As we begin a new financial year I thought it would be good to let you know just how much you’ve raised for external charities in the past year.

Macmillan Nurses £365.00

Southend Food Bank £30.00

Nkanfoa Methodist School £113.00

Action for Children £1219.07

Age Concern £198.41

Side by Side £496.83

Hope International £1344.00

Southend Young Carers £200.00

Christian Aid £512.00

JMA £29.75

**Total Raised £4,508.06**

This amount is in addition to donations received towards general church expenditure, including Gift Day, totalling **£2,705.00** and donations totalling **£8,743.33** towards the Building fund. Fundraising towards the Building fund totalled **£3,456.06** and we received **£8,799.26** from Gift Aid on donations to the Building fund from April 2016 to April 2017.

With regards to the Building Fund, we have a final payment to be made to the contractors in November / December which we have the finances for. The project completes under budget and out of debt due to the large VAT rebate we received. This is brilliant news!

**Tina Gowers**

**Treasurer**