

# **Trinity Church Annual Report 2010**



**January 2011**

## **WELCOME**

Welcome to our 2010 Annual Report. It provides a glimpse of the life of Trinity. The year has seen us continue to develop our prayer life and focus on God's Word as well as relationship building. Running along behind the scenes has been much work done by the Vision Team. By the end of the year some key areas of outward focus were emerging. These are to be shared with the whole church early in 2011 and my prayer is that 2011 will be a year when, as a church, Trinity becomes freshly energised and excitedly involved in what God wants us to be doing in building His Kingdom.

My thanks and appreciation go to all who've kept Trinity on the move this year – many volunteers in various roles, some of whom invest many, many hours and without whom nothing much would happen. My thanks go too to those who've contributed the bulk of the information for this report.

So, here's to God, our Heavenly Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit and the continuing journey we're on with them.

In Christ,

**Jon Salmon**  
**January 2011**

## OUR WORSHIP

This year worship has continued as a central feature, and our pattern of worship at our **10am Family Service** remains much the same as last year, as does its size with, on average, about 120 adults and 30 children participating. We've enjoyed welcoming a number of new people but also said farewell to some. We continue to enjoy a good mix of people stepping out in faith to lead, preach and pray in our services. We've continued with our **Parade Services** and have seen a stronger relationship growing with the uniformed groups, and it was super to welcome the Beavers to our Advent Parade. We had nine baptisms in the year, fewer than last year, but they were special occasions and it is encouraging to see relationships continuing with a good number of our baptism families. This is greatly helped by (*see below*) the weekly **Nursery Service**, and the **Parent and Toddler groups** which Trinity is now more involved in running.

There is usually a warm and friendly atmosphere before, during and after the 10am service and it's encouraging that so many people stay and chat afterwards. Relationships are growing which is so important. Small groups are helping here and this is having some impact on Sundays. Our aim continues to be to increase and improve our worship and praise of God, and throughout the year there has been an ongoing encouragement to keep Jesus very much at the centre of all we do in our worship, and to come to give as well as to receive. This is happening which is exciting.

It's so encouraging too to have people praying before each service, and whilst prayer ministry after each service isn't inundated it is available and people do seek it and value it.

A key feature of our 10am services is **Junior Church**. A wonderfully dedicated team look after a growing number of children. Before the children go to their groups we continue to have an Everybody Slot which is meant to relate to everyone. A good number of these have been great fun, inclusive and with a very relevant message. However, there remains the challenge to make our **All Age services** (typically on 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays) more all-inclusive.

Highlights from Junior Church include:

- There have been a number of changes with regard to staffing this year. Zena & David Rains, Olly Dyson, Kay Slack, Alison Travers, and Ann Pipe have left the Junior Church Team. They have all contributed a number of years to Junior Church and in this time influenced a number of children and young people on their Christian journey. We, as a church, are very grateful for their time and commitment.
- We welcomed Regina Cobinnah as a new leader for the nursery class in the summer term, Anna Meadows to the Junior group and Mark Cann to the Infants group in September.
- We want to continue to promote the children's participation in services and this is something the children, young people and their parents would like to see more of. Junior Church contributed to a number of services but this has recently lapsed and needs further planning for the beginning of the new year.
- The introduction of more regular Praise Parties has been a success and we have increased these to one per month.
- SOS continues to meet alternate weeks on Sunday evenings, with 5/6 young people in regular attendance. We hope the numbers will increase.
- Church Council should consider the active participation of young people in decision making processes within the church.
- The children and young people have contributed their views to the Vision process and they would like to be involved, particularly with changes to the physical presentation of the building eg modernising church hall, re-decoration, etc.
- Junior Church has focused on teaching children Christian principles and knowledge of the bible. This has given a good foundation upon which to further develop. We are now moving towards ways to encourage spiritual development and prayer and this will be an area of focus for the forthcoming year. We will be aiming to create "a space in which children and young people can encounter God".

We also continue to worship **slightly more traditionally at 8am and 6pm on alternate Sundays**. Some of the 6pm services have been more informal with some shared leading. We have also appreciated visitors from the Circuit taking some of these services. Attendance remains consistent with a congregation of between 3 and 20. One each of the 8am and 6pm services per month are Holy Communions.

We stopped “**P3**” early on in the year because it had lost its momentum. When someone then had a vision for something which has become known as **Presence of God**, we had the “space in the diary” for this on Sunday evenings. Three Presence of God meetings took place in the year, and the hope is for them to become regular times of worship. Presence of God is a very informal time of worship using more current worship songs and choruses, and is very much a journey of developing how we can worship God in a way in which music plays a more central role. This is a new style for Trinity but practised by many churches. So far, each Presence of God has had about 50 people attend and some very positive feedback has been given.

During the week a faithful group continue to serve by hosting **Monday Night Worship** on the second and fourth Mondays of the month. This is embedded in our pattern of worship and is a time and place where people can feel free to open up more fully to God’s teaching, with the Sunday preaching themes often reflected on, and there is a great sense of encouragement and growing together in our faith within the worship. Numbers remain consistent with about 12 people regularly participating.

Each Wednesday, in term time, the **Nursery Service** continues to be held. This is a real team effort and is doing fantastically with lots of relationships being built with parents and carers, as well as the children. Each week there is a really good message in amongst loads of fun, games, music and wonderful chaos. The introduction of a monthly lunch before the service has worked really well. Putting this on requires a lot of work but is very popular. Numbers of children are consistently up around 15-20, sometimes more. Parent and carer numbers are about the same. The plan is to build on this through the vision work and the emerging Young Families thread.

Each **Wednesday** morning we continue to have a short time of **worship and prayer in the Chapel**. Numbers are a concern now. Holy Communion is included once a month. Each week a coffee morning continues to be held at the same time to which those attending the time of worship usually go. This too is now very small.

Over the year our worship included an Easter Sunrise service at Maiden Erlegh Lake, another ASDA Car Park Service on Good Friday, and we held services on a number of other smaller festival dates. Our Christmas services were well attended this year which was great. The links with baptism families, the Nursery Service and our parade services helped here. We finally got up a wayside pulpit banner too for Christmas which may have helped. There is little doubt that the magnificent Christmas Tree festival helped!

Music during worship continues to be organised on a rota system, managed by Keith Waite. For the last year or so much of the music for the 10.00 services has been chosen by three music leaders – Andrew Rixon, Keith Waite and Peter Whiteman – and is steered by a strategic music group comprising these three plus Jon Salmon. Wherever possible music is chosen as appropriate to the service theme (hope you noticed) and is increasingly led by the band leader and amplified vocalist.

Typically at 10.00am one third of the services are led by the T-Band (the traditional band usually led by Peter), one third by the E-band (the more experimental band usually led by Andrew or Keith) and the remaining third by a single musician – but one who may then ask other musicians to join him as required. This three-way variation is intended to meet the choice of worship-styles enjoyed within the congregation. The two bands overlap (ie some people play in both). The Trinity Band is targeting more junior musicians and it’s been fantastic to have some new regular youngsters playing, while the “E-Band” caters for those who can play more experimentally (hence the “E”) and without formal music. We have 5 other people actively and regularly leading music during worship.

We continue to introduce songs new to Trinity and we are actively looking for new ways of integrating music into worship. Presence of God mentioned above and led by Andrew, is significant in this regard. If you have not tried it, then do find someone who has, to tell you about it, or, better, come along. The Singing Group (around 20 people) sang again this year for the carol service and the midnight Christmas Eve service.

We are looking to improve the sound system within Trinity over the next few months – to include additional microphones, infrastructure cabling and a small mixing desk. With this we can compensate for a wide range of voices (from the quietest 6-year old prayer to a loud singer) and also minimise the squeaks and whistles we sometimes suffer today (among other advantages). The upgrade is planned to include the ability to make digital recordings of sermons which can then be posted on the Trinity website for those who cannot attend services.

The planning and development of our services is facilitated by the Worship Committee and the Congregational Leadership Team. This team has seen the departure of John Lee, a URC Ordinand on placement with us for 10 months. He completed his placement in the Summer and was ordained to be minister at Thatcham URC in the Autumn. A number of Trinity people attended this service. His presence was much appreciated. As John left, Cath Mackrell (Bethell) joined us formally as a part-time Curate once her academic training was finished and she was ordained in July. She has continued to lead worship and will seek to develop this during her time as Curate.

It is worth noting too that our small groups (*see below*) spend some of their time worshipping too. This involves a different set of people and is encouraging their spiritual growth, and also includes creativity and trying out new ideas.

## **OUR PRAYER LIFE**

Prayer has continued to be encouraged during the year, with the aim that it becomes the bedrock of who we are and what we do.

A good team of Intercessors has continued to lead varied and inspirational Spirit-filled prayers throughout the year, and their input is much appreciated. It has been especially encouraging to have some small groups and the children more actively involved with thought-provoking and reflective prayers. It's good to know too that as well as the weekly Saturday morning prayer meeting, a fortnightly prayer meeting has started on Monday evenings. Both are small but Spirit-led and focus on praying for Trinity's way forward. In addition, the small groups beef up the prayer life of Trinity week by week and thus more people are stepping out in faith as they lead times of prayer in different ways.

**The Prayer Ministry Team** has changed slightly, with Margaret Stephens and Martin Carrick stepping down and Anna Addis being included in her role as Telephone Prayer Chain Co-ordinator. So, many thanks to Margaret and Martin for all their valuable input and support in the past, and to Anna for being such an important link for the telephone prayer requests. The email prayer requests have been a valuable additional resource, which has certainly been very well used over the last year. People have also emailed their thanks for answered prayers, which is always encouraging. Praise the Lord for that! This also has the benefit of developing relationships and building a growing sense of a shared journey.

Anita Stubbs produced an extremely helpful Prayer Guide, which was placed in the Chapel for anyone to use and was used as part of the Lent material Trinity produced this year. And in terms of developing prayer resources, a Prayer Workshop was also held on 22<sup>nd</sup> July at Trinity (as hosts) led by Rev Sally Dakin. This was attended by people attached to other churches as well as Trinity members. Other workshops led by Sally have been attended by members of the PMT and small groups, which have been extremely valuable and spiritually thought provoking.

One of the biggest tasks of the Prayer Ministry Team this year has been the introduction of Quiet Days throughout the year. These have been held on Saturday mornings, generally between 9.30 and 11.30am, the first one being held on 17<sup>th</sup> April – Be Still and Know that I am God, then 10<sup>th</sup> July – God at Work; 2<sup>nd</sup> October – Fruits of the Spirit, which tied

in with Harvest and was used for the Presence of God worship on Sunday Evening; Advent Time Out on 27<sup>th</sup> November, 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> December, focusing our thoughts to prepare spiritually for Christmas, the themes being: People in Need (linking with Youth Net's Slum Survivor); The Names Jesus is Known By; Christmas in our Community and Experiences of the First Christmas.

These Quiet Days have encouraged the Team's own personal spiritual walk and prayer life and it is sincerely hoped that this has been the case for others who have used the prayer station resources and taken some time out to sit at the Lord's feet.

Prayers continue to be offered after each 10.00am service, and although there hasn't been a queue of people requesting prayer support this resource is being used on occasion and will continue to be offered. What is encouraging is that more people are coming to the Chapel to pray before the 10.00am service on a regular basis, in order to pray for those taking part and those who are there to worship.

## **OUR BIBLE LIFE**

During the year the Bible has continued to be key to shaping our identity. During Lent we used a teaching series called "Finding the Real Me". We have also looked at some of Jesus' parables, the supremacy of Christ, men under construction, listening to God and being in tune with Him, our journey with Christ, our vision and a series on worship. Running through much of this has been the thread that our hearts are so important to engage if we are to really discover the joy and freedom Jesus wants for us. We didn't get to detailed work on forgiveness and healing, though this was touched on. During the year some sermon notes were produced which were welcomed. This should happen more than it does and should continue once sermons are recorded.

Once again different translations of the Bible have been used and readings at the 10am service are usually projected on the screen. As noted last year, some people do bring their own Bibles and some make notes during the sermon. This needs to be encouraged. Frequently sermon notes are passed to small groups for use during their mid-week meetings.

It has been really encouraging to continue to have several Trinity folk preaching and God has been speaking very clearly and powerfully through them. Their faithful preparation and willingness to "step up to the lectern" is much appreciated.

Graham Looker bequeathed a large number of Bibles to Trinity which have been offered to anyone who'd like one, and the remainder are to be placed in our library. Sixteen new books were bought for the library. Loans fell to 27 but did begin picking up in the Autumn, mostly from the Growth, Prayer and Relationships section.

## **OUR RELATIONSHIPS**

We have continued to encourage the deepening of relationships and the need to support and encourage one another with honesty and openness. Progress is being made but is a gradual process. Sharing stories about God at work in our lives still needs more profile in services. **Small groups** have been maintained and are seen, at least by those in one, as really helpful in different ways, especially in providing care and friendship. We have eight mid-week small groups with a committed membership of seventy-seven, so 42% of our membership, though not all group members are church members. Taking our membership and adherents together, 30% are in small groups. We are looking towards the small groups each taking on and sharing within them the responsibility for our existing but virtually dormant 'pastoral link lists'. There is recognition within the vision work that we need to put more emphasis on developing our system of small groups and this will include making sure anyone not wanting to go into a small group has access to support and care if needed or wanted.

Support for small group leaders remained insufficient during the year and so the commitment of the group leaders is all the more appreciated. A useful meeting of small group leaders took place in the Autumn and a schedule of meetings was agreed for 2011.

Oversight and management of our **pastoral care** is in a time of transition as the vision work explores the way forward. On the ground, pastoral care continues to be provided by Jon, Ann Baker and a few other church members, as and when there is a need. As always there is quite a lot of care between individuals, which meets their needs without a more formal approach.

With our younger people we continue to run **Pilots each week and there is an enthusiastic group of about 15 boys and girls**. We also continue to run **Youth Net** which has had a busy year. The main events were a successful Youth Alpha, some work on mission, attending Soul Survivor, working through "A Life Worth Living", and putting on a fascinating and challenging weekend event called "Slum Survivor" which raised awareness of slums and money for charities working with slum dwellers. During the year Youth Net has seen a core group of young people grow in number and in their faith. This has been helped by them meeting weekly – requested by the young people. Their appreciation of mission was exercised when young people from Centre Point started coming in. This was difficult to deal with but has led to the building of stronger relationships with the youth workers at Centre Point, the local PCSO and the Just Around the Corner team. Cath Mackrell is back at Youth Net now, with the aim of building bridges with these different stakeholders. All exciting and is being worked on within the vision work. It is fantastic that we continue to have a strong and committed team of youth leaders.

After more than a year seeking new leadership for the **Boys' Brigade**, two qualified leaders came forward with the help of Neville Keating, a senior Boys' Brigade Officer from Oxfordshire. Steph and Matt, from Emmanuel Church in Reading, started in September and agreed to lead and develop the Company for a year, during which the intention is to seek new leaders from within Trinity. Leslie and Ruth Bainton have now stood down and we thank them for their work over the years.

Our **Walking Group** continues with monthly walks of about 4-8 miles which are followed by pub lunches. In May a group of 18 walkers enjoyed a week of glorious walking weather in the South Downs and next year's walking holiday is to be based on Dartmoor.

A further stir in the year was caused by the visit to the **Oberammergau Passion play** in Austria of 45 Trinity members and friends. This is only performed every 10 years, and first began in 1634. Those who went were greatly moved by the whole event.

Looking to our **relationships beyond Trinity**, we continue to be represented on the **Reading Deanery Synod** (David Paine and John Goddard) which has looked at the Eucharist, the future direction and setting of the Parish Share (assessment), whether there's a case for 'richer' churches to help 'poorer' ones, the spiritual case for 'giving', and young people's work. We continue also to be closely related to the **Reading and Silchester Methodist Circuit** (reps – Tony Bonnett, Margaret Stephens, Keith Waite). Jon and Ann Baker attend various Circuit-based meetings and our representatives attended the four Circuit meetings. Trinity hosted the final one of the year. As noted above, we continue to participate in the Circuit's preaching/service plan. Wendy Keeley has once again been our representative on the **Wessex URC Synod**. She has kept us in the loop with URC developments.

Trinity continues to be part of **Churches Together in Berkshire (CTB)** and **Churches Together in Earley and East Reading (CTEER)**. The main points to note from CTB are: i) the Rev Nick Thompson has become Chair of CTB after the Bishop of Reading moved on, and Honor Alleyne, the County Ecumenical Officer, retired at the end of the year and is replaced by Mrs Louise Cole from Woosehill LEP. 2011 will also bring a review of Trinity by CTB. Please pray that this will be valuable to us in bringing in new insights and ideas to support our vision. CTEER has continued to explore a fresh

identity and possible stronger links with Reading Christian Network. It held monthly church leader prayer lunches during the year and several 24-1 prayer days, hosted by different churches. The format and purpose of CTEER still needs further clarification which will hopefully come in 2011.

## **OUR OUTWARD-LOOKING FOCUS**

Although we have not yet finalised the focus of our vision work, throughout 2010 there has been much talk about needing to seriously develop a clear outward-looking focus.

In terms of our **mission links and relationships**, the local links, mentioned above, made through Youth Net are important for our future mission and outward focus in terms of youth. We have also had one Trinity member become a **Reading Street Pastor** which is exciting. We've continued our links with **Christian Aid, Kagando, Retrak, Action for Children** and gave our Christmas offerings to **Just Around the Corner**. We also continue to support **Traidcraft**. However, Trinity's interest may be waning a little, with food and drink sales down to about £1,400. In 2011 we need to look in depth at how, and with whom, we can build deeper relationships and provide improved mission support.

Locally, we continue to be very involved in **RE-Inspired** which continues to grow and develop. Gordon Guile, Regina Cobbinah, Joy Hooper and Lisa Waite are regular volunteers. Gordon and Jon Salmon are Trustees. In September Trinity played host to Hillside School RE week – it was great for the children to use the church for the whole week whilst learning about Christianity and what inspires Christians. In February 2011 RE-Inspired is publishing (by BRF) a book, "The Story of RE-Inspired: Developing Creative Partnerships Between Churches and Schools". It is hoped more churches will look to and adopt this model, and plans are underway for training programmes to support this.

**The Chalfont Group**, formerly called the Chalfont Club, and now advertised as the "Chalfont Afternoon Social Group – For Everyone" (to get away from 'closed' 'club' image), continues to meet weekly, providing social opportunities for older people (though some younger people come), as well as some key Christian celebrations. Most weeks there is a guest speaker and refreshments feature all the time, and once again there was a day-trip during the year and a Christmas lunch in a local hotel.

Level of attendance varies but numbers fluctuate around the 30 mark and it provides an important slot in the week for relationship building and having a good time. The organising committee continues to be committed and works hard to maintain this group. During the year the committee has seen some turnover.

We continue to visit two **local care homes**, and occasionally visit two others. We take Holy Communion into both on a monthly basis and hold Easter and Christmas services. Attendee numbers have been maintained but it is clear that regulars are becoming more frail.

Though not intended to be solely for older people, the proposed Listening Service has been worked on and evolved into what is to be called the "**Community Chaplaincy Team**". This makes it distinct from the several local listening services which is important because we should, as Christians, have something distinctive to offer. It is hoped to launch this new team in 2011.

Both of the **Parent and Toddler groups** (Monday and Thursday mornings) are going very well. They are both extremely busy with 20-30 children attending each. And, significantly, involvement of Trinity people in the leadership of both groups has increased. Ann Baker, our Pastoral Development Officer continues to play an important role in facilitating both groups. For the first time both groups held and collaboratively organised (together with the Nursery Service) a shared event, "Fred in the Shed". We have also seen links begin with the nearby Yellow Brick Nursery when we co-organised and hosted an Advent service for their children and parents. We look forward to this link developing.

Part of the vision work has been focusing on Trinity's identity and presence (*see below*) in the community and on the web. We did finally manage to get up a **wayside pulpit** banner in time for Christmas and the **new website** was

launched in March. With this we achieved our aims of: having a bold and modern new style with better use of colour, graphics and photos; creating a better and more user-friendly menu system; slimming down the content, with a less wordy approach; having regularly updated news on the front page. It is also more easily updateable and provides a great platform for further development. It seems the site is being visited more than the old one. Significant effort was put into the website by Alex Robinson and Chris Pugh, plus some from Jon Salmon. We are grateful for the generous hosting offer and support we have had from Q1 Web Solutions (Helene Blanchonnet). Work also began on developing Face book and Twitter presence for Trinity.

During the year we've begun discussing how we can make better use of our building, as there are times during the week when it is not used and is "closed". Various ideas have been suggested and these will be taken forward within the outworking of the vision work. There may also be scope to become involved with the local authority in the development of a "community hub". Some very initial discussions have started via the only other local community hub based at Finchampstead Baptist Church.

Our welcome is so important. We are learning that how our building looks is really very important in this regard. The local Brownies have been wonderful spending time during the year looking after our flower bed which has made a good difference. And at all our services, we continue to take seriously trying to be as welcoming as we can to those coming into our building. We have a great team of cleaners too who work hard keeping things clean.

We are very appreciative of the superb flower arrangements that several volunteers create and display in church. In addition, the **Festival of Christmas Trees** held in the run up to Christmas provided a beautiful spectacle and involved a good number of local organisations, schools, businesses and churches and left us feeling as though the event had real "community" currency. We had just on 40 trees displayed. Phil Hooper needs singling out for thanks for organising this event.

## **OUR MANAGEMENT**

**Church Council** and **Church Meetings** continued as the two main management tools. Following on from last year's report, refreshments prior to the **Church Meeting** continue to be a great success. This is something that should be continued. However, attendance at Church Meetings is still poor given our membership. Additionally, there has been no need for a secret election ballot. Indeed it must be of concern that the number of vacancies has generally continued to grow.

Finance continues to be a significant topic for discussion and the uncertainty of the future form of the **constitution** continues. Under the existing constitution the Junior Church Coordinator now attends Church Council as an observer.

The eldership course has been completed and a few stewards are likely to be ordained as elders early in 2011.

The pattern of Church Meetings and Church Council Meetings has been changed for 2011 as an experiment. Church Meetings will now be January, April, July and October with the AGM in January.

Our **Staffing Committee** met recently for the first time since early in 2009. The purpose of the meeting was to explore the possibility of greatly increasing our paid admin support. The committee accepted in principle that we should extend our current paid admin support to 20 hours a week throughout the year. This would enable us to have the church open at stated times for 3 hours a day on weekdays. Church Stewards already man the church from 9.30am to 11am every Saturday. Work on this continues.

The current Church **Membership** is 183. In addition, we have 75 adherents and 69 children, giving an overall total of 323. Over the past year, 13 members have been removed from the database. Of those, 2 moved home, 2 died, 3 have gone to another church in the circuit, 1 became a Clerk in Holy Orders, and the remainder left for reasons unknown. However, we gained 12 new members.

The **Property Committee** has completed a significant number of tasks over the year coordinated by Richard Davis and assisted by Gordon Guile, Phil Hooper and John Goddard. In particular the following work has been done: door posts to safeguard the front door frame; additional spotlights to light the cross when in summer orientation; gutters cleaned out and leaks dealt with; additional shelves in the Church Office; a new alarm system; new central heating boilers to make the system more efficient. Unfortunately we lost our Property Steward (Richard Davis) in October but we wish him well when he returns to South Africa.

## **OUR FINANCE**

### **Treasurer's Report**

The past year has been successful on two counts, firstly we have increased our reserves by £8,000 and secondly this has been the second year our church has seen a surplus in our accounts. We are still not meeting our reserve policy, see section below, and our basic giving from members does not cover our expenditure. Nevertheless as a church we are moving forward, thanks this year to £15,000 of fund raising, see section below.

### **Review of Accounts**

The Church's income comes mainly through giving from members through Standing Orders, Envelopes and cash, this increased by 1.6% in the year. It will be remembered in 2008/09 we had a very successful Stewardship campaign which increased giving by 20%, so we have held this increase and added another 1.6%. Of course our costs have been rising by a greater percentage; our assessment for the year increased by 10%, fuel costs have risen by 5%, and Retail Prices Index has risen by 4% year on year. One very positive benefit from our Stewardship campaign has been the increase in the Gift Aid we collect from the Revenue and Customs, which has increased by 37.5% in the year. The increase was due to more members giving through Standing Orders and Envelopes rather than through cash gifts, and the Christmas Gifts to Trinity Church of £4,000 most of which were gift aided.

### **A Stake in the Ground.**

Part of the budget for the year 2009/10 was £15,000 'to be raised' by our members. A fictitious Stake in the Ground, or target, was set by the Treasurer to the members to help balance the books and to create a budget for a part-time Youth Worker. A number of activities were planned and the target was over achieved. The Christmas Gifts to Trinity raised over £4,000, the Auction in March made £2,500, the Music Night over £650, Christmas Readings £1200, the Craft Fayre £850 and increased Standing Orders, one off gifts and Gift Aid made up the total. A great effort by the organisers and for the support the whole church gave.

### **Reserves.**

Our Reserve Policy is to have 50% of our annual turnover in reserve to meet future emergency spending. As our income goes up, so the requirement for the cash value of the reserves goes up. We now hold 25% of our funds in unrestricted funds and therefore are £30,000 below our 50% target. Church Council and the Church Meeting will be asked to review our Reserve Policy to ensure our target is able to meet any emergency, or a drop in giving in the future. As our income increases and our turnover grows so does our Reserve requirement. With a newish building and a very good Methodist Insurance Policy behind us, the question that will be asked is, is a 50% Reserve Policy too high? Many churches in our situation operate on a lower Reserve Policy and it is proposed to reduce our policy down to 25% of turnover, but only with the agreement of the Church Meeting.

### **Building Expenditure**

In the past few years very little has been spent on the building. The biggest problem we were facing was the two central boilers needed to be replaced at a cost to us of over £8,000, £1,000 of which was VAT we cannot reclaim. In August

two new boilers were purchased and installed, plus the system was cleaned out and new pumps and programmer were added. The £8,000 was paid, mostly from our Restricted Building Fund, with the balance of £2,000 from the General Fund. The boilers will save 40% of our present gas usage, we're told. The alarm system, which had been very expensive in the past few years due to premium rate telephone calls and very large call-out charges for false alarms, was also replaced at a cost of £1,500. The new system will save us £1,000 a year in telephone calls and call-out charges. We also repaired our main doors, added two new posts to stop the doors swinging in the wind, new spot lights were added to the south facing sanctuary, and we had the gutters cleaned out. This was more than we planned but necessary. £3,000 was transferred from General Funds to Restricted Building Funds for future building repairs or redecoration, as agreed at the December 2009 Church Meeting.

### **2010/2011 Budget**

At the Church Meeting in June it was agreed to include £5,000 for additional Fund Raising events to balance the budget. Income is now projected to be £109,600, £8,400 lower than 2009/10. Expenditure is also planned to be lower due to less being spent on the building. We are expecting another large increase to our assessments in 2011, and the increase on VAT to 20% in January will also put up most of our costs. Financial pressure will be felt by many of our members due to government cuts, so the biggest risk to Trinity's budget will be if our income reduces in the coming year.

### **Charity Registration**

A lot of work has been done by your Church Council to register Trinity Church LEP as a charity and meet new legislation for churches with a turnover over £100,000 to register as a Charity. Having gained agreement for a new constitution with the URC and Methodist Church, the Oxford Diocese refused to agree and in August 2010 came up with a proposed way to overcome their concerns. At the time of writing this report, the URC and Methodist Church are considering this proposal. Again a lot of effort has been put in during the past year in bringing our CRB records up to date, again to meet our legal requirement and meet the standards set by Charity Law.

### **OUR VISION**

The Vision Team, which comprises a wide mix of Trinity people, has met regularly throughout the year. There has been much praying and discussion and a good number of Scripture verses, words and pictures have come to the fore. This has been exciting because there has been a high degree of correlation between them. From all this the focus has been very much on Trinity's outward-focus because, as a church, we feel this is our weakest area! And the areas that we believe God wants us to work on are listed below.

#### **Key areas** of the vision:

1. **Tools for the Job** – about making and nurturing disciples. Resources and ways to help us (eg further development and investment in small groups) mature as disciples, and to help those new or on the margins of Christianity, or simply enquiring.
2. **Youth work** – developing our existing work and building bridges with other churches and youth organisations. Employment of a youth worker for as many hours per week as we can, to oversee the strategic development as well as implementation – to add value and support our existing volunteers.
3. **Young families** – develop our existing work through the Nursery Service and Toddler groups. Look at supporting families in various ways such as parenting, how to love your teenager, dealing with substance misuse, marriage, dealing with divorce, debt.
4. **Men's work** – developing some activities to attract men – this is a significant ministry in the country now with lots of resources and ideas to tap into and can have significant impacts on church growth.
5. **Workplace ministry** – to support our folk in the workplace as they deal with the pressures they face and how to encourage and support them to be effective disciples at work. Not just about paid employment. It's about living

every day with purpose. Again this is a growing area of work and there are some great resources available. ALSO – how can we support people in this very uncertain economic climate where so many people are facing redundancy and possibly long term unemployment.

- 6. Use of our building** – Church Council started on this recently. Idea of second hand book stall on Saturdays with comfy seating area in sanctuary as a starting point. ALSO – possible scope for much wider conversation for Trinity with WBC about Community Hubs. New concept and our District Centre could become one.

## **CONTRIBUTORS**

Many thanks to all those who have made specific contributions to the text:

<b>Tony Bonnett</b>	<b>Sarah Brayshaw</b>
<b>Michael Bushnell</b>	<b>Richard Cocks</b>
<b>Gaynor Davis</b>	<b>Jill Duncan</b>
<b>John Goddard</b>	<b>Gordon Guile</b>
<b>Joan Guile</b>	<b>Joanna Hassan</b>
<b>Bethan Jones</b>	<b>John Medcraft</b>
<b>Elaine Munday</b>	<b>Michael Newport</b>
<b>David Paine</b>	<b>Rosemary Reece</b>
<b>Andrew Rixon</b>	<b>Alex Robinson</b>
<b>Lisa Waite</b>	<b>Peter Whiteman</b>

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