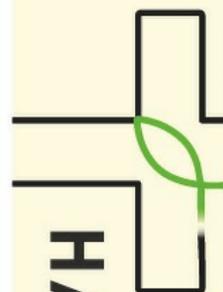


**Annual Report  
September 2017-  
August 2018**

Charity number 1162079



To Worship God To Know Jesus To Serve Others

**HALL GREEN UNITED COMMUNITY CHURCH**

## **Letter from the Chair of Trustees**

I began my service as your minister in September 2017 supervised by Br Peter Gubi. This has been a steep learning curve with all the different committees to get up to speed on and also the Vision 2020 building project, and I am very grateful for all the support and encouragement received from the congregation. I feel that there is a vibrant energy ready and willing to serve the local community.

Average attendance on Sunday morning is 85 adults and four children, but this increases to 90 and over for the Holy Communion service. We are very grateful to Br Blair Kessler and other ministers for leading Holy Communion services. We are also thankful to all visiting lay preachers, ministers both serving and retired and others for their support in leading worship.

Many members of our congregation volunteer with other local organisations and I am pleased that we as a congregation support their work both financially and with donations.

This year has been quite disruptive for us but with everybody's cooperation it has been kept to a minimum as far as possible. The church and halls have been reimagined and been kept under close scrutiny by the fantastic Building Strategy Team. We thank you for your dedication and commitment to the project. It is now up to us, the congregation to pick up the baton and keep the vision alive: To worship God, to know Jesus, to serve others. We can all do our own small, or larger, part in worshipping, knowing and serving others.

It is a privilege to be able to serve Hall Green United Community Church congregation, not just as minister but also now as chair of Trustees. You have devoted time and energy to the various services and many activities held this year. I am amazed and thankful for your commitment and dedication to serve the Church and continue this Christian witness in Hall Green.

The past year has been a whirlwind of activity and we look forward to continuing to share the Good News of Jesus Christ for another year knowing that He will sustain and guide us. I commend this report to you.

Revd. Lorraine Shorten  
Minister and Incoming Chair of Trustees.

## Contents

About Hall Green United Community Church	4
List of Managing Trustees	5
List of Other Offices	5
Activity Reports	
AgeUK	7
Baby and Co	7
Brownies	7
Disciples of Steel	8
Discoverers	8
infohallgreen	9
Sparkhill Food Bank	9
The Sanctuary	9
Friendly Corner	10
Fundraising Committee	10
House Groups	10
Moravian Womens' Association (MWA)	11
Property	11
Youth Club	12
Safeguarding	12

## **About Hall Green United Community Church**

The church was formed in 2014 by the coming together of Hall Green Methodist Church and Sparkhill United Church (Moravian/URC).

The two congregations have been worshipping together since January 2008 and unanimously agreed to form the new church in order to better follow our aims: "To Worship God, To Know Jesus, To Serve Others".

The original churches have a long history in this area. For more information about our past and the denominations of which we are a part of please visit our website, [www.hgucc.org.uk](http://www.hgucc.org.uk). This also features regularly updated news.

The majority of our members hold joint membership of the Methodist Church, the Moravian Church and the United Reformed Church. We make every effort to be fully involved in the life and work of those denominations whilst recognising our responsibilities to the wider church and the community in Hall Green and across our city.

This year has seen the fulfillment of our Vision 2020 Scheme and our buildings have been redesigned to be more accessible and we are confident that this will enable us to serve our local community more effectively.

## **Elected Trustees**

Peter Astartjian

Christine Bourne

Keith Dennis

Brian Dickens (Treasurer)

Leeford Dixon

Sarah Fidler

Julie Gumbs

Joy Johnson

Nick Jones (retired during year)

Blair Kessler

Norma Maynard (Secretary)

Rebecca Parkes

Alan Perkins

Linda Ramdharry

Lorraine Shorten

## **Co-Opted Trustees**

David Harwood (Safeguarding Officer)

Julia Parkes (Pastoral Links)

## **Other Offices**

**Access to building and bookings officer**

**Baby & Co**

**Bible Reading Notes**

**Brownie Leaders**

**Christian Aid Co-ordinator**

**Cleaning Staff Supervisor**

**Communion Steward Co-ordinator**

**Creche Co-ordinator**

**Church Directory Editor**

**Disciples of Steel Director**

**Discoverers Co-ordinator**

**Flower Co-ordinator**

**Health and Safety Co-ordinator**

**Lotubai Project**

**Musical Director**

Mark Thomas

Julia Parkes

Enid Allen

Ann Ford

Alison Raybould

Vacant

Barbara Dennis

Margaret Lilley

Linda Ramdharry

Alison Raybould

Paul Fidler

Maggie Lewis

Pauline Astartjian

Christine Bourne

Elaine Spencer

Val Dickens

**MWA Circle Leader**

**Newsletter Editor**

**Safeguarding Co-ordinators**

**Traidcraft Sales**

**The Magazine Editor**

**Vestry Steward Co-ordinators**

**Website Manager**

**Welcome Stewards Co-ordinator**

**Youth Club Leaders**

Evelyn Mackintosh

Blair Kessler

David Harwood

Sarah Harwood

Valmai Crocker

Pam Smith

Enid Allen

Sue Sainsbury

Blair Kessler

Pauline Astartjian

Sarah Fidler

Sarah Harwood

David Moore

## **Activity Reports**

From our community cafe serving mainly more mature local residents to our stay and play sessions for young families, Hall Green United Community Church seeks to fulfil its remit to the community.

This brief report aims to give an overview of some of the activities that went on in and around our premises in the year.

### **AgeUK Info and advice**

AgeUK Continues to run a monthly footcare session at the church, staffed by their own trained personnel.

### **Baby and Co**

Hall Green Baby & Co. is an informal stay and play group that meets in the Church hall on Thursday mornings during term-time.

We provide books, toys and a safe environment in which both adults and children can socialise. We have drinks and biscuits mid-morning. We have occasional visits from Chinnbrook Childrens Centre who provide information and advice for families.

Our numbers vary from week to week as there is no formal membership. Baby & Co. has been running for 30 years and we hope that it will continue.

### **110th Brownies**

This year the Brownies continued our themes of You, Community and the World. Everyone had a go at yoga, celebrated various festivals, worked towards crafts, badges and participated in a talent show. We contacted our local councillors about things we would like to improve in the area and were excited that two of them came to discuss these with us.

Brownies have donated items for the foodbank for Harvest and Asylum Seekers at Christmas. We made green hearts for The Climate Coalition's #showthelove campaign, two of the Brownies led an assembly at school following our involvement. The environment badge was fun. We were very pleased that Pam Smith joined us again and showed us how to make sugar paste biscuit toppers for Fathers day, with some great likenesses!

A successful joint pack holiday was enjoyed by Brownies from Sue Bate's unit and ours. We had a large group of older Brownies who took an active part in leading activities during the year, but we had to say goodbye to them in August as they moved onto secondary schools. We begin September 2018 with a much smaller group and a new programme from girlguiding uk to explore!

## **Disciples of Steel**

Our steel band continue to meet bi-weekly on a Sunday after church for rehearsal. We have a membership of 8 between the ages of 7 and 15, with the band being lead by Paul Fidler and Alison Raybould.

It continues to be a period of rebuilding, teaching new repertoire to more experienced members and integrating newer members into the band through existing pieces.

We continue to play at church events, and where possible external events to support the congregation and local community.

## **Discoverers**

Discoverers is still going strong. The children still seem to enjoy coming out and spending time with each other and discussing the reading for that week using the Roots Magazine.

We currently only have 2 leaders - Maggie and Zoe. Joy Fisher decided to step down after many many years service. We currently only have 3 helpers and would welcome more volunteers.

Since the new Minister has started, we agreed that the children would stay in church to begin with and then go out after the first hymn. This is working well. The minister has also introduced Godly Play which she leads herself. The children enjoy this session every month.

The number of children varies each week and it is nice to see some new faces even if only for a week. The children will sometimes come in near to the end of the service and present to the congregation. However, this is proving more difficult as the children sometimes arrive at different times.

I think with the refurbishment of the church, this will bring in many new members and hopefully children too!

## **Infohallgreen**

The service was started during 2017 for people who have trouble finding help or information especially if they cannot easily use the Internet. infohallgreen is here to help and can point them in the right direction.

Developed by HGUCC in collaboration with Highfield Hall and Gospel Oak Community Centres, infohallgreen provides basic IT support and information to support our community. The service is run by volunteers supported by setup funding from Birmingham City Council. We are unable to offer advice, but will help discover who can give the advice that's needed.

## **Sparkhill Foodbank**

During our fifth year of supporting the Foodbank we contributed 360kg of food, enough to provide 782 meals.

In addition to providing compassionate and practical help the Foodbank now provides, alongside emergency food, other services to help people address the underlying issues behind their crisis. There are now trained volunteers to help with clothing, money advice, basic cookery and help for people to get into work.

At a time of increasing referrals, mainly due to the impact of Universal Credit delays, they continue to be very grateful for our regular support.

## **St Chad's Sanctuary**

The Sanctuary is a place of welcome and hospitality for asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants through the promotion of practical support, English classes and welfare support.

This year we have been especially able to support them in the provision of clothing suitable for young men, which continues to be a main need.

## **Friendly Corner**

Friendly Corner is our community cafe - which opens on Tuesdays for light lunches, tea, coffee and cakes. It is staffed entirely by volunteers, several of whom are not from our congregation. We charge very modest prices, but make a small profit - that enables us to donate to various charities. There is also a weekly "Bring and Buy" stall.

We recently had to close for a few weeks, when the renovations - in the Church buildings - meant we had no suitable washing-up facilities. Since re-opening, we have been operating in the sanctuary - but look forward to returning to the hall very soon.

We celebrate 30 years of Friendly Corner this year, and are most grateful to all our loyal staff.

## **Fundraising Committee**

The large amounts needed to fulfil our 2020 Vision meant that the Fundraising Committee were very busy up until the end of 2017, running an event every month and raising a substantial amount of money.

With the completion of that effort the committee has now been renamed as the Events Committee and will concentrate on organising events to maintain and develop the fellowship at HGUCC.

## **House groups**

Two groups amalgamated during last year, enabling a wider group of members to share and discuss. That left two house groups meeting in the homes of members, on average twice a month. One group is on a weeknight and one during the day. The groups choose their own study material. Our study of the Bible promotes discussion, the chance to learn more of our faith and quite a lot of hilarity.

Meetings usually last for about 1 ½ hours and the sessions include prayer and refreshments. Members take turns to lead and prepare the material and programme.

Members of these groups also support the Hall Green Churches Together 'Lent Courses'.

## **Moravian Women's Association**

The Moravian Women's Association meet on the second Sunday of the month after morning worship. The meetings last between 30-45 minutes. Our current leader is Sr. Lorraine Shorten.

During the year we attend a yearly M.W.A. Day. Due to life circumstances our numbers are few but we are supported by our men and some of our Methodist sisters. Part of what we do is to visit the different Moravian settlements around the country by coach or mini bus. This year, we visited Harlesden in London, Swindon in Somerset. We also support the men at their Annual General meeting in Horton Moravian church in Yorkshire where our former minister Rev. David Howarth is Minister. We support many projects all over the province and locally.

Our meetings begin by reading the text for the day led by our leader or one of the sisters, we then read the Presidents letter which informs us of the various activities and events in the province

The Devotional leader will read devotional notes which relate to the theme for the year which this year is "Let it Shine", a passage of scripture linked to the theme is read and discussed. Our other notes are the "Home and Overseas" papers which inform us of our projects we are supporting abroad. Following, any other business we close with the Mizpah said by everyone "The Lord watch between me and thee while we are absent one from another" We then offer each other the right hand of fellowship. We look forward to attracting more HGUCC ladies to our meetings

## **Property**

It has been a very exciting year for our church as during the autumn of 2017 we looked forward to the start of a huge undertaking to remodel and update our church and premises. After a period of intense and very successful fundraising, generous donations from our church members and others, planning and hard work by our Building Strategy Group together with our

Architect and Quantity Surveyor, we began our 2020 vision project in January 2018.

Over the following 9 months we saw plans and drawings displayed and the gradual changes and improvements taking place as we shared our building with our contractors Trendgrey Construction Ltd. Determined to keep our premises open for the duration of the work, many hours were spent organising and ensuring that our user groups would be accommodated whilst access was limited and that our Sunday worship would continue with the least possible disruption. The patience and understanding of church members, user groups, visitors and our neighbours during some difficult times should be commended.

During the final stages of the work, volunteers have helped with the task of reorganising storage, moving furniture, adding the final touches and much more, throughout the building and grounds. Everyone including our staff has put in a huge effort to help realise the vision for a welcoming, safe building with useful, flexible spaces and facilities. We can now look forward to welcoming our local community and using this special place in the service of our Lord.

## **Safeguarding**

Continuing opportunities are available for Safeguarding training.

Our DBS and Safeguarding training used to be renewed every five years and we are currently applying DBS's for those whose training is up to date. In future we will be renewing every four years.

A number of minor changes have been made to our Safeguarding Policy and these are being implemented.

We have carried out an in house review of our Safeguarding procedures.

## **Youth Club**

The youth club meets on a Tuesday evening, during term time, between 7:30 and 9:00 pm. It caters for young people from school year 6 upwards. Over the last year club has gained a new leader but lost it's senior leader. We've also faced the annual challenges of members leaving for university, work and due to the pressure of school work. Our numbers starting this year are slightly lower than last September so we need a new input of younger members and your prayers for the future.