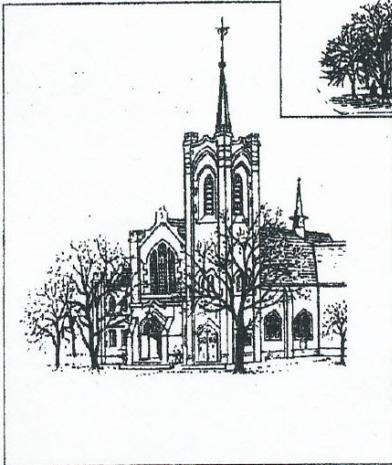
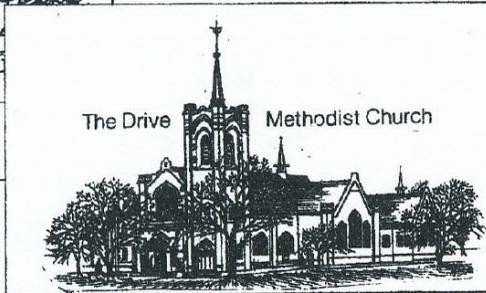


The Drive Methodist
Church
Eastern Avenue
Ilford IG1 3PP

ANNUAL REPORT 2016/2017



Minister: Revd Bernardino Mandlate
19 Bethell Avenue, Ilford, IG1 4UX
<http://www.the-drive-methodist-ilford.org.uk>

INDEX

<u>Report</u>	<u>Page</u>
Baptism and Baptismal Roll	7
Church Life	10
Church Stewards	2
Church Website	12
Communion Stewards	2
Cub Pack Report	18
Envelope Scheme and Gift Aid	14
Finance Report	13
Flower Arrangers	15
Junior Church	4
Junior Mission for All	16
Mission Statement	21
Music at The Drive	8
Newsletter	9
Pastoral Committee	10
Property Report	11
Reading Group	17
Safeguarding at The Drive	3
Scout Group Report	17
Serving the Community	12
The Drive Pre-School Report	19

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2016 TO 2017.

Church Stewards

All your elected stewards have continued to support the church and have always been there when we run into operational shortages on a service morning, my sincere thanks to my loyal colleagues.

We have also had the support of a number of our congregation who are willing to step in when asked, and I am most grateful to them. If any of you reading this are willing to add their name to those who regularly give us their availability to cover the Doors, Book distribution, car rota, etc will be welcomed. Many hands make light work!

We have also been grateful to our young people who have taken part in so many services, we look forward to this continuing.

It has been such a pleasure to have three local preachers who have been called to develop their skills as members of our church.

My grateful thanks to them all.

Roy Brunnen.

Communion Stewards

Your communion stewards have once more ensured that the ceremony proceeds in an orderly fashion. There are at present five appointed stewards with Elizabeth Amah taking a lead as senior communion steward. There is always a need

for more people to volunteer to serve, retrieve the glasses, or act as stewards ensuring that the congregation takes communion in an efficient and orderly way.

My sincere thanks to all my colleagues, including those who are "recruited" on the day. If any of you feel able to offer your services please let me know.

Elizabeth Amah.

Safeguarding at The Drive.

I continue to manage implementing the Safeguarding Policy at our church and a recent change has been the appointment of Isobella Pender who has agreed to oversee the Vulnerable Adult area of Safeguarding here at The Drive. This was approved by the Church Council in November 2016 where we welcomed Isobella's involvement.

There is soon to be a further round of new and refresher safeguarding training taking place in our district under the guidance of Reverend Jan Atkins with Isobella and myself assisting her. Dates are not yet confirmed although it is envisaged to take place over April/May. This training is compulsory for all those in direct contact with children and vulnerable adults and will be held at various times and venues across the district to enable all to attend.

In preparation for the local training, Jan, Isobella and myself attended the recent training instruction at Central Hall Westminster.

DBS checks for those at The Drive are well on the way to being completed. This replaces the previous CRB check.

If you would like to talk about any aspect of Safeguarding do please ask as I have a good deal of information that I would be happy to share. I am indebted to Brian Taylor who oversees all bookings for our church premises as this frequently involves risk assessing and advising those who wish to facilitate children's activities; to ensure the safety of the children in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

Lorraine Bendon

Junior Church

It is wonderful to report that our Junior Church is still growing.

We still have four groups that run each Sunday.

- The Grid for our senior group
- Extreme for our middle group
- Splash for our younger group
- Crèche for our babies, toddlers and parents/carers

This means that we need five adults each week to take the Junior Church sessions. It also means that one parent/carer has to stay in the crèche to help too. Parkavi, Parker's Mum, has often been in the crèche, as a parent helper, and has often organised the toys and activities for other children to enjoy. I am very grateful to all the adults, parents and carers, in the Junior church team, who help to nurture and support the young people at The Drive.

During the year Bella Pender has joined our Junior Church team and is working with the Bubbles and Splash group. We are very grateful and pleased that Bella has joined us.

We are always looking for more people to be part of our Junior Church team. You would be most welcome to join in the fun! Please speak to me or one of the Junior church team, if you feel you could help in some way, or come and join us during our Junior Church session to see what we do! The young people in Junior Church are a wonderfully lively bunch and they all bring different talents and skills to our Sunday morning sessions. They are very kind and supportive of each other too.

During the year the Junior church enjoyed the Easter Egg Hunt, the BBQ at the Rodings, the annual Nativity rehearsal and talent show and of course the Nativity service. John and Michelle were instrumental in organising the Nativity, so my thanks goes to them as well as Andrew who always supports the singing and music during the Nativity. Also my thanks goes to Peter Bendon who sorts out the technical side of things. The young people always bring joy and enthusiasm when they act out the familiar story. Well done team "The Drive".

The Junior church has also taken part in all age worship services during the year and our young people have grown in confidence and ability. They are looking forward to planning more all age services for everyone to enjoy.

The "Fab sisters" (Lola and Folake) not only sing in The Chorale, but have had an amazing year travelling around Great Britain and entering high class singing competitions. If you want to know which ones they were you need to ask them!

One of our young people, Thea Garner, will be travelling to Ghana, in the summer, with the Guides. Our Junior Church will be supporting her in her fundraising for this amazing expedition. Accompanying her will be Susannah Normanton in her capacity of trip leader. We wish them both all the best

and will look forward to hearing about their adventures when they get back.

Our senior group (The Grid) are rapidly turning into young adults and have started to support the younger children during our Junior Church sessions. A big thank you goes to Rochelle, Thea, Feyi, Yetunde, Sam and Rohit who are very supportive of our younger group members.

Thanks to Andrew, the young people sang at quite a few of the services during the year and many of them enjoy being part of the Drive Chorale.

Thank you, once again, to the Junior Church team and to all the young people who make Junior Church a fun place to be!

Joanna Wright

And our young people say:

The Drive Junior Church have had a brilliant year! In the first few months of 2016, we had our annual JMA Beetle Drive and Easter Egg Hunt events, traditions of the church that we all love! We have also managed to lead several all-age worship services spread out across the year which have been very successful. It was something that we all found fun and exciting to do, especially since the creative aspect was given to us and that we could incorporate all our ideas into the service.

In November, we had our JMA service, which I particularly enjoyed because we could see how much money we had collected together and how that money went towards changing people's lives. Our money went to Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe to support their projects. Towards the end of 2016, we began preparing for our Nativity & Toy Service, in which we would present our play about the Birth

of Christ story. The night before our performance saw the dress rehearsal, and of course, our talent show.

It is wonderful to see our church grow from the tiny seeds planted all those years ago. In terms of numbers, we are an ever-expanding group which I hope continues into the new year.

This year, I would like to see more events, like all-age worship, to bring the Junior Church and the Main Church together. A lot of our group are enthusiastic about Bible reading, singing and saying prayers in Church and it would be great to see these in action. We all share one goal: to spread the Word of God and the Love of Jesus to all!

Rochelle Inbakumar

Junior Church

Every Sunday I like going to Junior Church because the adults and church members provide us with free time to make and create interesting things linked to Christianity. We learn about important stuff about the Bible and we read poems, psalms and diaries from important people who worshipped and praised God. The best part of Junior Church is at the start when an adult or church member asks us about how our weekend had been.

Parker Samuel

Baptism and Baptismal Roll

Unfortunately there has not been any Baptisms during this Year. I therefore have nothing to report at this time.

Janet Wragg.

Music at The Drive

The Drive's musicians continue to provide weekly support for our worship, especially the members of the choir. We still manage a regular Sunday choir and sing anthems in communion services and on special festival occasions. As part of our regular pattern of music events, which is now well established, the choir

- led a short service of Evening Prayer to mark the end of the choir year in July
- participated in the Circuit's Advent celebration at Gantshill Methodist Church
- sang with great sensitivity and style in our Christmas Carol Service
- took part with members from Ilford Methodist Church in the annual Small Choirs Festival at All Saints, Margaret Street in the heart of London's West End.

The Drive Chorale, our all-age occasional singing group, has contributed to major festival services throughout the year, as well as providing musical contributions to some of our "own arrangement" services.

We continue to explore hymns and songs old and new from our hymnal *Singing the Faith*. In five years, we have used around 47% of the songs in the book, and new songs are regularly added to that list. All hymns were new once, and it is important to add to our repertoire to keep worship fresh and relevant. We are considering how to make new and unknown songs easier for the congregation to learn and sing with confidence.

Some of our young people are becoming very proficient at playing musical instruments, and there are plans to give them more opportunities to play in worship.

Thanks once again to all who contribute in whatever way to music at The Drive, especially the members of the choir who turn out regularly to practise, and to those who play occasionally in my absence.

Thanks as well to Bernardino, the church stewards and congregation who are so supportive and make my job so easy!

Andrew Taylor

Newsletter

I hope you have found the newsletter of an acceptable standard this year. The quality and items can only be successful if the church family provide articles and the leaders of the many groups keep us up to date with information and items showing how we are working within the church and community.

As always, I thank those of you who regularly provide me with items, and appeal to the rest of you to try to make a contribution in the coming year. There is much done which never seems to get mentioned. Such as the ever present support given to the sick and disabled, the financial gifts to charity such as the Whitechapel Mission, Christian aid, Shelter during the winter etc.

Please help us to make this year a successful one for our newsletter.

Roy Brunnen.

Church Life.

The committee continues to meet twice each Year to consider the week to week needs of our church, and the necessary arrangements to ensure the services meet the needs of the various seasons such as Christmas and Easter.

At our last meeting, it was decided that we should bring the Family news and birthday greetings to the start of the service so that we can celebrate birthdays before the junior church members leave for their lessons. We also sent invitations to all the church stewards to attend this and future meetings.

Roy Brunnen.

Pastoral Committee

In the last year the Pastoral Committee has met twice to discuss the welfare and pastoral care of our members and adherents. In October last year, the time when we have to send returns, our membership was 72, the same figure as returned last year.

We have a small, but dedicated group of class/pastoral leaders, some of whom are working full time, and others who are retired, but, unfortunately, suffering from advancing years. It is necessary to recruit some more leaders as we do not want to be in a position where we have not got enough leaders to look after the congregation. Indeed, we really need some more leaders now, as some of the classes are really too big for one person to look after satisfactorily.

I would like to register my appreciation of the sterling work done by our current leaders, and the visiting of our more vulnerable members, largely without anyone realising the work that is going on. Please, if you think this is the sort of

service that you could offer, see me or one of the stewards, and find out what is involved. Our leaders meet only twice a year to discuss pastoral matters.

Please give this matter some serious thought.

Brian Grinham, Pastoral Committee Secretary.

Property Report

In my annual Property report, a few years ago, I said that the Church would have to face three major property projects in the medium term – renewal of the Hall floor, re wiring and replacement of the boiler.

I am pleased to say that with the renewal of the Hall floor last summer at least one of these projects is now behind us. However, it cost around £25,000 and following the Circuit's refusal to provide any financial support, we had to cover the full cost ourselves. As a result, the Property Account carried a deficit of nearly £13,000 for the year. On a more positive note, the electrical installation has recently been inspected and tested. Overall, the installation passed with flying colours subject to the replacement of the remaining "wired" fuse boards with modern RCD boards. This work has now been completed. With regard to the heating system, there is no immediate need to replace the boiler, however our Treasurer continues to look at possible funding options ready for when the time comes.

Looking to the current financial year, we have intentionally deferred certain items and have capped the budget at £11,850. This will cover all the regular maintenance and servicing contracts plus the replacement of the cooker in the Hall kitchen and a continuation of the ongoing programme of redecoration to keep the premises up to standard.

As always, I wish to thank all members of the Property Committee (Corinne, Mike, Colin Rodway, Brian T and John H) for their continued support. However, as a Church we are indebted to Brian Taylor who continues to manage the lettings which are a vital source of income. Without our letting income, the Church would be unable to fund the Circuit Assessment. Finally, a thank you to Brian T, Joel, Peter B, Mike S and Colin R who take turns to check the premises are safe and secure each night.

Jeremy Foster.

Serving the Community

Users of the premises from the community have appreciated the new hall floor and chairs which were installed last August and bookings are at almost full capacity. Present weekly activities include, Yoga, Pilates, Keep Fit, Dance, Zumba, Punjabi, History and First Aid Training.

In 2016 24 groups used our premises each week and there were 17 children's parties.

Brian Taylor.

Church Website

As we approach the 10th anniversary of the launch of our website, statistics show that it has been viewed over 45,000 times in no fewer than 79 countries and from over 200 locations within the United Kingdom. Naturally, the vast majority of use is from within Redbridge, Barking, Dagenham, London and Essex.

The website has over 300 pages of information and contains a complete archive of every edition of the Church Newsletter

since December 2006. It includes a facility to search for any word or phrase anywhere on the website, so if you think something or someone has been mentioned in a past edition of the Newsletter, you can search for and locate it in seconds!

Seemingly all very impressive, but the average usage has shown a steady decline in recent months. Any website is only as good as its content and although, the service details, duty rotas, Newsletter and Minister's page are regularly updated, very little other new material is being provided. Several events during the year have gone unreported which seems a pity. If you are involved in organising an event, or just attending one, please consider writing a few words, supported if possible by a few photographs so that we can maintain interest in this resource.

Mike Seviour

Finance Report

As at 28th February 2017, the figures for the first 6 months of this financial year indicate a significant drop in freewill offerings. Additional income is expected from Gift Aid tax refunds, but overall we are below our budget. Income from lettings is on track and should meet budget.

This Church operates on the generosity of your freewill offerings. I realise that many of you are finding it difficult to make ends meet, as is the Church with higher utility costs. However it would be greatly appreciated if you were able to increase your freewill offering.

In addition to the freewill offerings received, a significant part of our income is from the lettings of our premises. In order to retain existing clients and attract new lettings, money needs to be spent to maintain the premises. Repairs

and replacements have been identified by the Property Committee, some of which have already been implemented; e.g. hall floor, new range in hall kitchen. Therefore it is important that we continue to keep a tight rein on our expenditure, to ensure that we have the necessary funds in reserve when required.

John Higgins
Treasurer

Envelope Scheme and Gift Aid Report

We have 37 members and adherents who currently gift aid their collections and donations made to the Church, and Last Financial year we recovered £7,231.63 which also included the return under the Small Donations Gift Scheme.

This sum obviously helps the Church with its financial commitments, and, although I cannot estimate the amount we will receive this year, as we have not yet reached the end of the financial year, I understand from our Treasurer that the offerings for the first half of the church financial year are lower than our budget. It may be, therefore, that we will not be able to claim back as much when I do the return for this year.

The Gift Aid scheme is a way which we can claim back from the Inland Revenue the tax paid on the contributions made by those members who are taxpayers, who are willing to allow the Church to claim back the tax they have paid on their contributions to the church funds through the collections. This is best achieved by joining the envelope scheme, or giving by way of standing order directly into the church's bank account.

We always welcome new members who wish to contribute in this way, and I would be very pleased to explain the scheme to anyone who would like to join.

Brian Grinham, Gift Aid Secretary.

Flower Arrangers

Since Catherine's retirement as one of the Arrangers; there remains just four of us. Janet Brunnen, Anne Dellow, Ruth Joyce and myself. We appear to be managing this well and try where possible to share responsibility. As I'm sure you are aware we offer the opportunity for people to donate the Sunday flowers in memory of a loved one or to celebrate a special occasion. The list is often quite full with the occasional need to share some dates. We cope with this by making separate arrangements and this seems to work well.

We haven't had so many weddings recently and this is disappointing because of the drop in couples being married in church.

We share the arrangement of the flowers for bigger occasions such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest and welcome donations for flowers on these special times.

We welcome anyone who feels they have a flair for flower arranging to join us.

Lorraine Bendon, Janet Brunnen, Ruth Joyce and Anne Dellow

Junior Mission for All (Junior Mission for All)

JMA continues to thrive at The Drive and I was delighted to report at our Presentation Service on 20 November, that for the year September 20 15 – August 2016 we had raised £685 for JMA funds. Of this amount, £345 came from proceeds of our Beetle Drive in March 2016 and the rest was from our JMA collectors and donations.

Once again Sanya Strachan led our service encouraging us to think creatively about ways our church can continue to bring God's mission to our members and the wider community.

I am pleased to have recruited four new collectors this year, Sam, Sebastian, Sheridan and Stacey Eshun, who along with our current members, Thea Garner, Rochelle Inbakumar, Feyi, Toju and Tunrayo Fadina, Paige Fordree, Iris Bennett-Wright, Yetunde and Folake Fadojutimi, brings the total membership to 13.

At the time of writing we have just enjoyed our 25th Beetle Drive and Tea, an annual fundraising family event, which raised £314. There were a good number playing, some for the first time, and Thea and Brian Taylor were the worthy winners.

Money raised for JMA goes towards the Methodist Church World Mission Fund and Mission in Britain Fund from which grants are made to support projects at home and overseas. Thank you to everyone for your continued support.

Diane Foster

Reading Group

As part of the Church's initiative to encourage bible reading it was agreed to start 'was it a good read' bible reading groups. The first phase of this was launched in September 2016. People are encouraged to read an agreed book of the bible a month and share their thoughts at the end of the month. There is now a core of people who are enjoying reading and sharing together.

Jan and John Pearson

Scout Group Report

After hitting a low point last year, 2016/2017 has seen the start of a welcome revival in the Group's fortunes. This has only been made possible by the recruitment of new leaders. and we have been delighted to welcome Rizwana Khan and Henry Watson, both of whom have volunteered to become uniformed leaders, enabling us to re-form our Beaver colony. The colony started meeting in January and they have made an enthusiastic and encouraging start.

For the first time in the Group's history, we are now pleased to welcome both boys and girls into the Beaver and Cub sections, a move which we hope will enable the Group to grow more quickly.

We were sorry to lose Julie Nagle as our Group Treasurer as she prepares to move away from the area but are pleased to welcome in her place Rob Mohammed, who has quickly and efficiently taken up the reins.

The Cub section continues to operate a full programme of events – please read their report for further details.

My thanks go to all the section leaders, assistants and helpers who so willingly give of their time week by week, and also to the members of our Group Executive Committee. Without all these people there could be no Scouting at The Drive.

Mike Seviour, Group Scout Leader

Cub Pack Report

Our membership is currently at 8 boys, meeting regularly at 7 o'clock on a Tuesday. We have had a varied programme in 2016 mixing games, crafts, outdoor activities and traditional scouting skills.

This year has been the centenary birthday of Cub Scouts so we have had lots of events on the centenary theme. We held both our summer District camp and a huge County camp in September at Thriftwood to celebrate the centenary. The theme of the camps were superheroes and the cubs had brought their superhero outfits for a party. We'd spent the previous weeks crafting our own outfits and capes. On top of the usual camp activities, we had a massive fancy dress disco and fireworks on the Saturday night which the cubs thoroughly enjoyed.

The year ended with the Cub Promise Party. All cubs met on Friday 16th December to have a centenary birthday party for cubs. At 19.16 (7.16pm), all cubs across the UK renewed their promises to remember the start of cubs in 1916!

Cubs have continued to work towards a number of badges within the new challenge badge award programme. The programme mix has been significantly reshaped with half of the programme now aimed towards outdoor activities. Recently the cubs have been working on their Home Safety

activity badges as well – learning about what to do in various emergencies and how to keep safe and secure.

I'd like to welcome and especially thank Henry, who has been helping out at cubs as our new Baloo leader since the summer. It has been great to have his ideas and energy and the boys have especially enjoyed having him. We wish him equally fun times in the beaver colony!

We look forward to another fun and action packed year – the hundred and first for cubs!

Reenit Shah, Cub Scout Leader

The Drive Pre-school Annual Report February 2017

The Drive pre-school opened its doors to the public in 1974 and now after 42 years in operation, we are still going strong.

The pre-school is well established within the local community and beyond, welcoming children and their families from all walks of lives.

We celebrate the diversity of our pre-schoolers and as we teach the Fundamental British Values, we are proud to say that our tolerance of other faiths and beliefs and our mutual respect is evident every day.

We are a very inclusive setting, and at the present time we are supporting four children with additional needs both in their learning and development, as well as in their transition to their next school. We have formed close links with some of the local schools and this ensures a smooth and happy transition for our children.

We are continuing to welcome new children at our pre-school and we will have full capacity by the Easter holidays. The summer term is always a busy time as we prepare the children for readiness to move on to their next part of their learning journey.

The ongoing self evaluation of our practice, ensures that we look at the way we do things, and we are always searching for ways to further improve our service to the community.

The whole team will be taking part in a two day level 3 qualification on First Aid, in the half term in February, to ensure we are all trained in line with government legislation. We don't advertise our pre-school on any media, however this has not affected our capacity of the numbers of children attending as we have a regular return of "clients". We have a good reputation, which allows us to welcome children and families who heard about our pre-school from their relatives, friends and neighbours. We have a family who travels from Romford and three other families who live in Barking. This shows that distance to them is worth it, as they trust in our pre-school.

The safeguarding of the children in our care is the most important element. We ensure that we offer a safe, happy and stimulating environment for the children to thrive and learn, so that they are ready for the next part of their learning journey.

Our caring and qualified practitioners, ensure that they care for and educate the children and support them to reach their next steps.

Finally I would like to thank my staff team for all their hard work and dedication. We all work together to continue to provide the quality care and education to all the children who attend as well as their families.

We are all proud to be part of the Drive pre-school.
Thank you
Kay Whiddon

Mission Statement

The Drive Methodist Church aims to be faithful to the commandments of Jesus, and the calling of the Methodist Church.

The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission, and to fulfil the promises detailed in the Methodist worship book.

In seeking to be faithful The Drive Methodist Church is committed to:

- Provide a weekly opportunity for all people to worship God in Christ, here at The Drive Methodist Church.
- Enable people to grow and learn as Christians through mutual support and care.
- Be a good neighbour to the immediate and wider community.
- Sharing our faith with others through pastoral care, church activities and communication.