

GOING DEEPER INTO GOD

Growing the faith of children and young people: a key factor in church growth

STRUCTURED support for children's work led to SEVERAL MORE churches exploring children's ministry.

RECORD NUMBERS went on the summer Taizé youth pilgrimage - 19 pilgrims: 11 under 18 and all under 29.

THY KINGDOM COME's season of prayer for new disciples of Christ from Ascension day to Pentecost included prayer for young people facing summer exams. This was one part of the celebration inside and outside St Albans Cathedral with the Archbishop of Canterbury and Presiding Bishop Michael Curry of ECUSA attended by 3,000 people.
(Board for Mission and Ministry)

CURATES' and NEWLY-LICENSED READERS' training

includes new topics to better fit the themes of Living God's Love, they are: evangelism and church growth, helping others grow in faith, conflict resolution, and social action.

MORE BAME (Black and Minority Ethnic) vocations were sought in many ways including unconscious bias training for all Vocations Officers and Advisers.
(Board for Mission and Ministry)

Many projects marking the centenary of the end of World War 1, aimed at helping people to encounter God, including through the temporary introduction of 'There but not There' silhouettes of 'Tommys' in churches were supported. (Diocesan Advisory Committee)

St John's Digswell C of E Primary School celebrated a special 'back to school' Eucharist in September 2018.
(Board of Education)

2018 IN FOCUS

highlights

MAKING NEW DISCIPLES

THE STODDEN CHURCHES' Café Sunday at Yelden Village Hall emerged as a Fresh Expression from the perceived need for new patterns of worship

THE PHASE PROJECT, is run by the Hitchin Churches Schools Worker Trust -FOR TEENAGERS STRUGGLING WITH MENTAL HEALTH. It has built strong and trusting relationships across Hitchin schools. A young participant has told how her confidence in her faith and leadership skills has been encouraged. (Mission and Pastoral Committee)

All Saints Church, Leighton Buzzard and Pulford VA CofE Lower School provided an interactive and educational experience for over 450 children from many schools in Leighton and Linslade who took part in 'Experience Easter' in Holy week. The engaging and hands-on trail around the church taught them about the events of the first Holy week. (Board of Education)

To reach out in mission Amptill, St Andrew would like baptisms to be more visible using a portable font and is exploring how it could be kept securely...
...and Stevenage St Nicholas is developing a scheme with the Advisory Committee to reposition timber screens, open up meeting rooms and install a new floor and heating in order to make the most of its building for its growing congregation and to engage with those outside the church, including those in new housing.
(Advisory Committee)

IN 2018 Reaching New People through Fresh Expressions, a key growth factor, had:

- 965 contacts with a Fresh Expressions Officer
- 411 people accessed RNP TRAINING
- 294 people attended A VISION DAY
- 25 FRESH EXPRESSIONS using 'Indicator Packs' to measure progress
- 12 Fresh Expressions receiving grants

TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

Chaplaincy renewed Watford Town Centre Chaplaincy, see p10

WELCOMING THE WIDER COMMUNITY INTO CHURCHES

The award winning £2m replacement halls complex at Christ Church, Bedford as much as the new kitchen at St John the Baptist, Gt Gaddesden are projects supported by the Advisory Committee which welcome the community in to use our buildings. (Advisory Committee)

Watford St John's Church of England Primary School is a new Church of England school in an area where there was no existing provision. Its new building was blessed and dedicated by the Bishop of St Albans in August 2018.
(Board of Education)

The BISHOP'S HARVEST APPEAL -

'GIVE PEAS A CHANCE' saw parishes and schools in the diocese raising £59,363 to support a Christian Aid project bringing hope to farmers in Malawi. Growing drought-resistant, nutritious, commercially valuable pigeon peas enabled co-operatives to form and negotiate fair prices for improved yield. This is feeding farmers and their families, keeps them healthy and even pays for their children's education where they were once at the mercy of drought, famine and sickness.

WORK WITH REFUGEES IN WATFORD

was informed by a clergy sabbatical visit to parishes in Sweden where this work is established. Revd Tony Rindl, the son of a 1939 child refugee from Austria, met people that were "deeply existentially moved and felt they just had to do something." A housewife opened her home to unaccompanied minors. A banker changed his profession and gained new friends. The church saw their faith and supported their engagement. All that has happened has changed the church as well as the lives of the people.

Living God's Love is our vision, expressed in 'Going Deeper into God', 'Making New Disciples' and 'Transforming Communities' and these are seen in the lives of all those who have taken this vision to heart and live it out in their lives.