



ANNUAL REVIEW

2015-16

December 2016

We hope you will enjoy reading about the life of St Paul's & St George's Church (Ps & Gs) for the year 2015-16. This annual report brings together the work of the different teams serving across the breadth of church life. The contribution of each team is celebrated as we continue to work to realise our vision to be whole-life disciples, sharing the whole of the gospel, with the whole of society through churches of grace.

Review of activities

In 2015/16, we continued to develop the ministry of the church under the four areas covered by our strategy:

Discipleship – we have continued to encourage people to become ‘whole-life disciples’ of Jesus Christ. We now have 20 Connect Groups across the city and beyond. The groups range in size from 6-60 people. During the year, we ran two Marriage Preparation Courses, a Network Course, and other courses to help people work out what it means to be a follower of Jesus. We have begun two Transforming Work groups to facilitate discussion around faith in the workplace. We have held regular prayer gatherings called Kingdom Come, and our Prayer Ministry team have received training and have begun serving at our 9am service, as well as 11am and 7pm each week. Our teaching series have helped people to grow in their relationships with God and each other.

Our Youth and Children’s work continues to prosper – from our Babies and Toddler groups, Bounce, Energise to youth group weekends away and the weekly Friday meetings.

Our work with students is now well established, while work with international students and refugees has continued to grow. Edinburgh City Council encouraged us to help people coming to Edinburgh as refugees ‘to rediscover beauty’ – and we are trying to do that through regular activities. The guests who attend our activities for refugees end their time together by eating at Soul Food.

Soul Food has continued to grow and develop – serving over 100 people each week and having over 100 people on the team too. Alongside church members serving on the Bethany/Edinburgh City Mission Care Van, our Counselling service, people volunteering with charities like Home for Good and Safe Families for Children, we were delighted to help in the appointment of the new Prisons Alpha Scotland Development Worker. Our **Social Transformation** ministry is widening its scope and going from strength to strength.

Under **Theological education** we have continued to run our School of Theology. Libby Talbot, our new Associate Rector who joined the staff in January 2016, has overseen the re-launch of this with new modules being offered and increased interest. Discussions with the SEI and St Mellitus have been ongoing during the year – and it is hoped mixed-mode training will be offered from September 2017.

Finally, we remain committed to the development of more **church planting** initiatives. Our Associate Rector, Richard Cornfield, has been working on a prospective new plan which is creative, imaginative and pioneering. Discussions will continue with the Bishop, Diocese and Vestry as these plans become a reality in 2017.

Vestry

Vestry has continued to meet during the year with the Rector chairing the whole Vestry meetings and Resources group. Craig Irving became the Chair of the Church Life group. Lynda Ross became Chair of the Property and Infrastructure group, Jake Thomas was Chair of the Staffing group while Sean Wright continued to serve as Treasurer. Helen Brett took over from Jake Thomas as secretary in January. At the AGM, Julie Taylor and Helen Brett will finish their terms as Vestry members while Sally Best will step down due to work commitments. We thank them all for their contributions over the past year.

Worship

In 2016 we have sought to deepen our expression of prayer and unity. At the start of the year, we were looking for new ways to enrich our prayer life as a church. This has led to the launch of Kingdom Come, our termly worship and prayer nights. Our final one was hosted by Housefires in November.

We have looked to unify music, creative and production teams to be one team that enables worship across the life of Ps & Gs and beyond. This has meant reorganising our setup and developing the technology and skills we use. This all happens with 75 people on teams serving these areas. We continue to support All Souls Fife and the Borders Filling Station in their worship. We hosted Shane Claiborne on the Storytellers tour followed by our epic Easter celebrations. Mark Cameron, our worship director, has also appreciated the opportunity to serve and receive at events including Seen and Heard, Jump, CLAN, Big Church Day Out, Transforming Edinburgh, Powerpoint, Bethel Live, Hillsong and Worship Central in Glasgow.

We have taken steps forward this year. It's been a time of rooting and establishing teams and technology. Numbers across various services, events and teams continue to rise. Our home grown media and song writing has opened up new creative avenues for church members.

Next year, we are pursuing two key developments: our song writing as a church; and the possibility of a worship training school. We believe these can have a significant impact in our church, city and nation.

We are particularly grateful for the involvement of Josh Gilbert and Rachel Mudie. As previous and current interns, they have enabled our community to encounter God. As we see more leaders grow, we look forward to seeing more people worship all of who God is, with all that they are.

Prayer

We continue to try & develop a depth of prayer life as a community. We have begun Kingdom Come nights where we gather to worship & listen to God individually & for the wider church as well as interceding.

Prayer ministry on a Sunday, led by Jo Hockley & David Strang, continues to grow with a successful training day being held at the end of the summer. We hope to gather 3 times a year to deepen our understanding of how to pray effectively.

Welcoming

Over the past year we have continued to try to ensure that despite being a large church we can still provide a warm, welcoming community for each person who comes into Ps & Gs. A lot of this happens naturally through relationships and being a church of people who genuinely love each other. It is also done more deliberately through the welcome, hospitality, the ability to access small groups, prayer ministry and numerous other ways.

Most notably over the last 12 months, we have changed the feel of the 7pm service. We have sought to engage the 'millennial generation' more effectively, whilst also being inclusive to all. As part of this we have been running separate sermon series since January 2016, with the culture of students and 20s & 30s more in mind. Tea and coffee has been changed in the evening, to create a more welcoming feel before the service. This has made a real difference both to the welcome people receive and the opportunity for people to chat.

Over the year we have also done a review of how we welcome visitors by looking at the journey from someone's first experience to becoming committed to Ps & Gs. As a result we have run more regular welcome evenings at different times of the day and week. We have also run a revised welcome team training event with increased emphasis on enabling newcomers to find their way, not just physically into the church, but also to help people find their way into the church community. This has been well received by those who attended and we hope that it will continue to have an effect on people's first and subsequent experiences of Ps & Gs.

Interns

The internship year at Ps & Gs is a year of service in the church, where we provide the intern with a full experience of what church ministry entails, with time for theological and personal reflection, as well as working within a specific ministry area.

During 2015/16 David Shanks spent his second internship year with us working with James McSparran and our young people and is now our full time administrator. Josh Gilbert, focussed on students and worship ministry and on completion of the internship was employed by Alpha Prisons to pioneer their work in Scottish Prisons. David Moodie and Ellie Hobson, were linked with Richard Cornfield in Social Transformation. David has gone on to be the full time Parish Assistant at Granton Parish Church, whilst Ellie left us earlier in the year to continue her counselling training and work in an outdoor centre in Aviemore. All four interns threw themselves fully into the life of the church, learning and giving a huge amount in their specific ministry areas.

We were delighted that this September, 3 new interns joined us, Rachel Mudie specialising in worship, Rachel Johnston, specialising in youth and Jess Polson focussing on students. They have already made a huge impact in every aspect of the ministries they are involved in.

Following a review of the internship year we tried to be more deliberate in planning how the interns' time is used and ensuring they get the full experience of being on staff at Ps & Gs. So now a third of their time will be spent learning and serving in one ministry area; a third having wider church ministry experience, through serving in many different areas of church life and having the opportunity to join the staff on conferences or wider church activities; and then a third of their time is spent laying good foundations for the rest of their lives, through training in weekly intern time, supervision, spiritual direction and mentoring, and theological education. On top of that they will be given the time and space for their own reflection and to explore God's calling on their lives.

Connect Groups

Connect Groups continue to be our expression of mid-week groups. They have a very deliberate 'up, in and out' focus. 'Up' being a focus on worship and Bible study and growing in faith. 'In' because connect groups are the places where relationships are built and life is shared which is crucial in a large church, and 'Out' in which each group has some sort of missional, community or evangelistic element.

The groups range in size from 6-60 and each has its own personality and style. Some groups focus on particular ages or genders, but most are a mix of ages and men and women. Some have a particular focus, whether that is the environment or staying active or serving their local community. All the groups are open to new members, share the leadership and involve food! Bible study and worship resources are provided which are linked in with the sermon series and groups can choose to use this or their own material. The main group leaders have support and training evenings every half term.

At present we have around 20 groups, but this is ever changing as new groups start and groups stop or re-form. Our vision is that over the next 6 months, 6 new groups will start and so we are keen to hear from members of the church who have the vision to start a new group.

Children's

This year in children's ministry has been another great year. We continue to enjoy having so many children in our Sunday morning groups. In September we started a group for our 9am service which is going well. Every Thursday Babies and Toddlers welcomes families from around the city. Many comment on how friendly the team are, how great the space is and how people feel part of Ps & Gs. It is still great to have Bounce five times a year. This helps to build relationships with families we have known from Babies and Toddlers. The magic show and bouncy castle are always big hits!

Energise runs every month for children in primary five to primary seven. They enjoy all sorts of activities from trips out to themed nights.

This year's highlight has to be Seen and Heard! On 24 September we welcomed around 200 people from around Scotland. The main sessions and workshops were all to encourage and equip people who volunteer and work in children's ministry. Throughout our preparation and on the day it was evident that God was present and His hand was on what was happening. This was especially evident when four days before, our keynote speaker pulled out due to illness and Professor Tom Wright was available to speak. The feedback from the conference has been positive. Our hope is that everyone who attended was encouraged and equipped in this vital work.

Youth

It has been an exciting year in our youth ministry! We continue to try to grow 'whole-life' disciples and are so encouraged with what God is doing. Ultimately, we think great youth work has 2 elements; spending time with God and spending time with each other.

Our heart is to faithfully respond to what God is doing in the lives of our young people. Over the last year, we have reshaped lots. As mentioned, the programme prioritises spending time with God, and with each other.

Our emphasis is on empowering young people. We want them to build habits that will help them grow as whole-life disciples for their whole lives. As a team, we encourage each other to lead in a way that makes this come to life. Our hope is that what happens within the youth ministry makes a difference to the whole life of a young person. We want our young people to flourish in their relationship with Jesus for themselves.

We have 17 leaders serving in youth ministry and we meet together twice a term for training and support. Over the last year we have come together to encourage and learn from each other in a more structured way. We are also delighted to have Rachel Johnston focussing on youth ministry this year.

Students

The last academic year was an exciting time for our students. At the start of the year we took over 50 students on our Weekend Away. It was a time of profound encounter with God.

Huddles (student connect groups) continued, this was the second year of running them. We saw them create space for students to grow deeper in relationship with each other through sharing the ways in which God has been speaking into their lives.

We continued to hold student gatherings once a month and we have remained committed to providing opportunities to see students grow in their gifts through them. A Student Strategy Team was formed to enable us to cast a larger vision for our student community. We have a core group of students who are invested in developing this vision, and committed to see it come to fruition.

The new academic year began with successful Hangover Brunches during freshers week, run in partnership with the Salvation Army on East Adam Street. We had great conversations with freshers and served over 170 bacon rolls. Excitingly we've also begun a daily bible reading rhythm together (we post links to our passages on Facebook – you're welcome to join in!) and have launched a weekly bible blog where students take it in turns to share what God has said to them through the passage and how it's changing the way we live.

Manifesto

Our ministry for men has met several times over the last 12 months with curry nights and Rugby World cup evenings. The high point remains Beer and Carols where 150 men enjoy a hog roast, sing some carols, and deliver a very raucous rendition of the Twelve Days of Christmas. It is always a much anticipated event with people enquiring months in advance.

Courses

The Marriage Preparation course ran in Spring 2016 over 5 evenings with 12 couples. The course ran again in the autumn of this year over 2 Saturdays to accommodate couples who plan to marry by the Spring or who live in different cities or work shifts. The Saturday course had 7 couples. The course aims to help engaged couples or those considering marriage develop strong foundations for a lifetime together. Couples enjoy a candlelit dinner (or lunch on the Saturday course), lots of chances to chat together, talks on the skills of marriage, and interesting insights into the married lives of a different couple each week. Feedback is always very positive with many people saying they would recommend it to others and that it is definitely worth doing.

The Parenting Course ran in Spring 2016 with 10 participants. The course gives parents time to hear about and share experiences with others in parenting. It is an excellent course for every parent whether they attend Ps & Gs or not.

The Network Course helps people identify how to serve the church and their community and guides them in the discovery of their Spiritual Gifts. 15 people did the course in June this year.

School of Theology had its second term in February/March 2016 with about 20 people participating. Libby and the other tutors met and refreshed the courses on offer for 2016/17. So this year we are running Bibletrack 1; a comprehensive overview of the Bible; Re:frame, a course which is designed to help people live out their faith in modern life; and Foundations in Apologetics, which is designed to equip people to engage in some key debates surrounding Christianity. There are around 45 people signed up and the school ran for 5 sessions between September and November and will run for another 5 session from January to March 2017.

The Transforming Work course started in Autumn 2016. There are two groups with around 12 people in each.

Alpha

This Autumn we have relaunched Alpha after a year off! We had a successful launch night with 90 guests, craft beer, a hog roast and the chance to find out more about the course. We've begun the course with around 50 guests in Costa Coffee on Hanover Street. We're using the new Alpha Film Series which is going down well and is more in keeping with the kind of atmosphere we're trying to create this term. Group conversations have been lively and well led.

Prisons

This year has seen some exciting changes and progression to our ongoing ministry at HMP Edinburgh (Saughton Prison). Josh Gilbert has been working hard to build a trusting relationship with the prison's chaplaincy team. Over the last year the church has lead worship for many of the prison's chapel services and Josh himself has spent time on the wings accompanying chaplains during pastoral visits with inmates. In addition to this a small number of volunteers have wrapped Christmas presents for visiting families and helped to coordinate a Christmas party in the visitors centre.

The church aims to continue this crucial work with some of the most marginalised in our city. Josh has since been appointed the Scotland Prisons Development Manager for Alpha International. Josh and his team are finalising arrangements to run an Alpha Course in HMP Edinburgh despite several hurdles they faced over this year. God is always going ahead of them and preparing a way which creates a real sense of excitement and anticipation in this ministry.

Soul Food

The regular Saturday night ministry has continued to go from strength to strength. We serve meals to 100 people each week, with over hundred people volunteering to serve week by week. Conversations and relationships have deepened – and have inspired so many people in the church and beyond. Value, worth and dignity are communicated to our guests as well as compassion and care. A small number of guests meet each Wednesday lunchtime. Soul Food has also become a place where some who have come to Edinburgh as refugees conclude their time together by joining in with other guests.

Pastoral Care

We have a passion at Ps & Gs to create whole-life disciples and a key requirement to enable this must be good pastoral practice. This simply means creating a place where people can be known, respected and responded to. A place where the whole person is considered - body, mind, emotion and spirit. Great pastoral care can cope with the ebbs and flows of life; can cope with being drawn near and also being pushed away; and it helps people go deeper and also laughs at the lighter side of life. Shirley Sim and Richard Cornfield have begun exploring how we at Ps & Gs can develop our pastoral care. We have begun to think about gateways for care and work out if Number 40 can be more than a counselling service but also a centre for pastoral care.

We recognise at a time of crisis we are well equipped with our counselling service. However, the counselling service recognise that some of the people they are caring for might just as well be helped by pastoral listening and prayer ministry. We also recognise that, because of ministries like Soul Food, there could be more demand for this lighter approach. We also recognise, following conversations with Teresa MacMillan that being able to broaden our care to include a befriending service might help. A new Pastoral team is being created to deliver this new approach.

Counselling

This has been a busy year for the counselling service based at Number 40 and at small clinics in Drummond Community High and in St Thomas Aquinas schools. Our volunteers are qualified and experienced counsellors or students who are working towards gaining a Diploma in counselling. We have three counsellors who are specially trained to work with couples, and two who specialise in working with children and young people.

Our clients experience difficulties and dilemmas in their lives which prompt them to seek counselling. Presenting problems include relationship difficulties, anxiety and depression. Over the year we have offered 1658 hours of counselling and were able to provide counselling to 89 new clients in Number 40. Over a third of clients waited less than 2 weeks for an appointment with another 25% waiting 3-4 weeks. We experienced a significant increase in referrals in Spring which resulted in us having to stop taking referrals as we were not going to be able to see new clients for several weeks. During this time we referred people on to other services

Our service is provided predominantly to people who want to be understood in their Christian worldview. Referrals from the wider community constitute more than a third of our client group. These clients access our service through recommendation either from members of our congregation or from previous clients who have been satisfied with our service.

An important part of our service is the professional development of our counsellors. Counsellors check in with their personal supervisors each month to ensure they are working ethically and appropriately with each client. We have a joint venture with Central Counselling which provides professional development and training to our volunteers and staff. We have learned a variety of new skills including sessions on working with trauma, using sand trays in counselling sessions, and we got a very useful introduction to "Transactional Analysis". Our dedicated teams also had the opportunity for creativity and reflection on a counsellors retreat day.

Global Focus

We have continued to provide financial support, prayer support and fellowship to our Mission Partners. We now support 9 individuals or families as this year we partnered with Hannah Wilkinson who is working for Latin Link in Peru, helping with their short term volunteer programmes. Roderick Mackenzie keeps in touch with all our partners on behalf of the Global Focus Team. Every partner is linked with at least one Ps & Gs Connect group and we aim to have a partner or organisation featured in services once a month. Where possible partners join us in person or through skype. We also publish prayer points for mission partners in the notice sheet each week and online.

We continue to support World Vision and International Justice Mission (IJM). We have established a new relationship with Tearfund linked with their work in Zimbabwe encouraging churches to take care of vulnerable orphans. IJM has now linked us with their work against trafficking in India. The Justice Prayer Group, led by Andy and Charlie Bevan, meets every two months to pray for the work of IJM and wider justice issues.

The Global Focus Team provided regular updates on Facebook and webpages to inform the congregation during the refugee 'crisis' of 2015/6. In November 2015, some of our partners ran a Middle East workshop attended by around 50 people.

A small team led by Wendy Ager is now running monthly outings for refugees with several Syrian families attending regularly.

Isobel Booth-Clibborn and David Dushimimana joined the Global Focus Team this year. Alison Strang and Jenny Cornfield will step down as Co-chairs in December 2016 and we thank them for all their hard work.

Micah

The Micah Fund's purpose is to raise funds for selected projects which are aligned with our current church strategy. Our aim is to give to churches, ministries and projects where we are confident they can make a real difference. In addition we also give grants for those going on short term mission from Ps & Gs, support for ordinands in training and donations to major international emergencies as declared by the Disasters Emergency Committee

This year we researched how we could help approximately 15 charities and organisations. We then reviewed the submissions and compiled a short list for funding, using agreed criteria.

The recipients this year were: Fusion, Alpha, Forge, Clay Community Church, Bethany, Home for Good and Granton Community Gardens. There were also several gifts to individuals going on short term mission and for theological training.

Facilities

We are delighted that our building is so busy, as this was a main objective behind the refurbishment 8 years ago. Internal events have grown this year and we now have Youth, Students, Soul Food, Marriage Preparation, B's & T's and Bounce using the main space regularly. In addition we have hosted a number of national events and conferences including the "We are Worship" Tour last October and "Shane Claibourne Storytellers" tour in March. A highlight of the year was Ps & Gs Children's Ministry Conference "Seen & Heard". We are thankful to our great team of caretakers and events staff who transform the building in readiness for each event. The Property and Infrastructure group welcomed a new chair, Lynda Ross, and this year has agreed funding for the new fire detection system in Number 40 and agreed the transition to LED lighting throughout.

Finance

Thank you so much for your amazing generosity in giving to the work of Ps & Gs. We finished 2015/16 with a small surplus. We have continued to look carefully at our costs, taking advantage of improved energy prices and this year has seen a big change in the way we finance mission work external to Ps & Gs. Our mission partners and partner organisations are now funded from the General fund and we have launched the Micah Fund to give to projects in the UK which are in line with Ps & Gs four strategic areas. We have continued to support the church graft in All Soul's Fife. Further information on our finances can be found in the Annual Accounts.

Staffing

This year we said goodbye to several core members of our Operations Team, Kay Hamilton, Clare O'Donnell and Laura Moffat. We wish them well in their new adventures. Laura left us in July to move to Oxford, following her marriage. We also said goodbye to our wonderful interns. Ellie Hobson, David Moodie and Josh Gilbert. David Shanks has now joined us full-time as an Administrative Assistant after 2 years as an intern. We welcomed Libby Talbot as Associate Rector in January and Anna Wakeling as Finance Administrator in April. From July, Beth Allnutt became our full-time Facilities Co-ordinator and Eilidh Matheson became our full-time Events Co-ordinator. In August we welcomed three new interns: Jess Polson, Rachel Johnston and Rachel Mudie. Jamie Woods started as our part-time Caretaker in November.

We enjoyed a staff team time away in September based at Winton House and led by Christian Salvaratnum from Alpha UK and G2 church in York. Staffing Group continues to review pay and conditions to ensure that we are caring for our staff well and this year we have increased our employer pension contributions to 6% and introduced Prayer and Study days for Operations Staff.

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