

Sutton Coldfield Vineyard

Directors Report

For the Year Ended 31 August 2010

Structure, Governance and Management

Sutton Coldfield Vineyard's primary Governance document is its Memorandum and Articles of Association incorporated on 23rd May 1995.

The Charity is constituted as a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustee recruitment, appointment and training

Trustees are selected by appointment upon the recommendation of the existing Trustees. The existing Trustees make every effort to ensure that any new Trustee appointment will contribute significantly to the skills base of the team. Areas of particular experience and competence are actively examined as well as the need for a trustee to be local and familiar with the day to day activities of the Charity.

Having identified a potential candidate one or other of the existing Trustees will be nominated to meet with and to appraise the potential Trustee as to the role and responsibilities of serving the charity in the capacity of a Trustee. Due to the size and nature of the Charity, we have adopted an informal training and induction process for new Trustees. This is achieved through interaction with the existing Trustees and through the provision of current documentation on the role and responsibilities of Trustees provided by the Charity Commission.

Organisational Structure

The Charity is organised so that the Trustees, who are also the Management Committee, meet regularly to manage its affairs. There is one full time Senior Pastor who manages the day to day administration of the Charity and oversees other staff. The Charity also employs a part time Administrator.

Relationship with connected organisations

Sutton Coldfield Vineyard is a Christian Church, affiliated to Vineyard Churches (UK). As such the Church is autonomous in regard to its local decision making but it seeks to express its commitment to a wider Church network through participation in leadership training events and conferences and the voluntary contribution of funds to support the work and ministry of Vineyard Churches (UK).

Sutton Coldfield Vineyard is a member Church of Churches Together in Central Sutton Coldfield and a member of the Evangelical Alliance of Churches (UK). The Church is also exploring links with the Churches Together local to the Boldmere, Banners Gate & Wylde Green area.

The Church supports the educational project sponsored by Spurgeons UK in the suburb of Kibera in Nairobi, Kenya. Links continue to be developed with Pastor Kenyanito Dudi, who is the Project Director and in September 2009 the Church hosted a visit from Pastor Kenyanito. An initial interest meeting for potential team members was held in regard to a proposed ministry trip to Kenya in the summer of 2010. A growing number of Church members have taken out long term child sponsorships to help support children through their educational years at the school. The Church continues to provide Pastor Kenyanito Dudi with regular financial support as he furthers his academic studies while heading up this project.

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Locally the Church continued to support the charity 'Space West Midlands' which operated a crisis pregnancy counselling and support centre as well as providing PSHE training & educational services to local schools. Support was provided through regular financial contributions in addition to a number of Church members fulfilling active roles with this Charity in a variety of capacities. However in February 2010 this support finished due to the closure of this project.

The Church financially supports a local Charity called the 'Causeway Project' which seeks to support people with a variety of learning difficulties through a variety of events including the Glory Group which meets on a monthly basis at the Carpenters Arms. Links have been established with the Kids UK Trust to provide sponsorship for local schools worker, Andi Markham, to help provide assemblies to Boldmere Junior School. Sutton Coldfield Vineyard continues to support the work of Christian Aid, taking part in the National Christian Aid Week fundraising efforts as well as supporting a variety of Fair Trade initiatives. A special gift offering was taken at Christmas 2009 to support the work of the Lazarus home for girls in Bethany.

Church Leader, David McNeil, serves as a committee member on the Sutton Central Churches Trust which is the Charity that runs the Carpenters Arms Community Centre in Boldmere where a significant amount of Church activities are based. During the year David McNeil also maintained connections with wider City Leadership initiatives such as the Birmingham Missional Leaders Network attending various meetings and events.

Risk management

The Directors purpose to be aware of any major strategic, operational and financial risks to the Charity. In the year ahead all of the major areas will be reviewed and kept up to date.

Child protection policy – the Church has an established child protection policy and every adult who is involved in working with the children and young people in the Church is screened through an independent body (CCPAS) and undertakes to follow the church guidelines. The Senior Pastor and his wife hold current enhanced CRB certificates as do the other members of the Leadership Group and the Trustees.

Safety reviews are conducted in association with the management team of the Carpenters Arms where Sunday public meetings are held with particular attention paid to parents for maintaining the health and safety of their children.

Public liability is covered by an insurance policy with the Charity specialist insurers Ansvar Insurance Company Limited.

Financial security is managed by a regular review of the Charity's financial status by the Senior Pastor and Financial Administrator which is reported to the Trustees at scheduled meetings as well as in between meeting dates.

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Objectives and Activities

The Charity's objects and its principle activity is that of the advancement of the Christian Faith. The principle charitable purposes of the Company in accordance with the objects of the Memorandum and Articles of Association are the advancement of the Christian faith; the furtherance of religious education; the relief of the poor and needy; the relief of the sick and elderly and for the benefit of other charitable bodies and institutions as the Directors in their absolute discretion see fit. When planning our activities for the year we have considered the Commission's guidance on public benefit and in particular guidance on charities for the advancement of religion.

During this period the objects of the Charity were put into effect by the Senior Pastor and members of the Leadership Group in conjunction with the wider grouping of leaders called the Ministry Team. The Leadership Group consisted of six church members from September 2009 to April 2010 then reduced to four following the unanimous decision to allow one of the couples to step down from their responsibilities. This Team, including the Senior Pastor, share responsibility for the varied aspects of running the Church. The Ministry Team is comprised of other leaders within the Church who hold positions of responsibility for various ministries within the Church such as small groups, worship teams, children and youth, administration and outreach. Each member of this team has defined reporting relationships to members of the Leadership Group.

Following a 6 month notice period to vacate the office premises occupied on Redacre Road the Church relocated its administrative base in March 2010 to Offices 4 & 5 at Queens Chambers in Boldmere. These provided a convenient and flexible space to operate from while further investigations continued to find more permanent premises in the area.

Achievements and Performance

Church Leadership development & training events

The Church leadership continued to use the Leadership Behaviours document generated through the interactions with Guy Rothwell from Waverley Learning at a series of Leadership Events in the previous year as a basis for operation and communication. This is made available to all new members of the wider Ministry Team and formulates an expectation of how the Team will function.

The Senior Pastor and his wife continue to gain benefit from the provision of Leadership events provided by the Midlands Area of Vineyard Churches (UK) and following discussion with the other members of the Leadership Group a decision was made before the summer of 2010 to appoint Simon & Keely Bateson from Vineyard Network Church Birmingham to fulfil the role as Vineyard Church Overseers for the Church in June 2010. Their role is to provide support and accountability for the Leadership Team and Senior Pastors in particular as well as to provide a point of reference for members of the congregation.

David McNeil attended a regional training event in March 2010 hosted in Birmingham for Churches participating in the National 'Freedom in Christ' discipleship program. The event was designed to help encourage Church Leaders enhance their use of the 'Freedom in Christ' resources.

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A significant Ministry Team retreat day was held in July 2010 at the Hillcrest Centre in Dordon whereby the various members of the Ministry Team and Leadership Group helped to generate a new vision and mission statement built around five key statements which follow, describing the Church we see: -

- 1) The Church we see...is devoted to God the Father, promoting a Jesus-centred life empowered by the Holy Spirit [**Vision**]
- 2) The Church we see...is a diverse family which is friendly, inclusive, accepting of all people and bridges the generations. [**Values**]
- 3) The Church we see...exists to help people encounter Jesus and enable them to do life well. [**Mission**]
- 4) The Church we see...takes responsibility to develop God-given gifts to serve others. [**Strategy**]
- 5) The Church we see... joyfully celebrates life and is growing together in a real and honest way. [**Culture**]

Overseas ministry

The Church continued to support the ministry of the Spurgeons partnership project in Kibera, Kenya through direct sponsorship of Pastor Kenyanito Dudi as he continues to further his academic studies. The profile of the child sponsorship program operated through Spurgeons continues to be raised both on Sundays and through Newcomers events such as lunches and training classes. Plans made for the visit of Pastor Kenyanito in September 2009 included him speaking at a Sunday service as well being part of an initial interest meeting to discuss plans for a proposed Ministry Trip to Kenya in the summer of 2010. The focus of this trip was to build relationships with the Team at the school in Kibera as well as to look to provide a holiday club with various activities for a number of the children at the school.

Following the initial general interest meeting a Team of 12 adults committed to this trip to Kenya and a series of training and planning sessions were scheduled to help to deliver an interactive Youth Alpha program linked with an Olympic theme. Throughout the year a number of fundraising activities were undertaken to help to raise funds for materials and equipment to be taken out to Kibera during the visit. Fundraising events included a Body Shop party and a special Sunday service selling Krispey Kreme Donuts as well as well as a sponsored 'shirt of hurt' where Church members were sponsored to wear a football shirt of a rival team for money!

The Team spent just over twelve days in Kenya from Sunday 25th July to Friday 6th August. Four days were spent providing a fun-filled program of main sessions, craft and sports activities for the four hundred plus student body of the School. The Team participated in a Church service on the Sunday as well as enjoying some more traditional tourist activities at the Nakuru National Park and Thomson waterfalls. The visit was well received by the staff and students at the School and has certainly paved the way for future return visits. A highlight of the visit was the afternoon session spent giving a significant number of the children various items of school uniform donated by members of the Church and some local schools in Sutton Coldfield.

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Children and Youth ministry

A team of committed volunteers continued with the development of these ministries for the children and young people of the Church. A full and varied teaching and activities program was implemented. Regular events saw the valued contribution of team members and children alike especially within the special Guest Event services held at Christmas and Easter. These contributions included the use of a variety of creative media including drama, dance, music and art. Various youth outings were provided including trips to Alton Towers, Waterworld and both laser and bowling events at Star City in Birmingham.

A number of residential events were participated in including a retreat at Cefn Lea in mid Wales plus the Youth for Christ 'The Experience' holiday at Saffron Walden. A number of church members worked as part of the Team to host this residential Youth event in August at The Friends' School in Saffron Walden, Essex. Most of the Churches young people benefited from their involvement in this excellent event.

David McNeil continued to be involved as a volunteer leader at the regular Monday Children's clubs led by Andi Markham from Kids UK at the Carpenters Arms Community Centre in Boldmere. A special event was held at Christmas for the children and invitations given to the children and parents to participate in Sutton Coldfield Vineyard's Christmas guest services.

Social, gathering and ministry events

The Church year started with an exciting new initiative to provide a series of high quality training events accessible to members of the local community during the autumn term. This training event started on September 16th 2009 and aimed to provide the community with a series of training courses aimed at helping people 'do life well'. This was delivered in the context of a cafe style environment with a shared meal for all course participants followed by the option of three different courses in seminar rooms. The courses provided included a course on handling finances called 'The Money Secret', designed by national charity Care for the Family plus a course generated by Mark & Stella Doggett from Centre for Life Management on managing stress.

In addition to these courses another two programs were offered including the Alpha course and the Freedom in Christ discipleship course. A significant proportion of Church members provided help in setting up the rooms, preparing and serving food as well as attending the courses themselves. These courses were advertised through a leaflet drop to around 2,000 homes in the area as well as face to face contact in Boldmere at various outreach events and the use of local media. The stress management course was promoted by an advertised give-away of 100 free stress shapes in Boldmere.

A social event for course participants was hosted during the half term break at the Mother India restaurant on Boldmere Road. The Freedom in Christ 'Steps to Freedom' day retreat was hosted at the Hillcrest Centre in Dordon with over twelve people in attendance. The Alpha course retreat day was also held in November for the half a dozen attendees. Overall the attendances grew as the courses developed. Numbers at the 'Money Secret' course were small but the feedback was very positive from guests and Church members alike. The numbers attending the 'Stress Management' course were very positive with around twenty five attendees. Again the feedback for this course was very positive with participants expressing interest in follow up events.

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As part of a leaving party for long standing Church member Madge Flemming hosted after a service on a Sunday in December 2009 Church members were able to present Madge with a very generous gift of £3,500 towards her relocation costs to Lancaster. Two further follow up events were made available to participants from the autumn Training event courses including a Managing Stress retreat day in Dordon in February 2010 and an Alpha attendees evening to hear Jeff Lucas at a Care for the Family event hosted at Birmingham Christian Centre in March.

The Church continued to make use of the week 5 Sundays throughout the year to host informal Breakfast events which created an opportunity to communicate different aspects of the vision of the Church as well as facilitating some focused corporate prayer. The week 5 Sunday in January was the focus of an appreciation event to express gratitude to all the Church members who served regularly either on the Sunday rota's or through mid-week activities. The free bowling and Costa coffee event was a lot of fun and well received by the sixty or so who attended.

A significant number of Church members committed to enabling the monthly outreach events within the Boldmere area. This included serving drinks to local shoppers, providing opportunity for members of the community to receive prayer for any needs and a number of give-aways linked to special events such as Valentine's Day, Mother's Day and Father's Day. Outreach events in the autumn were accompanied by a leafleting program in the preceding week to deliver event invitations to the Money Secret and Stress Management seminars to around 2,000 homes in the Boldmere area.

The evening service called 'The Well' continued up until March 2010 after which it was decided to no longer continue due to the departure of a key member of the Team who regularly contributed to the music element of this evening and a belief that it had run its course and that new initiatives would follow at some point in the near future. This service had created a relaxed environment for extended worship, prayer and ministry to enable meaningful encounter with God.

A number of social events were held throughout the year to help connect people within the church as well as create opportunities to welcome new visitors to the church. These included men's and women's evenings as well as a successful weekend event at the 'Pursuit 09' men's conference in Lincoln where around 15 men from the Church spent a very enjoyable and inspiring weekend at the New Life Church in Lincoln listening to guest speaker Paul Reid Christian Fellowship Church in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

A successful Newcomers lunch was held in April with follow up sessions for attendees which provided an interactive environment for people to examine the Church's vision and plans for the future and how they might get involved.

A successful day was spent over the May 2010 bank holiday weekend at Stanford Hall in Leicestershire at the 'Big Church Day Out' event. Over twenty Church members enjoyed a relaxed day of music provided by various Christian artists and bands. A number of World Cup social events were held during the summer tournament including participation in a fundraising event at the Hawthorns in West Bromwich to support the ministry of the Open Doors charity as they provide support Christians persecuted for their faith in various parts of the world.

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The summer program included a series of prayer meetings held in various Church members homes on alternate weeks over the months of July and August. These events were supplemented by a full program of Summer Sunday Social events including outings to Kingsbury Water Park, Dovedale in the Peak district, Canon Hill Park in Birmingham and a BBQ social at the Hillcrest Centre in Dordon.

Building explorations

The Church has continued to explore various building and premises options including conversations with the local Methodist Church in Boldmere about exploring the possibility of developing a partnership use of the premises. The outline proposal was to make a significant investment in the fabric of the building to upgrade the tired and dated facilities with an understanding that an agreement would be worked out to enable shared use of the premises. A positive initial meeting was held where four representatives of the Methodist Church met with two members of the Vineyard Leadership Team. The meeting served to clarify that a merger was not being proposed but simply explorations to better utilise the premises. It was noted that the congregations were very different and did not represent a significant threat to each other in terms of transfer of members.

In May 2010 investigations were made into the suitability of an unusual office and warehouse property on Highbridge Road, Sutton Coldfield that offered 3,500 square feet of floor space. The property looked to offer significant potential for administrative and mid-week use but it was noted that there might be restrictions regarding any significant Sunday worship use due to its largely residential location and parking restrictions. A process to begin looking at the possibilities in more depth was begun and a viewing was made for the Leadership Group, Trustees and wider Ministry Team. This was followed up by an on-site open meeting for all interested Church members to both pray and provide feedback and comment from a viewing at the property held on 9th June 2010.

Financial review

Review of financial position

The principle funding source is voluntary donations made by members and visitors to the church. The income for the year was £135,764 and expenditure was £112,508 giving an overall surplus of £23,256. This surplus was made up of £30,526 relating to donations towards the future development of the Church meaning the day to day church activities led to a small deficit of £ 7,270.

Reserves policy

The Company holds reserves in interest bearing accounts with quick access time frames. The directors aim to hold reserve funds from a level of three months minimum to a level approaching six months of operating expenses in these accounts. This equates to a fund of between £28k to £56k. Current unrestricted reserves stand at £ 47,635.

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Plans for the future

The Trustees and Leadership Group will continue to look at the possibility of finding local premises to serve as a base for ministry and more direct community involvement. Explorations will include searches for premises suitable for both administrative and ministry purposes. The Church will continue to promote investment in to the 'Building for the Future' fund to further strengthen the Church's position should a suitable property materialise.

The Church will aim to continue to develop its Sunday services and network of small groups as well as seeking to create more ways in which to connect effectively with the local community. This includes thoughts towards the provision of children's and youth clubs in the area subject to finding a suitable venue and team.

The Church plans to arrange for a follow up visit to Kenya to visit the Kibera School Project in Nairobi perhaps looking at a visit every other year. Initial plans are for a trip during the school Easter holidays in 2012. The purpose of this visit will be to continue to develop more direct and personal connection with this project and look at ways in which we can utilise skills and abilities to enhance the work of the school.

Following the decision to discontinue the Pursuit Men's Conferences in Lincoln there are plans to re-visit the Xcel Men's conference at the Abundant Life Church in Bradford in the autumn. Other events planned for the autumn include a Ladies social event called Girls Allowed.

Statements of Directors responsibilities

The directors are required under Company Law to prepare financial statements for each financial period which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and its results for that period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- (a) Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently.
- (b) Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- (c) Prepare the financial statements on an ongoing concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the charity will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for the keeping of proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity. They are also responsible for the safeguarding of the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approval

This report was approved by the directors on

2011 and signed on their behalf

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Director