**THIS YEAR’S GOALS FOR THE CHAPEL’S MISSION**

Since a Chapel Conference in 2014, facilitated by Paul Boateng and Fr Neil Evans, the Chapel Committee has first received your ideas in relation to its mission and identity, and has drawn up a Mission Action Plan. Even with such a plan, we have to set priorities and on Sunday 16th July, Fr Richard, Fr Alan and Lis had been asked by the Committee to present a manageable plan for the next year of our priorities, and to ask for any feedback that you may have, and equally important, to encourage your participation. The presentation focused on three key priorities, which we hope will help the Chapel grow.

1. Occasional Offices

Where would the Chapel be without its “Occasional Offices”: weddings; baptisms; and funerals or memorials? We have a lot of them in comparison to the average Church of England parish, just over forty last year. They bring people to the Chapel, not just on the day, but in preparation and we hope afterwards. Sometimes Fr Richard feels as if he is pastoring to two different congregations: the Sunday congregation; and the Occasional Office “congregations”. Of course, there is overlap and some people stick, indeed, many of the baptisms that we do are of children of people who are married at the Chapel and our two current Chapel Wardens were both married in this Chapel. This is a clear channel into the Chapel, so are there any ways we could make this gift to us more fruitful in our Chapel life? Much rests on preparation, welcome and outreach, and follow up, not activities that just the priests alone should be engaged in.

How can we expect to integrate families into our community if we have nothing to offer them, apart from the christening service itself? Yes, we have a small Sunday Club, but that only takes children from about four upwards. It has been suggested that we run a “Mother’s and Toddler’s Group” on a Sunday or on a weekday. But Fr Richard can’t just do that on his own, so would you be prepared to help with that?

It has also been suggested that we introduce Baptismal Families to the congregation, at drinks after the Service, once every quarter and we could do the same with couples to be married. Twice a year we could invite married couples back for a post Service celebration of their marriages.

Each couple to be married and baptismal family could also receive, if they wished, a sponsor from the Chapel congregation, who would act as a point of contact with the Chapel congregation. Is this the sort of thing you would be prepared to be involved in?

Currently, Fr Richard and Lis run a very successful “Marriage Preparation Course” for people who will be married in the Chapel, on a Saturday morning ending with lunch. We could do with some more help, especially from couples! Could you think of volunteering?

2. OUTREACH

In the last five years, the Chapel has renewed its efforts to reach out to the local community of Mayfair, both working and resident. We have had some success. The current edition of the Mayfair Times, has an article by Mark Henderson, Chairman of Gieves & Hawkes, and the Mayfair Neighbourhood Forum, in which he observes: "It is equally notable that Mayfair contains cultural assets, such as The Royal Academy; community assets, such as the Grosvenor Chapel; and affordable housing, such as the Peabody Estate." That we are mentioned above St George’s, or even the Library next door, is testimony that others see the Chapel as active partners in the local community.

We want to work on two areas of outreach:

The first is our Parish School. It is at our doorstep with over 200 pupils and the concomitant number of parents. It is not easy. The School is good, but not outstanding, so the religious selection criteria are hardly ever applied. Very few families live in Mayfair.

In addition, to extensive interaction with the children, we have started a “Coffee Mornings for Parents” after the Friday Assembly, twice a term. Maybe, this is something you could think of volunteering to help with?

The School also has asked us for volunteers who might help with the prayer space they wish to create in their school building. That would mean going in to the school during the day to help the children learn how to pray and interact with the prayer space. Perhaps, you could volunteer for that?

The Chapel is a hybrid church somewhere between a city church with a weekday ministry and a parish church in a residential area with a largely Sunday ministry. Working people outnumber residents by 17:1 in Mayfair. One way to build relationships with working people is to work in partnership with them. The Chapel Committee has voted to take forward a “Refugee Lunch Club” on Thursdays, in partnership with the staff of Forsters Law Firm. When Forsters asked their staff if they wanted to be involved, they had over sixty volunteers! The club works by invitation only, so that we remain in control of numbers. The invitations will be issued by us and local churches. Hospitality, food, friendship and community will be offered as well as orientation about life in the UK. Now this is something that we could never do as a church on our own, but it is something we can do in partnership with the manpower and financial support of local business.

Perhaps, you would like to go on the rota to join the 60 volunteers from Forsters in running the lunch club?

3.) LITURGY & MUSIC

The Chapel’s motto says, “Unafraid to reason and unashamed to adore” (Bishop Daniel Tuttle)? If you were to consider our core identity as a Chapel, it would be our tradition of worship, which involves a high standard of music and liturgy, and ample space for prayer and reflection.

However, we face some challenges in this respect. We are not the only people in town who worship in this way. Central London is full of churches that have good choral and liturgical traditions. So, we need to explore if there are, first, further ways of divulgating the excellence of our musical tradition. Secondly, our tradition needs to be cultivated and transmitted, because both long-standing members of the congregation and especially newcomers are not always clear why we do things in the way that we do. We just cannot be unafraid to reason and unashamed to adore if we do not really know the reasons that grounds our tradition or why we worship in the way we do.

So, perhaps you have ideas on how we could divulgate the music excellence of this place more widely and its reflective liturgical tradition? It has been suggested, and we are planning, an Autumn Series of Sermons and post-Service Talks on the Liturgy – why we do things as we do and the meaning behind it. You may also have some other requests for post-Sermon Talks to promote Christian education: what would you like to know more about? Or you may have a talk that you yourself would like to give?

The Chapel can have no mission without the participation and animation of its members. Fr Richard, Fr Alan, and Lis cannot do it on their own and that should not be the goal. The mission of the Chapel depends upon the body of its members. That is why we invite your feedback and your participation. It also needs your prayers and God’s energy and guiding care, if we are to grow as a Chapel in God’s grace.