

All about Anchor Church

Anchor Church is a lively community seeking to engage locally with neighbours and walk with them through their situation. Our Vision statement is 'Learning to love, Reaching out, Anchored in Jesus.' And we try to do this with our limited core of members. We are engaging with other local Churches and community groups, schools and businesses to connect and try and show love.

History

Anchor Mission was planned by East Hill Congregational Church to serve the local community and on 16th March 1908 it became its own church. Slowly the numbers of members reduced and decision made to sell the larger building to the left of its current space and moved into what was a church hall / gym on 16th January 1988. Shaftsbury society were running the church and they brought the land and made a hostel that is now for adults with mental health conditions. We have some contact with them.

Over the years Church number reduced and there was discussion about closure as the congregation had reduced to 4 members, a Sunday service and 3 mornings of an under 5's group. In 2013/14 some others joined and since that time we have been trying to re-establish the Church to be one which engages with the community. We received a diminishing grant from the Congregational federation to employ a Church and Community Development Worker and the post started in September 2016 and will finish in August 2019. Our current Church Minister started as Minister in Jan 2017, but was supporting the church from May 2014. This has been a voluntary role and together with the Church Development worker and the members they have tried and sustained a number of activities. (See the programme or our AGM report for detail) The Minister moves on to another Church at the end of July 2019 and the Development Workers role could end at the same time.

Membership

Over the past few years the people coming to Sunday service has increased and we currently have 9 members and on Sundays have between 6 and 15 people to a service. There are occasionally children and we have created a family service and then a Messy Church monthly to try and increase a younger demographic. Five of the nine members are over 80 years and two over 90- One is the current minister and two are very new and have taken on roles. People are prepared to help some of the time but want the guidance of a Church leader and have very limited experience of leading Church.

Partnership

We realise that within our current resources we do not have enough people to do all that is needed to sustain the Church and seek to serve the community. We are talking with a number of other local Churches about the possibility of a partnership. At this stage we do not know what that would mean but we are seeking Gods guidance as to how we can flexibly engage with another Church or group so that we can maintain the excellent relationships we continue to develop with our community with the desire so show them Jesus' love.

Structure

We hold a Monthly Church meeting at which any major decision is made. A local member of an Anglian Church has taken an active supportive role and together with the Development worker they head the Community Lunch. This person also leads services and a fortnightly Pray/ bible study and led on an Alpha course we ran in 2017. The Development worker leads on our Friday morning activity, Woman's nights and other one-off activities and does a lot around the building. In the Constitution we have allowed for Friends of Anchor to take the lead if agreed by the Church meeting. We have had a leadership team which consisted of two members our Development worker and key and leading member of another

Anglican church. One member moved away and our recently adopted constitution stated that 50% of the team had to be members so that group no longer formally exists.

Worship

The minister takes the service at least twice a month and we do have member lead and shared services. Other weeks we invite people to lead. It is informal and in a circle with more traditional hymns using Songs of fellowship, but also more contemporary songs. We do sometime have a guitar, but often use an iPod to boost the singing. We have Key board but usually no one to play it. We have open prayer some are willing to pray out allowed and we give space for this. We do pray for people sometimes in small groups. The preach can be interactive and we welcome input and discussion where appropriate. Monthly Messy Church is very interactive with lunch together. We work on a them for a term which most people follow (currently the sermon on the mount)

Building

We have a 3-bedroom flat, currently let out to the past minister and his wife. It is few roads away. The Church is positioned back from the road and is old with high ceilings. It is currently functional, but needs upgrading, in the toilet area, kitchen and will need a coat of paint in the next 2 years. We let the building out, which brings in a good rent, but we need a more substantive regular booking to have enough to employ more hours. We have childrens birthday parties and a Filipino Church use the building on Sunday afternoons.

Locality

We are on the main Road from Earlsfield to Wandsworth and many pass by but as we lay back from the road they may not see us. There is a lot of social housing and increasingly private owned and rented and that accommodates people from many nations. Some have been

here for long and others will only be around for short time and then move on. The older groups that come into Anchor have been here for years and there is a strong community spirit. The Younger more transient community are busy working and will move on as they establish their families as house prices are high locally. There are plans to redevelop new high-rise building behind Anchor, but this is slow to be agreed.

Transport to and from central London is good and public transport is good. Parking around the Church is limited. There is a lot of school choice.

If you could like to know more do ask, we have our *AGM* report 2018

Nigel Lindsay 13th January 2019