



**St George's Church Barcelona
Chaplain's Report to Annual Church Meeting, 18th April 2010**

*Show me your faith without deeds,
and I will show you my faith by what I do.*
James 2.18

The Annual Church Meeting provides a perfect opportunity to look back on the ways that God has been active among us over the last year and to consider the ways in which God may be challenging us to grow and develop as a Church in the future.

Key Developments 2009/2010

Our Church has a clear and concise statement of purpose which, although not set in stone, provides a useful measure of our current and potential activities and facilities. Here it is again:-

St Georges' seeks to be a Spirit-led community in which English-speaking people of every nation are welcomed, cared for and equipped to live in love and service.

The Church leadership are continually and prayerfully reflecting on how we are doing and trying to identify what is limiting our effectiveness in carrying out our purpose to the full. A year ago, some of our main limitations were firstly in the realm of communication and promotion of the Church and secondly our engagement with teenagers and young adults, including the large group of international students in Barcelona. Two of our most significant moves in the last year have come in response to these limitations.

- **Redevelopment of the website** – Led by former churchwarden Phil Seager, a team of St George's members and professional programmers has produced a superb, attractive and functional new website for the Church. Further phases of development are envisaged, but the site has already proved highly successful both in attracting newcomers and in helping existing members connect with the Church's programmes and teaching. We are all indebted to Phil and his team for this outstanding piece of work however we all have a part to play in realizing the full potential of the web site in enabling outreach and spiritual growth.
- **Appointment of Youth Outreach Volunteer** – Our recognition of this gap in our provision coincided with the availability of a gifted and motivated candidate to fill it. I was delighted that the Church Council agreed to the appointment of Caroline Cox and have been even more delighted to see how God has confirmed that decision, blessing Caroline's efforts and initiatives and bringing more and more young people into contact with St George's. For some, this contact is mainly for friendship and fun, through George's Teenz social events or the renowned 'Spice up your Mondays' for people in their 20s and 30s. However, many of the new arrivals have also joined regularly in worship, home groups and Roots 1 courses and have ministered and served in various ways. Some of the students have only remained with us for a short time, as part of international exchange programmes, but their involvement at St George's has benefitted both us and them. The recent



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appointment of Heidi Hansen as an additional Outreach Assistant recognizes the importance of this growing ministry and brings further gifts and abilities into the ministry team.

Other significant developments during the year include:-

- **Launch of Sunday Nite** informal evening services with food, fellowship and a focus on outreach by thinking about the the growth of the early church in the book of Acts.
- **Routes 2**, our Discipleship and Mission training course has recently been launched with an enthusiastic and dedicated group of participants. At the halfway stage of this first course, we are learning together how to understand, articulate and grow in our faith and helping each other to make a thoughtful and spirit-enabled impact in the world. Routes 2 is designed to combine the best of traditional and contemporary Christian thinking with the best educational practice to equip St George's members for service. It is a key plank in our strategy to meet the Church's purpose.
- **Roots 1**, our Christian foundations course has run three times so far, helping newcomers and regular members alike to ask all the awkward questions and explore the basics of Christian faith in the 21st Century. The course is currently being used to prepare candidates for Confirmation.
- An **Events Committee** has been formed to oversee planning, organization and promotion of all kinds of events. A tremendous amount of behind the scenes work has been done by this small group, helping to ensure that events run smoothly and enabling St George's to serve the local and English speaking communities in a variety of ways.
- A new **Women's Social Group** has been meeting regularly, with a wide range of activities encouraging fellowship and mutual support within and beyond the Church membership. One of the highlights was a showing of the film *Amazing Grace* followed by an informative talk on the evils of modern day slavery.
- A **Discipleship Support Group** for men, aiming to provide a venue for mutual encouragement, support and accountability, has also held some initial meetings.

Looking Ahead

The new initiatives I've mentioned and the many other activities at St George's indicate that we are, if nothing else, a lively and active Church. But we are of course called to be more than this and here are a few brief thoughts about ways in which I'm hoping we might develop during the next year or two.

- **Prayer and Worship.** Don't take this the wrong way but I do think that sometimes our commitment to both prayer and worship is too casual and superficial. I fear that unless our approach becomes more dedicated and passionate we are unlikely to achieve much for the kingdom of God.



- **Pastoral Care.** This has been a strong feature of St George's Church for a long time, but far too much of the burden of providing this care is falling on the shoulders of a very small group of people. This needs to change and I would ask all who are not involved in this work to give it some serious thought and prayer. If you think God may be calling you to a pastoral caring role, come and see me for a conversation or a SHAPE interview. Training and support can be provided but we need people to come forward.
- **Support for Leaders.** Similarly, some of those in leadership and organizational roles in the Church have found themselves stretched or compromised by too many commitments and we need more people to step forward and share some of the burden and responsibility. Again, if this might be you, come and see me.
- **Community action.** Another way we can grow is by active involvement in Community ministry projects. Sending money or clothes or food is a great help to organizations involved in the frontline of providing care, organizations like Salvation Army, Sabadell Church, Sant'Egidio and so on. But we can contribute and receive so much more – spiritually as well as in practical ways - by active, hands on participation and I hope and pray that more of us will do so in the near future.
- **Responsible giving.** Finally I just want to remind everyone that St George's is a completely self-financing Church, which we are all participating in and benefitting from, one way or another. I ask everyone connected with St George's to prayerfully consider how much they are able to contribute to the cost of running and developing the Church.

Thanks

I want to end with a warm thank you to all who have supported Billie and I or served the Church in any way during the last year. I do appreciate the sacrifices that so many of you have made and appreciate your skills, dedication and faithfulness with which you have served. I don't like singling out individuals, but it would be remiss of me not to thank Circe Bosch followed by Monica Clua for the terrific support they have each provided in the role of Administrator. Also Mark Hopper for his cool analysis and skillful care of the Church's finances in the role of Treasurer and our Churchwardens Louise Schubert and Jimmy Dress for the wisdom and dedication they have each brought to the role, in spite of leading such busy family and professional lives. There are many others I could and should thank. You know who you are and your treasure is in Heaven.

Thank you all for a great year and for your prayers and commitment to staying with me on the journey God is leading us on together.

Rev Andrew Tweedy
Chaplain

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