

### 33. Managing Trustees of the Methodist Central Hall, Westminster

<b>Contact Name and Details</b>	The Revd Michaela Youngson Chair of the Managing Trustees michaela@methodistlondon.org.uk
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#### 1. Introduction

This report gives an overview of the varied activities and events which have been part of the life of the Methodist Central Hall Westminster during 2014/15. The church and the conference centre reach out to a vast number of residents and workers in London and the South East, as well as to visitors from all over the UK and the world.

#### 2. Ministry of the Church

- 2.1 The team ministry, led by the Superintendent Minister, the Revd Martin Turner, has the support and loyalty of church officers and other volunteers in carrying out a diverse range of tasks. A key focus and meeting point for the congregation is Sunday morning worship, where visitors join a gathered community of regular worshippers each week. Mid-week worship and Bible and fellowship groups offer opportunities for a deepening of discipleship in an atmosphere of hospitable welcome. Membership now stands at 420, with a typical morning attendance of 250, with 50 for evening services – rising to 150 for healing services.
- 2.2 The pastoral work of the church is led by Deacon Kina Saunders, who has coordinated care for church members and those in our extended church family alike. Kina joined us in September and has quickly become a highly valued colleague in the ministerial team.
- 2.3 Work amongst children and young people continues to flourish. All-age worship services, held quarterly and led by the Revd Tony Miles, are a welcome feature of Sunday morning worship. “The Sanctuary”- a creative contemporary worship service meets on Thursdays and includes members who have volunteered to assist at a winter night shelter run by Westminster Churches Together. Tony continues his valuable work in broadcasting, in both Christian and mainstream media.
- 2.4 Our Healing Ministry, under the leadership of the Revd Peter Edwards, continues to be an important part of the life at Central Hall and is valued by the many who attend.
- 2.5 As part of our serving the local community in Westminster, we host drop in projects for those living with mental illness and those with Parkinson’s Disease. Both of these projects are run in partnership with ecumenical and NHS contacts.
- 2.6 Another long-standing partnership has been that with the Sisters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul, as together we run the St Vincent’s Family Project, which is based in an extended community suite at Central Hall.
- 2.7 Chaplaincy continues to play an important part of the work, with Martin Turner as chaplain to the Methodist Parliamentary Fellowship, Tony Miles as Media Chaplain and Kina Saunders as Chaplain to the St Vincent’s Family Project. We note with regret that the three active members of the Methodist Parliamentary Fellowship have all stood down as Members of Parliament.

2.8 A key role for the Church at Methodist Central Hall is acting as a facilitator for events led by a whole range of different ministries and charities, thus the building is used to serve the London District, the Connexion and the wider Christian community.

### 3. **The Conference Centre**

3.1 Mr Paul Southern, Managing Director, leads the Conference Centre team as it works tirelessly to market the facilities of Central Hall at a time when all such centres have suffered from the down-turn in the economy. The year ending August 2014 was very successful, with record turnover from events and the café. The completion of the Lower Ground Floor refurbishment has given more high quality space to let. Bookings this year are generally up on the previous two years, though the election period seems to have caused a hiatus. Reservations are often made at very short notice, so the team has to be very flexible as it maintains the excellence of service that an ever more demanding client base expects at Central Hall at a competitive rate.

3.2 The Conference Centre team continues to work hard in developing links with new markets and to maintain standards as a world class conference and events centre – demonstrating a welcome that reflects our Methodist identity to all who use the building. Central Hall Westminster was the only London Conference Centre shortlisted as a finalist in the M&IT Industry Awards as Best UK Conference Centre.

3.3 The range of events that takes place at the hall continues to be exciting, a few highlights include:

- The televised Holocaust Memorial Service, attended by HRH The Prince of Wales, David Cameron, Ed Miliband and Nick Clegg;
- The Chinese Film Festival took place in the Great Hall in December for the second time;
- The BBC New Year's Eve Concert in the Great Hall, also featuring fantastic views from the roof;
- Many university graduation ceremonies;
- Channel 4's "Stand up to Cancer";
- The BBC "Leaders' Debate" during the General Election campaign, with worldwide coverage;
- A growing number of concerts are booking events through 2015.

### 4. **The Building**

Maintaining a building of the status and complexity of Central Hall is a constant challenge and the Trustees are committed to effective and efficient programme of maintenance and refurbishment. Dealing with general maintenance and decoration is a permanent and ongoing task, alongside particular major projects. The building continues to be in good order.

### 5. **The Future**

5.1 The Sunday congregation continues to grow and the community engagement of the Church demonstrates the Methodist commitment to an outward oriented mission, with God's love at its heart. The business is in a much stronger position than in recent years, with many clients returning and new clients are being added, with some bookings two and three years in advance.

5.2 The Revd Martin Turner will end his time as Superintendent Minister at Central Hall, this August. This is at the end of fourteen years of fruitful ministry, in which he has built a team able to offer a range of ministries and responses to the context of the Hall. His work with the Company and the Trustees has enabled the mission of the Circuit to develop and the Hall itself

to gain a national and international profile and to be a place of Christian hospitality, vibrant worship and mission outreach. The Trust wishes to thank Martin for his hard work, enthusiasm and great skill in leading the work at Central Hall.

### **\*\*\*RESOLUTIONS**

**33/1. The Conference adopted the Report.**

**33/2. The Conference appointed the following Managing Trustees of the Conference Property at Central Hall Westminster:**

The Revd Michaela Youngson (Chair of the Managing Trustees and Convenor – ex officio)

The Revd Dr Martyn D Atkins (Superintendent, London Westminster – ex officio)

The Revd Graham Thompson (Treasurer)

Mr David Morgan (Secretary)

\*Mr Tony Ackah-Yensu

Mr Kojo Amoah-Arko

The Revd Ian A Bell

\*The Revd Anthony D Miles

Mrs Judith Mitchell

\*Mrs Grace Sangmuah

Mr Ian Serjeant

Ms Helen Tudor

The Revd Jason Vinyard

*\* Indicates the people nominated by the Westminster Circuit Meeting.*

Reasoned Statement:

Grace Sangmuah has been a member of MCHW for 35 years, holding many leadership positions. She has extensive media experience, latterly for a national newspaper.