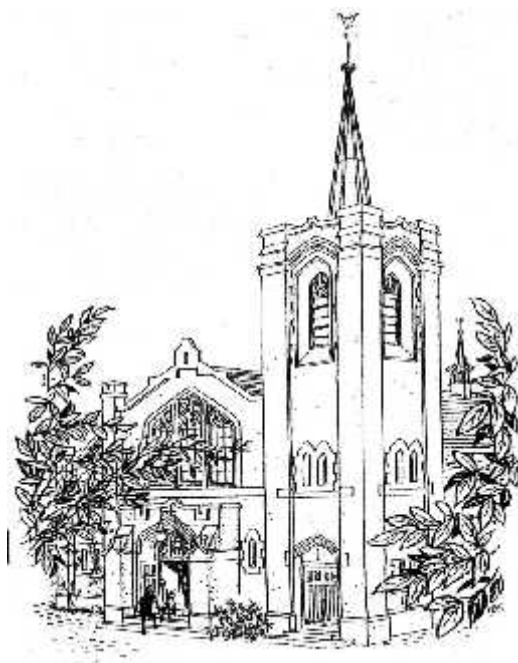


The Drive Methodist Church
Eastern Avenue, Ilford, Essex, IG1 3PP

ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023



Minister: Revd Mmasape Zihle

Email: mmasape.zihle@methodist.org.uk

<https://www.drive-methodist.church>

Church Mission Statement
of
The Drive Methodist Church

The Drive Methodist Church aims to be faithful to the commandments of Jesus, and the calling of the Methodist Church.

The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission, and to fulfil the promises detailed in the Methodist worship book.

Provide a weekly opportunity for all people to worship God in Christ, here at The Drive Methodist Church.

Enable people to grow and learn as Christians through mutual support and care.

Be a good neighbour to the immediate and wider community. Sharing our faith with others through pastoral care, church activities and communication.

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MINISTER'S MESSAGE

At the time of producing this report our minister Mmasape is still on sabbatical so we'll begin with the Methodist Covenant Prayer:

I am no longer my own but yours. Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you, exalted for you, or brought low for you; let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing: I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal. And now, glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours. So be it. And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven.
Amen

We look forward to welcoming Mmasape back who will be returning shortly before our Annual Church Meeting.

Diane Foster

STEWARDS

We would like to say a warm thank you to Andy Packer, Kido Baek and Diane Smith who have led worship and communion services while our minister Mmasape has been on sabbatical. It has been much appreciated.

Thanks also to my co- senior steward, Diane, who pulls this report together and prints it in time for the Annual Meeting. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this annual report, helping us to take stock of what has happened in the past year and perhaps to plan for the future.

Thank you to Brian Taylor who produces the posters for the 'A' frame notice board in the church foyer giving details of our forthcoming services. Outside, our lovely, free-standing noticeboards at the corner with Eastern Avenue are important in letting everyone know we are open. We are grateful to Lorraine and Peter who maintained the boards before the job passed on to Diane and Jeremy. Thanks to you all.

We were sad to have lost one of our longstanding stewards in the past year, Hilary Stevens. Hilary was a steward for many years, she was not afraid to get stuck into tasks and her prayers were very much sought after. Amy Gabbidon has joined our small group of stewards and we look forward to helping her learn the ropes. Diane and I currently share the Senior Steward role; we had hoped to step down however it may be more feasible for us to look at ways in which we can share tasks with the rest of the team. This may go some way towards ensuring that moving on to the Senior role is less of an unknown.

We have settled back into regular worship at church, with memorable services, including Anniversary, Harvest, Christmas and Easter and also hosting circuit services. Our committed group of worship leaders has shrunk somewhat - we are very grateful to Rochelle and Brian who make themselves available as requested to assist the preacher or minister in leading prayers. We say a fond farewell to Bambo who was a worship leader for many years but who will be worshipping in a new church following his recent marriage. Going forward, we and the circuit hope that we will have more worship leaders.

Our WhatsApp group is still going strong and it is great to see more people getting involved in providing the daily prayer.

We are grateful to all who take the time and effort to provide us with uplifting, encouraging and thought provoking words to begin our day. We have also seen the group be a powerful resource for support as members ask for prayers for themselves or loved ones or share news from our church family.

There are changes in the circuit which will continue to unfold and which will impact the Drive. Superintendent Dino will be retiring this summer, with Kido and Mmasape stepping in as joint Superintendents. In preparation for the reduction to two ministers and one Deacon, a number of churches in the circuit now have shared services. In time, the plan is for the Drive also to be linked to another church(es) and share services. Currently, our later starting time has made this more challenging. Going forward, Mmasape will have responsibility for the Drive, Ilford Lane and Barking churches. As part of the circuit vision, Seven Kings church will cease to worship from this summer and there will be a service of thanks for the many years of worship in that place.

We have been pleased to welcome a few visitors during the year but have sadly lost some members. We want to thank all those who volunteer for duties on a Sunday and hope that others will put their names forward too.

Michelle Garner – Senior Steward

COMMUNION STEWARDS

Unfortunately, the passing of Hilary meant we were one communion steward short. We have carried on with our remaining stewards and I am now pleased to report that, subject to the agreement of the Church Council, Rochelle has

agreed to join the current stewards who are Liz Amah, Oli, Ruth and myself.

We are now back using bread and wine for our communion, and we have changed the wine which we have been using for many years. Our current wine is pure grape juice from Tesco and is solely for use for sabbatical purposes.

It has been a pleasure having the Revd Diane Smith taking our Communion Services whilst Mmasape is on sabbatical.

Brian Grinham - Senior Communion Steward

TREASURER

Income

Freewill Offerings -

Receipts for the first 7 months of this financial year are in line with our budget for the year. Your continued support is much appreciated. The majority of freewill offerings are received electronically. Please contact me should you wish to set up a standing order. However, Gift Aid envelopes are available, should you wish to continue making cash/cheque offerings.

If you pay tax in the UK, the benefit of Gift Aid is that we are able to reclaim the tax from your offering. Therefore, if not already done, I would ask that you request a Gift Aid declaration from Joel Inbakumar.

Rentals -

I am glad to report that rentals are back to normal. As a result, revenue is up and so far in excess of budget.

Expenditure

Circuit Contributions –

Due to the loss of income at Grange Hill and Seven Kings, the remaining Churches in the Circuit are paying extra contributions.

Repairs and Renewals -

We had two property damage claims this financial year, which pushed up our expenditure. Most of these costs have now been recovered from our Insurer. Expenditure is currently in-line with our budget.

Because of the energy price increases, we had to budget additional expenditure for gas and electricity. Electricity costs are currently in-line with budget. Due to the cold Winter period our gas costs are up, but hopefully a mild Spring/Summer will even this out.

Overview

Now that the worst of Covid-19 is over, and thanks in part to the return of our regular renters, our finances are much healthier. It is anticipated that we will make budget this financial year, despite the rising costs.

A big thank you to all those who continued to support the Church financially throughout the year. Without these funds our work in maintaining and operating the Church and its buildings would have been very difficult.

John Higgins – Treasurer

GIFT AID

“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver”. 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

I am pleased to present the Gift Aid Report for the tax year that ended on 5th April 2022.

We were able to recover £6,409 from the HMRC which is more than £410, which is an increase of approximately 6.8%, compared to the previous year. However, the previous year was affected by COVID-19 related church closures. The Gift Aid receipt is an integral source of income for our Church. A summary of the Gift Aid receipts in the last four years is shown below:

For the year ended 5 th April 2022	£6,409
For the year ended 5 th April 2021	£5,999
For the year ended 5 th April 2020	£6,215
For the year ended 5 th April 2019	£8,171

The Gift Aid scheme allows you to increase the value of your donation by 25% at no extra cost to you if you are a basic rate taxpayer. For example, if you donate £20 we can claim an extra £5, making your gift worth £25. If you pay income tax at a rate of 40% or above, you can claim the difference between the basic and higher rate from HMRC either through your self-assessment tax return or by asking HMRC to amend your tax code.

The more donations we make, the higher the Gift Aid receipt from the taxman. We, therefore, as a church family need to

do everything possible to increase church attendance by attracting new members. The easiest way to donate is to set up a weekly or monthly standing order from your bank account. Please ask one of the stewards to obtain the bank details. If anyone is interested in joining our envelope scheme or learning more about Gift Aid, please feel free to contact me or our treasurer, John Higgins.

Joel Inbakumar

PROPERTY

In addition to all of the ongoing routine work that it essential to maintain our premises we have undertaken four major projects in the last year. These are:

- Completion of the double glazing to the Hall building and the replacement of all the low level leaded light windows to the Church building. As well as improving the energy efficiency of the buildings, the double glazing reduces ongoing maintenance (as we no longer have to paint them) and improves security as they are much harder to force or break open.
- Renewal of the sound system giving us greater scope to offer audio visual presentations and the ability to stream our services. The sound quality has undoubtedly improved and following a few teething problems the streaming has become well established.
- Installation of CCTV around the outside of the buildings. Suffice to say, the video evidence was crucial to the successful prosecution of the burglar who broke in and caused so much damage in the church last year.

We have also undertaken a significant amount of electrical work much of which has been aimed at reducing our energy consumption. The work has

included the installation of various automatic timers to ensure that electric heaters and lights do not run continuously as well as the replacement of the 1000watt floodlight bulbs in the church which has halved the energy used.

Managing the property is very much a team effort and I would like to thank all members of the Property and Finance Committee. John Higgins who is our very able Treasurer and Committee Secretary, Anne Dellow who looks after housekeeping issues, Joel Inbakumar who manages our Gift Aid claims, Brian Taylor who looks after the invoicing of the Community Groups who hire our premises, Brian Grinham who adds a wealth of experience and Mike Seviour & Peter Bendon who help with general maintenance and/or meeting contractors when necessary. Finally thanks also to John, Mike and Peter, along with Colin Runeckles, who undertake a regular turn each week to check that the premises are secure at night.

Jeremy Foster – Property and Finance Committee Chair

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

As things have slowly returned to normal post Covid we have seen a steady increase in the number and variety of community activities which we host at The Drive. We have recently welcomed The Big Sing community choir, the Muthuhara Arts group and the Nandana Dance group. In addition we have an Islamic tuition group and a tots (2 – 5 years) football group waiting to start.

As well as ensuring that our premises are put to good use and that we fulfill our mission of being a “good neighbour”, the

income we derive from our lettings is essential in order that we can afford to maintain our premises and keep the church financially viable. For the year to August 2022 our lettings income totalled £51495 and we are budgeting to at least repeat this level of income this year.

Jeremy Foster – Bookings Steward

SAFEGUARDING

The Drive remains in a positive position with regard to our safeguarding practice. On the rare occasion that we appoint someone to a role within the church, we now follow Safer Recruitment Procedures in line with safeguarding practice and procedures.

My previous report discussed the Safeguarding Audit issued to all churches; a significantly lengthy document that proved to be overwhelming for many churches to complete. In view of feedback to the Connexion, a simplified version has been developed and will be known as the Annual Safeguarding Review. This title has been chosen as it is felt it more appropriately addresses the nature of what it sets out to achieve. An annual review of all churches in the district is essential to ensure that safeguarding practices are aligned, and this review enables churches to receive appropriate support.

Our DBS procedures are up to date and Foundation Training has been delivered. May I remind all who lead or undertake a responsible role within the church, that it is mandatory to undertake Foundation Training. Those who lead and work directly with children, young people or vulnerable adults must also complete Advanced Module Training. There is some urgency for all Local preachers and Worship Leaders to ensure

they complete the Advanced Module. I am continuing to offer Foundation Training to those in the circuit and this always takes place at The Drive.

I would like to continue to improve the liaison between safeguarding and church stewards as they are a significant conduit throughout the church and can only improve our safeguarding practice.

Our Pastoral volunteers are very aware of safeguarding in context to their pastoral work and have become creative in their endeavours to offer Christian care and support to others. We are very fortunate that many of our Youth Team work regularly with children and young people and have the benefit of work-based Safeguarding practice.

Jeremy Foster and I collaborate on safeguarding tasks regarding lettings and I'm aware that I don't have as much time as I'd like to visit and review those with long term lettings of the premises.

Lorraine Bendon – Safeguarding Officer

PASTORAL COMMITTEE

The current church Pastoral Team comprises of Jo Wright, Susan Ruckes, Brian Grinham, Ruth Joyce and Lorraine Bendon. In addition, we have been fortunate to welcome Anne Dellow who was recently recruited using our Safer Recruitment Policy.

Janet Brunnen retired from the role last year after serving many years as a Pastoral Volunteer/ Visitor and sadly we lost Hilary Stevens who also served for many decades.

Unfortunately over the past year we have lost more members than we have gained, although it is encouraging that we welcomed two new members to our congregation.

It is a sign of the times that all Pastoral Workers are now advised to be creative when keeping contact with those on their list as there are many alternatives to home visiting, which doesn't suit everyone.

If you have an interest in the work of the Pastoral Team, or if you think you would like to be allocated a Pastoral Volunteer, do please contact me.

Lorraine Bendon – Secretary Pastoral Committee



TEAM TDY

In April 2022 we had our annual Easter Egg Hunt, which was the first one since the covid restrictions, so it was lovely to see everyone hunting for eggs,



enjoying the crafts, and eating hot cross buns together again.

TDY enjoyed the church anniversary get together at the Rodings, in July. It was a 'bring and share' picnic and everyone enjoyed being out in the fresh air. It was good to see people chatting in the sunshine.

Our big adventure in 2022 was travelling to Birmingham for 3Generate, where we met up with other young Methodists from around the UK. Some of us stayed in tents for a couple of nights and others drove up and spent Saturday enjoying the event. There were rappers, steel pans, crafts, and acts of worship. It was wonderful to join in holy communion whilst

sitting on beanbags and worshipping with hundreds of other young people.

It is always lovely when our young people return from university. It's so good to hear how they are getting on. Even though some of our young people are studying away, we keep in touch, and they are all still very much part of team TDY. Thea will be qualifying as a nurse in September and we wish her well with her first nursing post. Revd Kido Baek is planning a youth get together with all the young people in the circuit, but particularly those who are at university. It will be great for our young people to meet other young Methodists in the circuit.

Some members of TDY planned a Christmas Extravaganza where crafts, fun, fellowship, and refreshments were enjoyed. Thank you to them all for planning it, and to Kay who created crafts for us to enjoy too.

Our Nativity in December was a whole church event. Michelle sourced the service, and we had many young people and adults taking part. It was wonderful to have young and (slightly) older members of our church retelling the familiar story of Jesus' birth.

As ever, I am so grateful for the enthusiasm of our young people. They may be small in number, but still committed to sharing the love of Jesus. One member of team TDY, Rochelle, is currently training as a worship leader, and we wish her all the best with her studies.

Rochelle and other members of TDY have taken responsibility for posting items on our church Instagram account, which has attracted attention from all over the world.

We need to keep our young people in our prayers and hope that new families come to our church. Emily is currently our only 'Extreme' (title for the younger group) member. I know she would love to have others join her.

We also have a fantastic group of leaders who support and nurture our young people. We recently got together to catch up, plan some sessions, and share new ideas. This was a good opportunity to work together to ensure our weekly Sunday sessions are meaningful and fun for our young people. Our leaders prepare sessions for TDY every Sunday and support the various TDY events. A massive thank you to them too. Their time and dedication are very much appreciated.

Bambo has been one of our TDY team leaders for many years and we wish him, and his wife Belinda, well as they start married life together.

I also want to thank our organist, Andrew, who encourages TDY with their various musical talents and is always very flexible and adaptable (especially with last minute requests!). Andrew has also inspired members of team TDY to join the chorale, and together with the choir our Easter service was a truly wonderful, uplifting service.

Lastly, thank you to all the church congregation, who are always so willing to support TDY in their ventures.

Jo Wright – TDY Team Leader

JMA

We held our first JMA Beetle Drive and Tea after four years in March and the splendid amount of £390 was raised. It was a great success and as well as our past regulars, we were pleased to welcome many new players who I hope will come again.

All money raised for JMA is split between The Methodist Church World Mission Fund and Mission in Britain Fund supporting projects both overseas and at home.

The young people who were JMA members have grown up and are no longer collecting. However I thank them for their loyal support over many years. Going forward The Drive will continue to support JMA through donations and fundraising in particular our annual Beetle Drive.

Diane Foster – JMA Secretary



Music@TheDrive

A whole year of “normal” worship! It’s almost impossible to imagine where we were just a couple of years ago, working around lockdowns and restrictions.

Of course, “normal” is never where we should be – we should always be finding new ways to make music alongside the familiar patterns of the church year. Slowly we are trying to break down the distinctions between “The Choir” and “The Chorale”, our recent Easter Sunday service being a good example. We had sixteen singers taking part together throughout the service. Our Carol Service in December was

similarly successful, and the choir and small congregation enjoyed a service of Evening Prayer in the evening sunshine in July.

Sadly, we have lost two of our longest-serving church musicians during the last year, with the deaths of Frank Sayers and Hilary Stevens. Frank was organist at The Drive for well over thirty years, and led the choir for much of that time, also working with Nicholas Foster when he was choirmaster. His faithful and generous service during that time was an inspiration to us all, and he was a great support to me when I took over in 1995. Hilary sang in the choir for as long as I can remember, and her sudden and unexpected death at the beginning of Advent was a shock to us all. As ever, it is only when someone is no longer there that we truly appreciate everything they did for us and meant to us.

I have missed a couple of Sundays recently, so we now have a set of Singing the Faith accompaniments on CD as a back-up. It has also got us thinking about how music is led on a Sunday when there is no organist/keyboard player available.

Choir practices have moved to Tuesdays to ensure everyone can attend regularly. I am keen to open these practices up to anyone who would like to come. We can only keep up high standards with regular practice, but I appreciate that not everyone is able to make such a commitment.

My thanks to all our musicians who enrich our worship at The Drive in so many ways. Thanks also to Mmasape and all in the congregation for the support and encouragement that you give.

Andrew Taylor – Organist and Choirmaster

BIBLE READING GROUP

Introduction: The Bible Reading Group has been meeting once a month. The group is designed in a 'Book Club' format rather than a Bible study, which has enabled participants to read and explore the wide range of scripture, including Old Testament books and sections from the letters and the Gospels. The group has been thriving with five regular attenders, and we are delighted to welcome a new member who has recently joined the group. The following is a brief report on the activities of the group over the past year.

Meeting Schedule: The group met regularly on the last Friday of every month for the entire year. Members gathered to discuss their thoughts and reflections on the readings, followed by a time of fellowship and refreshments.

Book Readings: The group has read a wide range of scripture over the past year, including Jonah, Paul's letters to the Galatians and Corinthians, Daniel, and the Gospel of Luke. Participants enjoyed reading and discussing these books, with each member sharing their insights and reflections on the readings.

Participation: The group welcomes anyone who is interested in exploring the Bible and its teachings, regardless of their level of knowledge or experience. There are no experts in the group, and everyone is encouraged to share their thoughts and insights on the readings.

Conclusion: In conclusion, the Bible Reading Group has been a wonderful experience for all who have attended. The group has provided a space for members to explore the Bible and its teachings in a supportive and welcoming environment. We look forward to continuing our meetings in the coming year and exploring new books of the Bible.

Jan and John Pearson

THE DRIVE NEWSLETTER

We have a new printer! No more dashing back and forth to the circuit office, having called upon the kindness of Jackie to print it.

We, or perhaps I should acknowledge that Peter prints 50 copies of the newsletter and generally they are all taken, some being sent off to those who maintain an interest in what's happening at The Drive. I am grateful that there are approximately six regular contributors, all very willing to write something interesting about their exploits or recollections.

Don't underestimate how comforting and interesting this publication is to those who can no longer attend church, which is why I need more contributors. When people are housebound, hearing what is going on around them can be so pleasing. It's difficult to find a balance without contributions and ideas.

The Fostering Team in Redbridge and The Foodbank are a regular feature along with helplines and debt support information.

Feedback would be so useful as I would like to produce what our church family and supporters want to read, so if you have an idea or would like to adopt a particular interest page , I would welcome this.

It would be interesting to know how many read the newsletter online, rather than the hardcopy.

Lorraine Bendon – Editor

CHURCH WEBSITE

The past year has been a case of 'business as usual' on the website. There is a project in progress to redesign the front page following some helpful work done by TDY, but this is proving to be technically more complex to implement than envisaged.

Reports on church activities are now mainly handled by the church Instagram account, which is quicker and easier to update than the main website. However, these can still be accessed from the website.

Mike Seviour - Webmaster

THE DRIVE TOGETHER WHATSAPP GROUP

The Whatsapp Group continues to exist virtually alongside our church life, providing us with daily prayers which bring comfort to many. Church family members post news and information some of which is passed on to members who do not have mobile phones.

A welcome addition has been the inclusion of Andrews reminders for pre-service practice, music and sound files. Rochelle provided us with her poster for the Easter Egg Hunt which was posted on the Instagram account.

As well as providing us with prayers, Brian posts an occasional quiz and keeps us alert to any scams. Joyful occasions are announced via the group and news shared of those who have moved out of the area.

In March 2020 the Drive Together was set up to ensure we had daily prayers and a virtual Sunday Service throughout lockdown. Some three years later it is an integral part of our daily lives keeping us closely connected.

Anne Dellow.

FILM SHOWS

After a break of over three years, we are hoping to start the film shows again on 17th June 2023 subject to the availability of the Church Parlour. We will start at 2.30pm prompt and the films are approximately 2 hours long so we will pause about half way through for a comfort break and a cup of tea/coffee and a biscuit.

There will be no charge for the show, but we will be grateful to receive donations towards the cost of the DVDs and the Church for the use of the premises and the cost of the heating (during the winter months) and the electricity.

We will be showing films that we already have in stock to start, and, at the moment, we are expecting to show a PG rated film "The Case for Christ".

As soon as the date has been confirmed I will put it on the WhatsApp group, announce it in Church and get it in the Newsletter. We will also open it up to the Circuit and invite folk from the other churches.

Brian Grinham

FLOWERS

We have a team of four flower arrangers who ensure the church has one or two displays each Sunday and on special occasions throughout the year.

Janet Brunnen had been our flower secretary for a number of years and recently retired from the position. We are thankful to Janet for all the commitment she has given to the role and pleased that she will continue to be on the team of arrangers. I have been appointed flower secretary and hope to welcome

some more volunteers to join us. It is a very enjoyable task and one that can be therapeutic too.

In recent months we have joined a couple of groups in Wanstead to watch flower demonstrations and to take part in classes to help further our skills in arranging. These groups have given us some ideas which were recently used in the flower displays for Easter.

Request for arrangements are welcome. Photos of the displays and dedications are put on our website and for this we are grateful to Mike Seviour.

We will have a fundraising table at the church lunch in April to help our flower fund. Please support us and help to beautify our church each Sunday.

Anne Dellow

CHURCH SATURDAY LUNCH

The opportunity to meet and eat is still popular. Ruth, Anne and Lorraine arrange a lunch each month where possible. We average about 20 guests and its good to see them catching up and making new acquaintances which happens when our regulars bring along a friend or family member.

We endeavour to keep the cost as low as possible unless we buy in Fish and Chips. The food we serve is, on the whole healthy and nutritious and is cooked fresh.

We have a new cooker in the Parlour kitchen....Hooray!

Recently, we were pleased to donate our costs to The SARAID UK Rescue Team working in Turkey and Syria and our generous friends increased our fund to £320.

Lorraine Bendon, Ruth Joyce and Anne Dellow

SCOUTS

In July last year the difficult decision was made to finally close the 14th Ilford Scout Group. In its heyday, the group had well over 100 members and many leaders running seven sections.

However, following the demise of the Venture Scout Unit (2001), the Guide Company (2007), the Brownie Pack (2012) and the Scout Troop (2015), the Cub Pack finally closed in 2022, sadly bringing to a end 94 years of uniformed organisations in The Drive. In every case, this has been brought about by a lack of adults willing and able to take on the essential leadership roles.

The Group has always been grateful to the Church for its support in providing facilities for its activities, headquarters and equipment and to the many members of the church family who have helped the group in so many ways for so many years.

Mike Seviour - Group Scout Leader (Retired)

THE DRIVE PRE-SCHOOL

The Drive pre-school has been serving our local community and beyond for 49 years now, offering Early Years Education to children aged 2-5 years old. Next year will be our 50th anniversary and this is an achievement that we will be celebrating with pride.

We celebrate the breadth of the diversity of children and their families as well as the adults working in our pre-school, appreciating the different cultures and religions these bring. We have families from around the world, including India,

Pakistan, Bangladesh, Eritrea, Romania, Cyprus, South Africa, Turkey, Afghanistan, Germany and Sri Lanka.

Independence is a very important part of the children's development, and is a skill that can be learned from an early age. Children learn self-help skills such as taking themselves to the toilet, washing and drying their hands, serving their own snacks and drinks, washing up their dirty dishes, tidying up the toys, and taking off and putting on their coats. These skills are significant for the children, as these prepare them for their next stage of their learning journey.

These are very difficult times we are living in. The cost of living crisis is affecting many people such as the elderly who are feeling cold in their homes as they can't afford to put the heating on and families struggling with the continuous rising food and energy bills. The people of Ukraine who are continuing to suffer as a result of the war that is now in its second year. The global need for many people to flee their countries to find safe places to live in with their families. The homeless and hungry people in our society, who sleep on the streets and rely on kind people to give them money and food to survive.

The cost-of-living crisis has resulted in the closure of many nurseries and pre-schools up and down the country due to the rising costs of bills. As an established and successful pre-school, we are here to provide a stable and safe environment for the children during these difficult times, where they can learn and thrive.

I would like to express my gratitude to the whole staff team at the pre-school, for their dedication and hard work towards the children and their families. It's this relentless dedication of

caring for all the children in our care, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, colour of their skin or ability that has given the Drive pre-school the good reputation it has in our local community.

Kay Whiddon - Pre-school Manager

Almighty God, we thank you for the life of your Son,
our Saviour, Jesus Christ,
who sent his disciples to share your Good News.

Help and guide us to deepen our own spiritual faith,
enabling us to nurture those we meet
to come to know you more personally.

We pray that you would draw people into your presence,
expanding your kingdom here on earth and that you would fill
us all with your Holy Spirit so that we may grow in love and
joy serving you through the people we meet.

In all that we do,
may we know your grace
and give glory to you.

Amen