



Taking ageing and faith seriously

Annual Report

for the year ending 31 December 2017

Project for Seniors and Lifelong Ministry

Registered Charity No. 1103130

Registered Address: St Pancras Church, Euston Road, London NW1 2BA

www.psalm.org.uk

To advance the education of the public in the subject of the care of the elderly, including self-help by older people, through the provision of lectures, seminars, hands-on training, and provision of a publication resource centre

1. GOVERNANCE

PSALM (Project for Seniors and Lifelong Ministry) is governed by the constitution, dated 2004, amended 2007, which provides for a Trustee Board / Executive Committee. Ex officio members are the Vicar of St Pancras and Chair of Edmonton Episcopal Area Social Justice Committee (vacant: see note below). St Pancras' PCC and Edmonton Area Council each appoint 3 members to the Executive Committee. Up to 4 PSALM members are elected to the Trustee Board at the AGM, and in addition up to a further 4 members can be co-opted. The Chair, Treasurer and Secretary are also elected at the AGM. The term of service for all officer holders and trustees is one year, renewable from year to year.

2. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

2017 Trustees	Electing Body
Rev'd. Anne Stevens	Ex-officio, Vicar of St Pancras [Elected as Chair by the members at the AGM]
Dorothea Hackman	St Pancras PCC [Elected as Treasurer by the members at the AGM]
Frances Mills	St Pancras PCC
Anne Rouse	St Pancras PCC
Robert Andrewes	Edmonton Area Council
Beryl Dowsett	Edmonton Area Council
Irene Money	Edmonton Area Council
Rev'd. Audrey Browne	Elected by members at AGM
John Willmer	Elected by members at AGM
Gaynor Dunmall	Elected as Secretary by the members at the AGM

Note: Due to the previous disbanding of the Edmonton Episcopal Area Social Justice Committee, the ex officio place on PSALM's Executive Committee remained vacant throughout 2017.

During 2017, there were three business meetings of the Executive Committee, in February, May, and September. An additional meeting in November focused exclusively on future plans and focus for PSALM.

In fulfilling their legal and administrative responsibilities, the Trustees have:

- considered and evaluated the ways in which PSALM can meet its objectives;
- monitored the budget and made decisions in the light of funds available;
- reviewed the risks to which PSALM is exposed and considered ways to mitigate these;
- taken due note of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

3. PSALM TEAM

In early 2017, Gaynor Dunmall moved from London with her family. Gaynor gave generously of her time and administrative skills in supporting PSALM's work for many years, and continued to do as much as she could to help from home until September 2017, when it became necessary to resign due to her other commitments. The Executive Committee noted their thanks and appreciation for her service and commitment to PSALM and its membership. Since September, the PSALM Associates have shared administrative tasks, but also started to look for additional support to enable the organisation to run smoothly.

The PSALM Associates have met during the year to plan and coordinate a programme of workshops and other events. Ann Wright and Ann Morisy have continued to share leadership of workshops, seminars, and consultancy as requests have been received from churches and other organisations. Claire Pinney's artwork, design and graphics have enhanced posters, flyers and publicity material. In addition, the Finance Officer of St Pancras Church (initially Roy Sully, then Deseline Djiayep) has worked with Dorothea Hackman, PSALM's Treasurer, to ensure that the finances were dealt with effectively and efficiently.

4. MEMBERSHIP AND MAILING LIST

PSALM's subscribing membership saw a decline in 2017, but the mailing list numbers (both email and postal) remained stable. Work on updating the database and encouraging more members was agreed in 2017 and will be implemented in early 2018.

5. OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

PSALM's core objective is to encourage a wider understanding of the benefits of 'taking ageing and faith seriously.' Workshops, seminars, provision of training and outreach work have contributed to this overall objective. The support provided by St Pancras PCC and church has been crucial to the work. PSALM is grateful for the provision of office space and facilities, which has included extra cover for administrative tasks such as answering phone messages and checking post during the last few months of 2017. Gifts in kind have also been contributed by volunteers, particularly in time donated in preparing and planning workshops, and by free or subsidized use of venues.

5.1 Annual lecture and AGM.

The AGM was held at St Pancras Church on Thursday 16 March 2017, followed by an interesting presentation by Rev Dr David Primrose, Director of Transforming Communities in the Diocese of Lichfield. David spoke on 'Talking about death and dying', giving a dozen 'Ds' to think about, followed by group discussion on the themes that had struck a chord, and the place of Christian hope. David ended with a challenge to take this thinking back to our churches so that we could become more confident about talking about death and dying. A PSALM occasional paper based on the lecture can be found at <http://stpancraschurch.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Talking-about-Death-and-Dying.pdf>

5.2. Workshops, Networking, Outreach and Consultancy

Following the successful **training sessions** launched in 2016, Ann Wright and Joanna Cox led two sessions at St Leonard's Church in Streatham for volunteers from the ecumenical 'Streatham Senior Connections' and their partners. The first session, held on 11 February, looked at 'Listening and communicating well,' and a return visit on 25 November focussed on 'Boundaries, expectations and safeguarding.' Both sessions were well attended and well received, with comments including:

- *I thought it was an excellent and very varied session.*
- *The trainers were very engaging and encouraged discussion and ideas.*
- *Listening to other people's perspectives, experiences and insights offered a broader context to frame my own volunteering.*
- *The session improved my understanding of 'reasonable expectations'.*
- *The exercises helped to clarify boundaries, potential risks and the need for safeguarding.*

These sessions were deliberately structured so that they can be adapted and used for a short introductory course on pastoral care and older people. Setting up costs for this have been prohibitive when requested in the past, but a course could now be offered at a realistic charge for a church or group of churches.

Two **workshops**, led by Ann Morisy and Ann Wright, were held at St Pancras Church Hall, which were welcomed by members and friends, and attracted a larger number of participants than in recent years. On 26 May, the theme was 'Generosity', looking beyond giving of time and money to include the attitudes that shape our approach to people and situations. The second workshop on 27 November looked at 'Memory and Memories', with a real buzz in the room as those present reflected on the significance of memories in shaping our present, explored ways to handle difficult memories so that they do not cast a shadow over the future, and shared ways to lessen the impact of our own forgetfulness.

During the year, Ann Morisy was engaged in **outreach and consultancy** work, including

- Leading two sessions for St Mary Abbots / Kensington and Chelsea Older People's Forum on 'Who do you think you are?' on 16 February and 'Living alone in later life' on 9 March to complete a series booked for 2016-17.
- Presenting a workshop on 20 May on spirituality and ageing as part of the Southwark Diocesan lay discipleship programme, in association with SAGE (the Southwark working group looking at issues around ageing). This was fully booked, and responses included several people who had identified ideas to take back to their own parishes.
- Leading a morning on working with older people on 30 September, in association with Angela Liddell from St John's URC and Orpington Churches Together.
- Meeting a small group of church pioneers from the Netherlands who were visiting London and wanted to know more about the vision and experience of PSALM.
- Responding to requests for events such as a day for older people in church and congregation at Christ Church, Southgate and consultancy at Holy Trinity, Sloane Square to develop innovative work with older people.

Networking with other groups and organisations with an interest in spirituality and ageing continued. Ann Wright is a member of the Southwark Sage group chaired by Joanna Cox, and acts as a link between SAGE and PSALM. Links with MHA (Methodist Homes) have continued during the year, and PSALM is also in touch with CCOA (Christians on Ageing) and PARCHE (Pastoral Action in Residential Care homes for the Elderly) in Eastbourne.

6. FUTURE PLANS

Although PSALM is currently going through a period of re-shaping, it is encouraging to note that even 'just ticking over' is continuing to produce useful work that can be the basis for future development. The Associates and Executive Committee have been working on a strategy and programme that will move PALM into a new phase of development. This includes

- Continuing discussions on the shape and priorities of PSALM for the future. Discussions to date have confirmed that PSALM will remain as a separate, registered charity, but more work needs to be done on a strategy for moving from survival to expansion.
- Improving communications with members and the circulation lists, in accordance with the requirements of the new General Data Protection Regulations.
- Development of the website has been discussed and will be undertaken in 2018: this will include updating the current pages and adding more material from workshops to provide a better showcase for the organisation.
- Running three or four workshops at St Pancras Church Hall, with the first to be held on 16 April 2018 on 'Decluttering'. Suggested topics for further workshops are 'Relationships, companionship,' 'Songs / Psalms or the road,' and living with decreasing independence (with titles and dates to be confirmed).
- Links with SAGE in Southwark will be further developed. Initial discussions are underway about a joint conference to take place in 2019, which may build on research into the churches' response to loneliness and isolation.
- Promotion of the training programme for visiting / pastoral care groups across London, with a view to running a couple of courses a year.
- Redeveloping the relationship with Edmonton Area Council, the deaneries and parishes when the future shape and structure of PSALM is agreed

These plans will depend on expanding the core team to include both administrative support and Associates to deliver workshops and consultancy. The Trustees would like to ensure that this is undertaken in a way that retains PSALM's model of dispersed and collaborative leadership that has proved effective to date.

7. FUNDING AND OTHER SUPPORT

In the current difficult financial climate, we remain indebted to St Pancras Church for its ongoing support, which provides PSALM with an essential office base for its activities. We were fortunate and thankful to obtain significant funding from **The Thanet Street Trust** in 2017. This funding enabled PSALM to continue its work and develop and deliver workshops, and is much appreciated.

We want to say an explicit thank you for the:

- subscriptions from **members**;
- fees from **groups** requesting PSALM workshops and conferences;
- donations from **individuals and churches**. Particular note – and thanks – should be made of the continuing, generous financial support received from **Hampstead Parish Church**;
- gifts in kind from those with distinctive expertise and from **St Pancras PCC**.