

Charities Support Group Report to the APCM 2025

a) 2024 Donations, fundraising, appeals and talks (see also attached spreadsheets)

Holly Fair

We had a successful Holly Fair (raising over £3500) enhanced by carol singing in the foyer. Thanks to everyone who donated items, helped in any way or braved the wind and rain to attend. Due to the stormy weather, much of the town fair was sadly cancelled. The elderly Holly Fair banner just about stayed up but will need replacing for the event in 2025!

Donations

The PCC contribution (£13,700) was £400 less than in 2023 but fundraising from the Holly Fair was up so overall CSG income was similar. We gave planned donations of £8,086 to overseas charities and £8,770 in UK donations. Due to the charity being based in India, we are now sadly unable to make donations to Delhi Brotherhood but have decided to donate in future years to Supporting Dalit Children. Our USPG donation also currently supports work in India.

Additional appeal income and donations totalled £2595. The congregation were encouraged to donate online directly to some emergency appeals and we collected cash in red buckets for the DEC Middle East Gaza Appeal (£134) and Hurricane Beryl (£79). We collected £376 for the Bishop's Harvest Appeal. Handling of cash is not easy due to bank closures but thanks to Martyn and others for extra time and effort to enable us still to do this. Donating via Donr or direct to the CSG Missions account is normally an option.

Our 2024 Lent Appeal was extremely successful and was divided between Embrace (Middle East) and the Bishop's Stortford Child Contact Centre. Over £600 was given to each charity in addition to the annual regular planned donations. The BSCCC was also the beneficiary of the Patronal Festival lunch collection (£143).

Letters of thanks can be found on the Church website or the CSG boards in the porch, church and WCC.

Talks

Talks were arranged once a term. Bishop's Stortford Child Contact Centre (Claire), Lastone from Uganda (Nabikabala) and Leprosy Mission (Matt) all gave interesting and well-attended talks to the congregation over coffee.

Further Fundraising

Rosemary kindly organised a quiz for the Holy Trinity Night Shelter in November raising £720 for this local charity. A fundraising initiative for

Mary's Meals (foreign currency) has raised £325 though this is not seen on the CSG accounts.

We didn't have an Advent Appeal in 2024. There was however a Christmas card collection going directly to the Children's Society.

b) 2025 news and thanks

Our recent 2025 Lent appeal for Supporting Dalit Children and the Holy Trinity Night Shelter raised almost £400 for each charity.

In March we welcomed Dinah from Supporting Dalit Children to give us a very informative talk about their work. Dave Perry is scheduled to talk in May about the running of the winter night shelter and the continued community outreach and support they provide over the rest of the year.

A quiz for the Leprosy Mission organised by Rosemary takes place in May.

Thanks to Martyn Greenwood (CSG treasurer), and others in the finance team including Graziana. Special thanks to Christine Rixson who stepped down in 2024 after writing our minutes for many years. Also, to Peter Rixson who has resigned from the committee but will continue in the vital role of organising the production on the Holly Rings. We have two new members, Shell and Tracy, so the CSG committee is currently Val Ashwood, Martyn Greenwood, Angela Weeks, Carole Macdonald, Gavin Minter, Claire Conquest, Gary Jones, Mireille Baulcomb, Tracy Mannings and Shell Langston. We contact the charities and/or follow their websites and carefully consider our donations. We encourage prayers for the charities in church intercessions where relevant.

Val Ashwood-Chair (April 2025)