



All Hallows Vicarage • 24 Regent Terrace • Leeds • LS6 1NP  
t: 0113 242 2205 e: [ray@allhallowsleeds.org.uk](mailto:ray@allhallowsleeds.org.uk)

an open, welcoming Christian community exploring the meaning of faith today

## **Pentecost Sunday 2005**

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

We're writing to you on behalf of the PCC. The PCC, as well as dealing with specifically church matters, is also where the legal responsibility for All Hallows Community Project rests. Most if not all of you will know a lot about the All Hallows Community Project but just for those who don't, it's basically All Hallows throughout the week. There is the community café, open for two days, and a whole lot of groups, courses and activities. Most importantly, it's a space which, reflecting the ethos of All Hallows, is welcome, open and inclusive, comforting and challenging. It would be wrong to say that All Hallows Community Project is extremely important to All Hallows – perhaps it would be better to say that it is All Hallows, just as much as the Sunday congregation.

At the moment there is one full-time post at All Hallows Community Project, which is job shared by Ruth (member of the Sunday congregation) and Sandra whom many of you will also know. The funding has over the years come from various sources. Last year, a big funding bid was prepared by a group from the PCC and others for continuation funding of the Project. The group worked extremely hard on the bid over quite a few months. However, at the end of last year a decision was made not to go ahead and send the bid off. This was because, in the process of writing it, we had had to say that we would do things (hit certain targets and jump through hoops) which were not in the spirit of All Hallows. It was a brave, some might say foolish, decision because it means that we are now without any outside funding. The church has been using its reserves since the beginning of this year to pay Ruth and Sandra and for the costs to keep the Project running. However, we believe that the decision was the right one.

At the beginning of the year, we had a discussion at a PCC meeting about what we should do about the funding situation. At the start of the meeting it felt like a panic meeting about a funding crisis, but by the end, it felt as if we were being given an opportunity as a church to reflect and grow in a new and exciting way, and we did feel that we had been led by the Spirit.

During the course of the discussion at that meeting, we decided not to go for any more external funding but instead to see what possibility there could be of funding the project ourselves, from the Sunday congregation. There is by no means a split between those people who are members of the Sunday congregation and those who work and use the Project. People have come to the Project through the Sunday congregation and vice versa. However, in general it would be fair to say that the majority of the members of the Sunday congregation are financially better off than the majority of those involved in the Project, and indeed than the majority of those who live near All Hallows. Many members of the Sunday congregation already support the Project in a whole variety of ways, by giving prayers, support, and volunteer time. We, as a PCC are now asking you if you would consider also supporting the Project financially.

We feel that this would allow the Project to develop in freedom, unhindered by the necessity to claim that we're hitting targets alien to our ethos, and it would also allow for a deepening of our expression of commitment as a church to the Project as one vital way in which we serve the community around the church.

From now until the end of the year, we aim to undertake a review with Ruth and Sandra, and with the users of the Project to see what shape we would like the Project to take in the future,

and specifically, what kind of paid staffing it needs. There is a feeling (nothing to do with the funding situation) that it may be that what is actually needed is less paid time, but we need the rest of this year with Ruth and Sandra in a stable position in order to carry out the review.

So what we are asking for is around £2000 per month. Ray has already pledged £500 per month from his stipend (which has already been going to support the Project since January) so what we need is £1,500 more per month. Presuming anyone making a donation is a standard rate tax payer and gift aids the donation (meaning the tax man contributes 28p for every pound you do) then this could be achieved by for example 20 members of the congregation giving around £15 per week. This is probably far more than many can afford but hopefully some of us will be able to give more than that.

At present, we are asking for money from now until the end of December 2005. After this time, it may be that we will have decided to change the staffing structure and we will need less money (although, who knows, we may need more!) and it may also be that we will find a funding source we are happy to apply to. However, we would like to see the rest of this year as a time when we try out what it's like for the Sunday community to support the project financially so if it works out, it might well be something we want to continue into the future.

We are asking every member to consider their level of giving. If at present you don't regularly give we are asking you to seriously consider doing so no matter how much the amount is. This is not an attempt to guilt trip anyone, but regular giving from everyone could make an enormous difference. If you already give we are asking you to consider how you might increase your giving. This is not to belittle other forms of giving, do continue to give support by prayer, time, or however it feels appropriate to you, and huge thanks to all those people who do this, in whatever ways. However, we would like to ask people to open themselves to the possibility of reviewing their financial giving, even perhaps giving sacrificially. Is there anything we might be prepared to give up each month in order to be able to support the Project?

In our discussions at the PCC we felt that perhaps money is our last taboo at All Hallows. We're quite happy to be entirely open about sexuality, politics and all kinds of issues which might be considered sensitive elsewhere. However when it comes to money, suddenly it can feel quite uncomfortable to be talking about it. We'd like to see this as an opportunity to enable ourselves to be more open about the money we have, and perhaps as the beginning of a process of becoming more accountable to each other as a church community about how we use our money, and how we place it, along with the rest of our lives, before God.

God bless you

Love

Three handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature on the left is 'Sarah Fishwick'. The middle signature is 'Steve Thackray'. The signature on the right is more stylized and appears to be 'Elaine Wilford'.

Sarah Fishwick • Steve Thackray • Elaine Wilford  
On behalf of the All Hallows PCC