

## Experiencing and Responding to God's Generosity in St Austell

Converting a public house and a hairdressing salon into a centre for a cafe, children and youth work, church offices, conference and training, social outreach support...etc...etc... has certainly been a means of keeping St Austell Parish on her knees in prayer. We had plans in place for a number of years to extend the church building, but when the opportunity arose to obtain a building directly opposite the church, a vision for the next chapter of mission began to unfold. No one can remember suggesting the purchase, but as we prayed, we became more and more convinced that this was the right plan.



'Location, location, location' was the mantra of Harold Samuels in the 1930s. We see huge potential in this development. In the heart of the old town we will have the opportunities, not only to use both the church and the Trinity Centre, but also to develop a 'piazza' between the two buildings that can be used for innumerable activities. The possibilities seem endless.

There certainly have been challenges. But these challenges have been the means by which we have experienced the generosity of God and the generosity of so many people. We thank God that the work continues to be funded, despite escalating costs. We had church contributions, a gift day, a grant from a town heritage scheme and we raised almost all of the £500,000 we *thought* we needed. It all seemed to be so straight forward...a great deal of prayer and we were able to not only get on with the building project, we could also reorder the church, removing the fixed pews. However, the escalation of the costs has actually given us an even greater sense of a reliance on God's provision. The figures we needed were beyond what we could find...and Jesus' words in Luke 18:27 became incredibly relevant, "What is impossible with men is possible with God." There has never been a point since the first large sum where we could honestly say we knew we had all the necessary funds. But at each point the money has been there when we needed it.



These experiences have given us a renewed sense of His willingness to use us to share with others not only all that we have been given, but also that we might be used to demonstrate the generosity of God in our own walk and witness to others. The reordering of the church means we can accommodate large town functions like the 'Green Whitegold Festival', St Piran's Day market reminding the town that this is THEIR church and they are always welcome. Christians Against Poverty, marriage and divorce counselling, support for families and other projects...training new leaders in ministry...the list is endless ... but, as we move forward with God's love in our hearts, giving is easy... because we know we have also been given so much.

**Rev'd Carol Edleston, Associate Curate, St Austell Parish**

