

footsteps

OUR
STORY

Falmouth
✝ Penryn
Churches
Together

The Story of Footsteps Community Coffee Shop
taken from the archives of
Falmouth and Penryn Churches Together Annual Reports
with an introduction by its founder, Ali Durkin



2011-15

KCM FALMOUTH PARISH CHURCH



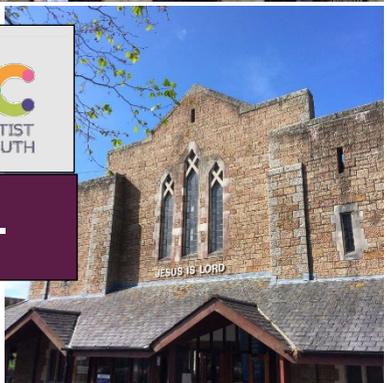
2016-21

 **Falmouth Methodist Church**



ebc
EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH - FALMOUTH

2022-



**The Story of Footsteps
Community Coffee Shop**
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March 2022

FOOTSTEPS – THE HISTORY | *ALI DURKIN*

Back in 2009 with help from the Trussell Trust, Highway Church set up the Foodbank supported by a large team of volunteers from Falmouth and Penryn Churches Together. It soon became very clear that the Foodbank needed regular monetary donations in addition to the food offerings provided by all of the churches.

In August 2010, the Foodbank rented the King Charles Church cafe on four Fridays and provided staff and refreshments to raise funds. It was obvious that the Foodbank could not maintain the fundraising as well as running the Foodbank.

In September, a call went out to the churches to take on the fundraising, but with little response. By December, David Ward from Highway Church and instigator of the Foodbank was in desperate need of funds in order to continue. A second plea for volunteers went out to the churches and also to ladies attending the 'Be Beautiful' outreach event organized by FPCT. Many people volunteered and with some assistance from Transformation Cornwall, the doors opened at the Footsteps Coffee Shop on 15th April 2011.



Many people donated funds for aprons, signs, tablecloths, trays and rent. Footsteps soon grew from a monthly, to a twice monthly and then to a weekly fundraiser with the assistance of students from the Christian Union at the University. Very soon, Footsteps was also able to provide funds to support Falmouth Street Pastors, KidzKlub after school clubs and also St Petroc's Society for the homeless.

Footsteps became a blessing not just in its provision of funds to several needy local charities but also in the building of relationships between the volunteers, their churches, the wider community and the many visitors to Falmouth. Helpers were also blessed with new friendships and new purpose and have provided witness and outreach to the local community; the really caring and friendly atmosphere was very evident to all who entered.

2014-15 | PENNY WILLIAMS

2014: Footsteps occupies the premises on Church Corner, Falmouth, known as King Charles the Martyr Coffee Shop and is open every Friday of the year with the exception of Good Friday and in January, perhaps the quietest month of the year, when the premises are closed for cleaning. The opening hours are very approximately 10.30am-2.30pm.

Five years ago, we had a vision that individuals from any church, under the umbrella of Falmouth & Penryn Churches Together, would come together to run a Churches Together Coffee Shop in Falmouth. There were two aims: to raise much-needed funds for Foodbank, After School KidzKlubs, Street Pastors and St. Petroc's; and a

place for outreach both into the community and to visitors to the town. We have succeeded on both fronts.

We have a strong and loyal base of volunteers who help on a rota basis throughout the month, and roughly the same number of folk who regularly cook or bake. More willing volunteers on both fronts are always welcome.



The Footsteps Committee believe that our work in promoting the Gospel message is vital for our community and to drive Footsteps to, who knows, even greater things. We are following in Christ's footsteps and seeking

and doing his will is the most important step for us.

2015: Takings had reduced considerably in 2015 in comparison to the previous year, even in the summer months, and in November 2015 we experienced one Friday when our profit only covered the £30 church rent, leaving nothing for shopping repayment. There is now incredible competition with somewhere in the region of 20+ coffee/tea shops in Falmouth town; some, of course, used by students are offering free wi-fi. We were unable to compete. In addition, in 2015 Trago Mills opened their own extremely popular café charging very reasonable prices with an added bonus of a superb view over the harbour. This impacted **hugely** on us more especially

during the greater part of the year when we had to rely on local trade.

The team also considered those who regularly helped, on Fridays, some every Friday whether morning or afternoon shift, and all the produce providers; it all takes time and money. We'd always had a good selection of produce but in the last few months not the number of people coming in who had previously enjoyed our variety of light lunches and cakes.

From September 2015 Fridays became enormously disappointing! The period July-mid December 2015 saw a profit of £1485.08. For the same period in 2014 we'd made £2750.98.



So the Footsteps team regretfully, in many ways, made the decision to cease operating our coffee shop with effect

from Friday, 11th December. It seemed that it had run its course and was no longer viable.

We had been in existence for 4½ years during which time we really had raised a considerable amount for our local charities. All by donation in time or effort from the 40 or more folk, involved in one way or another, over that period.

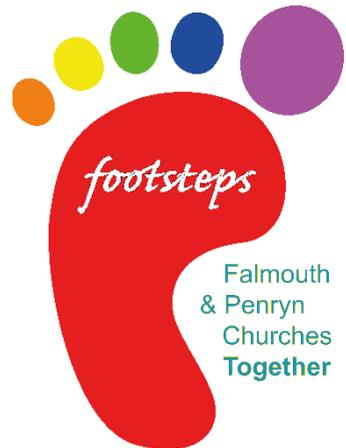
We all do feel that we were greatly blessed and were so grateful for the opportunity we have had.

2016-18 | *REVD PAT WHITTAKER*

Q. What did Churches do in the past when they were a bit short of money?

A. Pray for it, and work for it. They had a Jumble sale, or a Summer fair, or a Christmas bazaar, or a coffee morning.

A few years ago, money was needed for some of the activities that were happening under the FPCT banner. After a considerable amount of prayer, a Coffee Shop was opened on the premises of King Charles the Martyr church. It was a really good idea and could have been developed into a nice little earner. However, it was not to be, and perhaps it had done what it was intended for. The people who had worked there missed it, many customers missed it, but it was in July of last year that FPCT found they needed to be able to support, once more,



some of the services we offer. KidzKlub, Street Pastors, Foodbank, the events at Easter and Christmas. It just happened that Falmouth Methodist Church had refurbished their downstairs hall. It looked great, just the place for a coffee morning, right in town, next to banks, Tesco, taxis and buses. It just happened that a few people from Footsteps were together at a farewell supper. They all agreed to support it if a day could be found to hold a regular coffee morning. It just happened that there was only one day left in the church diary for a regular letting: THURSDAY. We took a booking for one month and opened on August 2nd. After two weeks, we decided to rebook until Christmas. In those 5 months, we had a turnover of £2000. Of course, there are expenses, rent, coffee, milk and sugar. But not for cakes! Cakes come every week as donations. Homemade cakes that look amazing and taste



better. We have also been blessed recently with the gift of colourful new aprons bearing the Footsteps logo.

What started out as a fundraiser has developed very quickly into a rather

special place. Each week we have about six or seven helpers, serving in the coffee shop, keeping track of the washing up in the back kitchen, taking the money as people leave, and also spending time to stop for a chat.....



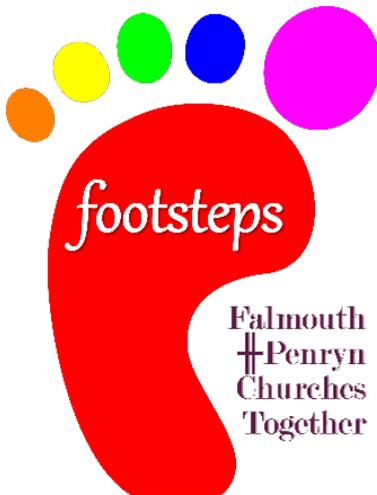
That is perhaps the most important thing we do. We listen! We often laugh, we sometimes cry! But there are some of our regulars who rely on being able to see familiar faces, who

need to be able to talk, who might just need a little company. We are blessed that our church friends are supporting us, but we also delight in meeting people who have come for a day out on a coach tour or have one day ashore from a cruise ship. I love telling them that two ladies at the coffee machine are from St Mary's, that the Salvation Army are in the Kitchen, that the cashier is a Baptist, that that waitress is C of E and that one a Methodist, that I and another listener are URC. If they hail from an area where Churches Together work, they usually say something like "WOW, they only hold meetings where we come from"!

If you would like to join one of our rotas, you would be made very welcome. We need people to make cakes or scones, and/or to help us deliver the goods to our customers by being waitresses for 2 hours a week. Even if you could only offer once a month, it would be great to hear from you. Just come down, see if you think you would like to help, and tell us



there and then, and you can put your name on the calendar. There's a lot of fun, and laughter. The whole ambience of the place is one of joyful service and appreciative customers. We start at about 9:30am, getting organised, and we cannot thank our Methodist friends enough for all the help they offer each week, setting up the tables and putting out the notice boards. Just before 10am we gather for a prayer, to ask God's blessing on whatever we are called to do that day. We join in a circle, and occasionally, there will be a few early birds there waiting for friends to join them, so they are included in the circle as well.



2017: When we wrote last year's Annual Report, we had been trading for almost a year. What had started as a fund raiser had consolidated itself into a community space where all are welcome, where all are free to speak, and can be sure that they will be heard. Now we have been going for almost 2 years, and that has not changed. I cannot tell you in any detail, the

stories we have heard, but I can tell you that our regular customers come from many churches and none, and that some have wept as they told us of losing loved ones, and others have wept different tears as they showed us pictures of new grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Since Christmas we have had two ladies ask to join our team, one as a cake maker, thank you Brenda. And the

other as a waitress, and I think she might become a good listener too; thank you Jean. The churches continue to support us with cakes, and our thanks go to everyone who comes in with cakes and stays to serve or wash up. We could not manage without you all.

The Methodist Church has been generous with help and setting up on Thursday morning has established itself into a well-ordered routine with guidance from Tony, who opens up for us.



As long as we continue to hear people say, “Thank You, keep the change, I love to come down here because it’s such a friendly place”, we shall know that we are about God’s work. We all enjoy doing it so

much that it doesn’t seem like work, but more like a privilege. One thing I can share is that only a week or so ago, just before Easter a group of about 12 people came in at 11-30. They advanced to look at the cakes, and even offered to serve themselves and pay when the coffee came. I suggested they sit down, remember which cake they wanted and tell the waitress. The leader of the group issued an instruction, and they all sat down obediently at one long table and were soon served. They told us that they were a group of ramblers from Huddersfield, who had stayed at St Mawes the previous night, and come across on the ferry to see Falmouth. They were surprised at how

small it was. It turned out that they had explored the Moor, but not the main street. They were amazed to hear there was a seafront, “where was it” they asked. We directed them through town, past the Church, past Trago, past the Maritime Museum, and out onto the seafront. We are still baffled at the fact that they thought the Moor was all there I was to Falmouth.



We would welcome anyone who feels they are able to help us in any way. There had been several calls on the FPCT bank account of late, including the Food Bank, and the outreach through The Turning. We are proud that we have been able to help them in some measure, as well as what we offer to individuals. Only a small cog in the machine, but valuable none the less. We are looking forward to meeting more strangers as the summer comes, with the visitors from Up Country, and spreading the word of what Christians can do when they work together as a team.

2019: In Memoriam: Revd Pat Whittaker

Very sadly Pat died suddenly at the end of March 2019. As one of the longest serving members of Falmouth and Penryn Churches Together, Pat was instrumental in developing many of its key initiatives, including most recently the Footsteps community cafe. We all owe her a huge debt of gratitude.

Footsteps thrived under Pat's wise leadership, and now we are building on that firm foundation.



I am delighted to report that the enterprise continues to flourish with the wonderful team of volunteers who provide cakes, and work tirelessly each Thursday morning, to ensure that everyone who comes in for their coffee, cake and chat receives a warm welcome and a cheery smile.

Footsteps also provides much needed funds for Falmouth and Penryn Churches Together initiatives. Long may it continue.

2020-21: Since the last report, Footsteps continued to flourish in its dual role of being a welcoming weekly space for folk to come and enjoy coffee/lovely homemade cakes, and more importantly a listening ear and fellowship, as well as being a source of income for FPCT.

Each January we have a “wash up” meeting to chat about how we are doing, and where we can improve. At this January’s get together, we felt that we should be reaching out to more vulnerable people, so we prayed for guidance. Our prayers were certainly answered.



In February we were approached by Jess Merivale who is the health and wellbeing coach for

”Pluss”, a community interest company that supports thousands of people each year to achieve a career and fulfil their potential; and Lollie Brewer, who works for Cornwall Hospice Care and is hoping to set up a community friendship café in Falmouth and Penryn jointly with colleagues in the community.

At the same time, Churches Together in Cornwall launched SAM – Social Action Mapping for Cornish Churches which is an initiative to make Church-led social action programmes better known to the wider community.

We set up a meeting with Jess and Lollie in March, but sadly the Coronavirus pandemic



intervened before we could meet, and Footsteps like the rest of the country was put into lockdown. Our plans are on hold for the time being, but will I'm sure come to fruition before too long.

In the meantime, the Footsteps volunteers continue to meet virtually each Thursday morning by email and phone, and members of the team have contributed the following to this report.

A cafe ordinarily has a buzz of conversation going on, but I find with Footsteps that the conversation is punctuated with people greeting each other and an overall air of friendliness and laughter. We are.....one big family. I really enjoy my time working in FPCT Footsteps Coffee Shop & look forward to my sessions very much. Linda

It is a privilege to share God's love with our lovely customers, especially as some of them do not see many people from day to day! I also enjoy fellowship & fun with the other members of the team & we have all now become firm friends. Sylvia

I love volunteering at Footsteps. Of all the things I am committed to doing, Footsteps is my favourite. It is a special place where people meet up with friends for a reasonably priced hot drink and homemade cake. If you come alone, you won't be alone for long as there is always someone to chat to. A place where people have their favourite table and can stay for as long as they like. A place where it gets noticed when they are not there. There is a buzz about the place that is infectious and lifts your spirits. Footsteps helpers come from various churches in Falmouth and it is a privilege to be part of this team. We

really are a team; we work well together and care about each other. We welcome new volunteers to the team, whether to help with waiting on tables, help in the kitchen or by baking cakes. Interested? Pop in for a chat; we are a friendly bunch. Footsteps last met on Thursday 12th March due to the Covid -19 lockdown and I am so looking forward to the day when we can open up again. Pat

For me, Footsteps has been a very special morning, once a week on a Thursday, when I meet up with our lovely group of volunteers. I feel that Footsteps provides a much-needed oasis of Peace, Friendship and Prayer in an increasingly frenetic world. I'm sure we have been missed by our 'regulars' and that we all pray that they are keeping safe and well. May it not be too long before we can all gather together once more for coffee, cake and chatter. "We'll meet again".....and we DO know where! Jean

These reflections tell me how much we, as a team enjoy the fellowship of working together to bring God's kingdom closer in Falmouth and Penryn, and we all look forward to opening Footsteps again in the not-too-distant future.

As the lockdown restrictions seemed to be easing in the spring, on May 13th we had a team meeting on Zoom. We began with prayer, and then went on to think about the following question: - When Covid restrictions are lifted, do we want to open Footsteps again? The answer was a resounding YES.

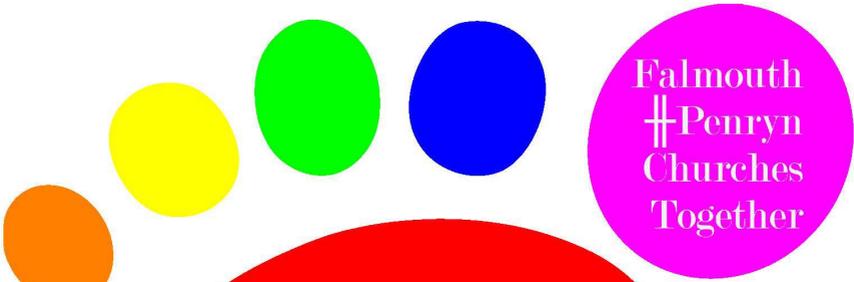
We will meet again to finalize our plans when we have clearance that opening will be possible and that FMC will be happy to accommodate us.

As I write this on July 2nd, 2021, FMC has confirmed that we can open on Thursday 29th July, so that we can again be witnesses for Falmouth and Penryn Churches Together with our love, fellowship, tea, coffee and cake!

Postscript: Late in the summer of 2021 we were met with the news that the FMC building was for sale and that we would have to vacate the premises by the middle of December. After our initial disappointment we prayed that the Lord would help us to find another suitable venue – and He has! We will be re-opening Footsteps at Emmanuel Baptist Church on Thursday 3rd March 2022, with our very grateful thanks to the members of EBC who have made us so welcome. We would be delighted if more volunteers would like to join our team, either by providing a listening ear, making a cake, serving at the tables or even washing up... there are plenty of opportunities for you all!

Jan Winslade





Falmouth
+ Penryn
Churches
Together

footsteps
at

Emmanuel

Baptist

Church

Western

Terrace

Falmouth

TR11 4QJ

*Everyone's
welcome!*

**Community
COFFEE
SHOP**

**Weekly on
Thursdays**

10am-12noon

Commencing: 3rd March 2022

Falmouth
+ Penryn
Churches
Together

*working together
to share
the love of God*