

In the 1930's it became clear that the congregation was outgrowing the old church, also the Sunday school needed more accommodation. But how to build it with a debt of £345? The policy of the Trust was that it could not be considered till the liability was removed. So, according to a minute of February, 1932, a committee was sent to discuss ways and means with the Ladies' Guild. The upshot was that, with the co-operation of all departments, the debt was cleared by October, 1933. Thereupon the Ladies' Guild handed the Trust a donation of £20. Thus the foundation stone of the historic Church Building Fund was laid. Its objective was £2500, which was considered a reasonable sum for building a church in those days.

Agreement on design was reached by 1937, but all was not plain sailing. Plans were rejected and the price of delay meant the cost of the new church went far beyond £2500.

Finally, after preparations for the work were interrupted by World War II, the foundation stone was laid on 30th July, 1955, and the building dedicated for worship on 3rd November, 1956. The cost was approximately £20,000 and the existing debt about £3,000.

The old hall was beyond economic repair and, like the vacant ground beside it, was no credit to an otherwise beautiful church. The facilities of the new hall were urgently needed. A 'Peace Memorial Hall Fund' was established, and much hard work undertaken to raise the estimated cost of \$32,000.

The dedication service of the 'Peace Memorial Hall' was on Sunday 30th March, 1969 with Rev. W. Bampton and Rev. H. Kettle officiating.

November 24th 1985 was the 'Were St. Centenary Reunion'. Many returned for a day of praise and thanksgiving with the officiating minister Rev. P. Down.

The Were Street church has always been characterized by enthusiastic and committed lay leadership which affirms the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Missionaries who have gone out from Were Street are - Ida Horth nee Griffiths, Joan Cooper nee Davis, John and Barbara Hutton, Val Bock, Ian Whitelock, Ken Booth, Noel Bock, Beryl Williams nee Whitelock, Lois Newnham nee Hutton, Freda McDonald and Rev. Wesley Vial who did theological training.

Were Street has for much of its history relied upon ministry which has been shared with other churches. Full time ministry has not been the way. Among more recent ministers have been Howard Kettle, Walter Goff, Walter Bampton, Keith Stephens, Keith Whittle, Philip Down and Graham Gall.

Following formation of the Uniting Church, Were St. joined the Brighton Parish. A process of rationalization and church closure began and Were Street was mooted for closure, against the congregations wishes. Finally the Assembly gave Presbytery authority to close the church without appeal. The Were Street congregation requested permission to leave the Brighton Parish and transfer to the Brighton Beach Parish. This occurred in December 1990 and the congregation ceased to operate as a separate entity in February, 1991. At the time of closure the Were Street congregation consisted of approximately 95 members and adherents, an active Sunday School of 15-20 children, a youth group of 12, ladies U.C.F. and a tennis club with senior and junior teams.

The congregation has transferred well into the St. Leonards congregation where the welcome has been warm and the ministry of Duncan Watson and Shirley Coxhell appreciated.