

London has seen a wave of new Church of England congregations in the last few years, with everything from a German-language Eucharist service to 'disco worship'.



The Diocese of London, which covers much of the capital north of the River Thames, is celebrating the establishment of 87 new worshipping communities since February 2018 – with a vast range of styles and approaches, some more formal than others.

They include a 'Shh free' Mass - set up at St Barnabas, Ealing, with services specifically designed to be welcoming to younger people and families.

"We wanted Eucharist, complete with a Gospel Choir, that both reflected our Anglo-Catholic background and welcomed parents with young children," explained the Revd Fiona Jack.

"After almost four years these shorter and interactive sermons have been embraced by new families and the existing congregation.

"It's been such a success that some of the young people have gone on to become members of our Serving Team."

The 'Silent disco worship' at All Hallows' Bow, is also an example of a new congregation being founded within an existing church.

There are 14 new communities holding services in languages other than English, such as Japanese and Yoruba, as the Church reflects the international nature of London.

Lyrics to a hymn are shown on a projector screen next to a modern pulpit. A photo from French Connect and a photo from The Grove Community's Winter Wonderland

The Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally, said: "In these new worshipping communities we have 87 reasons to celebrate. They are a signal of the strength of the Church in London, and together they are making a special, eclectic, contribution to life in the capital.

"There are new, thriving foreign-language services, a Deaf Church and a new silent disco service. In St Francis at the Engine Room, we have the first new, purpose-built church in the capital in 40 years, and in Genesis we have our first purpose-built floating church.

"London is a wonderfully diverse, creative city; it is through emulating that diversity and creativity that the Church will continue to grow and thrive.

"After a uniquely challenging year, it is inspiring to reflect on all that our church communities, new and old, have achieved. Whether it is St Dionis – one of our new worshipping communities – collating PPE kit bags for a local NHS trust at the height of the pandemic, or Westminster Abbey – one of London's oldest church buildings – supporting the vaccination effort, the Church has helped to spread hope during the pandemic.

"It is wonderful news that 87 new worshipping communities have opened in London, helping to spread hope and the Good News of Jesus further still."

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