



COMMUNITY APPEAL TO SAVE THE LAST HUGUENOT CHURCH IN LONDON



MARCH 2017



THE FRENCH PROTESTANT CHURCH
* SOHO SQUARE *



FIVE CENTURIES OF HISTORY

The present building in Soho Square, completed in 1893, was conceived by Aston Webb and is the direct descendant of the first 'Strangers' church founded in 1550 for French and Dutch refugees. Officially established by Royal Charter during the reign of Edward VI, it makes London the oldest Protestant exiles' church in England.

The major wave of migration ('Grand Refuge') came in the seventeenth century as a result of Louis XIV's persecutions, epitomised by the 1685 Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

The freedom to practise their faith according to their own rules, as well as the generally favourable treatment they received, brought an estimated 65,000 French-speaking Protestants to England over two hundred years. Often highly trained and bringing with them sophisticated methods of production, the Huguenot refugees made long-lasting contributions to English crafts and knowledge and assimilated swiftly into British society. By the time of the building of the present church in Soho Square it was the only French-speaking non-conformist protestant church remaining in London.

Today, it is still an active place of worship and research.

Evidence of the Church's early roots are preserved in its **Library**, a room specially designed by Aston Webb, which houses the collection of books and archives saved from the Great Fire of 1666. The archives include account books, records of poor relief, apprenticeship indentures and *Livres des Témoignages*, which are registers of members admitted to the church. Among the printed books is the precious first French Protestant Bible, the Olivetan Bible published in 1535. Many of those books printed before 1600 come from the most famous printing presses of the time such as Froben in Zurich and the Estienne family in Paris.

A SAD REALITY

Affected by time, weather but also endless constructions around it (buildings, Crossrail), the building has many issues: leaks damaging the roofs, cracked stained glass, humidity creating infiltrations in the building's terracotta walls and the original organ.

Toilets, piping, heating system, kitchen, office and museum rooms as well as electric and gas system are all in need of a thorough update.

OUR VISION

Offering a modern, welcoming and secured environment for our community to meet, share, volunteer, engage and pray.

Opening our Church to the Soho community, charities, historical societies and businesses giving them the perfect environment for events, conferences or meetings in a prime central and historical location.

Sharing the wealth of our history, by providing access to our unique collection of rare books and manuscripts.

Helping you trace your family lineage.

KEY WORKS

Resolving all humidity issues, roofs, walls, floor, organ, and windows.

Improving disabled access and facilities, with the installation of a lift and disabled toilets.

Remodelling the kitchen with top grade catering equipment.

Creating two large meeting spaces for educational and social events.

Engaging a comprehensive program of conservation of the historical library, books and archives.



The present French Protestant Church of London is the direct descendant of the French Church in Threadneedle Street, which was the largest Huguenot Church in England. It is a precious heritage and I commend to you this appeal for the funds now needed for repairs and development.
Brian de Save, President of the Huguenot Society of Great Britain and Ireland

HOW TO DONATE

BY CHEQUE

I enclose a cheque payable to the *French Protestant Church* for £.....
Please return this form and your cheque to 'Huguenot Church Appeal' French Protestant Church, 8-9 Soho Square, LONDON W1D 3QD

BY TRANSFER

Please quote the reference 'Appeal' and your name.
LLOYDS BANK - THE FRENCH PROTESTANT CHURCH
Sort code 30-84-51, Account Number 32015160
IBAN: GB97 LOYD 3084 5132 0151 60
BIC: LOYDGB21760

GIFT AID DECLARATION

Title Forename Surname

Address

Postcode City

I confirm I want to Gift Aid any qualifying donations I make in the future or have made in the past three years to The French Protestant Church of London, Charity number 1070623.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in the tax year, it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Date Signature

I WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE BY EMAIL UPDATES AND COMMUNICATIONS ON THIS PROJECT- **EMAIL** (CAPITAL LETTERS):

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