



Love God, love each other, make disciples

# **ANNUAL REVIEW**

**of**

# **2009**

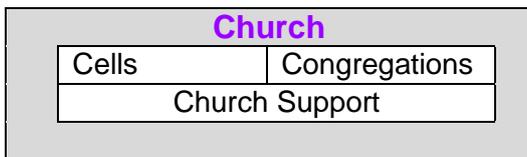
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## **CHURCH**

There is nothing like the local church when the local church is working right. The local church has been entrusted with carrying the life-changing message of Jesus Christ, and it's the only hope for this hurting and broken world.

The early church were intentionally committed to **one another**. They ate together. They shared their property. The rich sold stuff to make sure the poor didn't live in need. The gender walls dropped. The racial walls dropped. They loved each other in outrageous ways. And they were so committed to **making disciples**, that when Christians started to be sawn in half, thrown into prison, fed to the lions, they met in an upper room for prayer. They didn't pray for the overthrow of the Roman government or for the persecution to stop. Instead, in Acts 4, we read that they prayed for the boldness and the courage to share the good news even if it cost them their lives.

They were a people who had abandoned themselves to **love God, love one another, and make disciples**. If such a community of believers existed in the first century in Jerusalem, one can exist today. God still has his power. The Holy Spirit still is at work. The Gospel still transforms lives.



At GBC, we are still working out what it means to be a church made up of cells and congregations where we **love God, love one another, and make disciples**.

We have especially been thinking about what it means to be intentionally inclusive; treating with equality people who attend our opportunities to worship in different ways, or support each other in appropriate contexts.

In order to maintain our unity within this diversity:

1. We have the same **values** in common.
2. We have **programmes and learning** in common (e.g. weeks of prayer, training, social activities, church weekend, Bible study and congregation teaching themes).
3. We use **events** to draw together all the congregations eg for baptisms and dedications.
4. We have common ways to **communicate** across congregations (notice sharing, intercessory prayer needs, website, mail outs).
5. We support a common set of **mission opportunities** overseas.
6. We have a common team of **staff** who serve across congregations. We share **buildings** and **support resources** and a common **purse**.
7. We share in a common **membership covenant** and **church meeting**.

Our Review of 2009 uses this **cells | congregations | church** structure to organise the reports from our different groups and activities.

### **Church Weekend**

In October, 123 people from GBC ventured down Ermine Street all the way to Hoddesdon in Hertfordshire for a weekend at the High Leigh Conference Centre. The different age groups were led by a team of 13 workers from other Churches. The adults were led by Simon and Linda Jones from Bromley Baptist Church.

The weekend was characterised by **a good mix**

- of the active and the passive
- of listening and talking
- of sung worship and socialising
- of teaching and caring
- of young and old
- of families, couples and singles
- of good food and helpful staff

Thanks to everyone who played their part in making it so special. Did you miss out? Look out for a 2012 diary and mark 23-25 March for our next Church Weekend. *John Pickersgill*

Two key ministries which are church-wide are **prayer and mission**.

## **Prayer**

We have lost a great prayer warrior in Jeremy Lange. He was the leader of the Core Prayer Team over several years and worked tirelessly in developing the prayer ministry within GBC. Amongst other things he set up the Prayer Vision document and was instigator of the prayer walk around Godmanchester. His last prayer walk was at the beginning of January and he had already offered to lead another one in the summer. Jeremy definitely lived out those words in Isaiah 6:8: "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I, send me".'

We have been blessed in many ways over the past year. Prayer weeks are now an established part of GBC's year, taking place in January and September. These have been a great encouragement to those who are able to attend. The regular Come and Pray Together sessions on the third Saturday morning of most months have continued and, under Jeremy's guidance, the Prayer Walk is now well established.

Some challenges ahead for 2010 involve finding ways to continue to encourage the whole church in prayer and developing prayer ministry and enhancing prayer life in the cell groups.

We look forward to taking up the challenge Jeremy has left for us, in particular continuing with the Prayer Walks and also getting more of our young people involved in the prayer life of GBC.

Also during 2009, Jackie Harwood-Clark and Annemarie Leach have left our team and we are grateful for all the help and guidance they have given. Kathleen Taylor has now joined us and has already established herself as a strong support and contributor to the CPT.

*Annette Hickling*

## **Mission**

### **World Mission**

GBC provides financial and prayer support for the following Overseas Missions represented by the following members of GBC:

**Anglo Indian Concern** – representative Rachel Thurley

**Cambodia Action** – representative Geoff Collett

**Joe Warton** – representative Kath Pickersgill

**Kathryn Thompson** – representative Christine Heaton

**Mission Direct** – representative Tim Martindale

**Rehoboth** – representative Connie Andrews

The Mission Team have been blessed in 2009 by new members John Smith and Laura Quail joining the team.

*The different missions report the following blessings during 2009:*

Anglo-Indian Concern – in 2009 the Indian Government granted a Foreign Currency Account to the Vine Charitable Trust – an answer to many years of prayer, and a matter for much rejoicing.

Cambodia Action – It has been great to see how God has carried us all through a challenging financial time, with team members, UK staff and projects all seeing cuts in income, until at the end of the year a legacy final payment was received. Praise the Lord for His faithfulness!

Joe Warton – continues to work for the U Turn charity providing vouchers so that homeless people are provided with meals and a bed for the night.

Kathryn Thompson – 2009 was a challenging year for us here at Rehoboth; we faced many different problems and situations which took a lot of time, energy and prayer to deal with but as we look back we know that God blessed us with ways to deal with our challenges and He will use those experiences for His good.

Mission Direct – in 2009 Mission Direct took over 400 volunteers to Uganda, Zambia, Sierra Leone, Cambodia, Dominican Republic, Brazil and Moldova. In addition the new GAP programme and Medical Missions got off to a great start.

Rehoboth – The reserves in the bank accounts were much the same at the end of the year as at the beginning despite the fact that more funds had to be sent to the Philippines because of the lower exchange rate between the pound and the peso.

*Challenges facing our ministries in 2010:*

Anglo-Indian Concern – We hope to develop further the small employment projects recently started for illiterate Anglo- Indian adults.

Cambodia Action – in 2010 we will be looking forward to exploring how we can work in new and more open ways as we look towards having a new registration, allowing us to work directly with the national church to bring spiritual and physical healing to the people of Cambodia.

Joe Warton – continues to have a lot of pain in his joints and this causes him to have time off work. Do pray that he will be supported by the rest of the team when this causes him to feel low.

Jonathan and Matty are working towards using Matty's language skills to record local stories and stories from the Bible, which can be used to take the gospel into areas in the mountains they can't reach themselves.

Kathryn Thompson – Providing a Christian home for 51 children and young people is not an easy task and we are currently looking at ways to improve our provision and care of the youngsters; effective communication, developing relationships, setting goals, raising expectations and improving monitoring and supervision, alongside supporting educational needs and providing for continuing spiritual development and understanding.

Mission Direct – The credit crunch has finally started to bite for our volunteers and bookings are down significantly on last year despite adding Malawi, Tanzania and Zimbabwe to our countries. This is affecting our staffing both at home and overseas.

Rehoboth – We constantly face the challenge of encouraging our youngsters and enabling them effectively to stand for Christian principles in spite of all the pressures in society today.

*For 2010 we are excited about the following:*

Anglo-Indian Concern – it is exciting to see more and more of the young people finishing their courses, moving into good jobs, and lifting their families out of poverty.

Cambodia Action – The challenge will be how to move this initiative forward within the partnership with five other missions and seventeen nationalities.

Joe Warton – with the World Cup happening in South Africa there will be many visitors – we don't know how this will affect the homeless people. Joe is attempting to show his Christian faith in action. Some of his friends from the UK hope to link up with Joe while they are tourists and maybe they will be encouraged to ask questions about his faith.

Jonathan and Matty are excited that many more areas are asking them for water and nutrition projects, which will open new areas to hearing the gospel, especially through their local project supervisor, 'Caleb'.

Kathryn Thompson – I feel privileged and excited to be part of the work of Rehoboth both in the UK and the Philippines – it is such a joy to me to work closely with the children, young people and staff, despite the challenges we face on a daily basis, as we lead and guide these youngsters in all areas of their lives

Mission Direct – We go into the new year with new countries, new specialist teams and new ideas and know that God has new things for us in the year ahead!

Rehoboth – We are eagerly anticipating the project whereby our Peace Corps volunteer, a horticulturalist, is planning to develop the garden, in an eco-friendly way, including the sinking of a well with funding from the United States.

*Tim Martindale*

**Local Mission**

## Explorers

The Explorers Children's Club for children in school years 3-6 on Thursday evenings has seen *many blessings in 2009*:

- The continued dedication and commitment of the leaders with several new youth leaders adding strength and energy to the team.
- The fact that around 30 children attend Explorers most Thursdays and that many more children have attended at least one session.
- A successful Holiday Club, supported by a substantial team of enthusiastic leaders, attended by over 120 children during the week (average attendance just under 120). An excellent social evening where we were able to meet many of the parents.
- Our third Torch party on 31<sup>st</sup> October. This was a more intimate occasion than in previous years, with fewer children attending; but we are grateful that we could offer a Christian alternative to the Halloween evening.
- We perceive to have more opportunities to have contact with parents, who are happy to chat at the end of sessions. We now have a new family attending on Sundays as a result of that contact.
- The Explorers has developed into a 4 year programme based around God's plan: creation, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, Jesus, his disciples, Paul and Acts. This year we spent the January-March term looking at various aspects of Jesus' life and ministry and the September-December term exploring Moses, Joshua and Christmas.

*Challenges facing us for 2010 include:*

- To strengthen the team with both adult and youth leaders. The club ethos is to make close contact with the children through the activities, which we achieve by having teams with regular leaders.
- Competition with alternative activities which the children can attend during the week. Attracting the children to the Torch party is very difficult as Halloween is proving to be ever more popular. We need to be bolder with marketing, and more adventurous with our programme and activities.
- As mentioned in last year's report, we would like to see even more children who attend the summer club coming to Explorers on Thursdays so that we can build relationships more deeply.
- To encourage children from GBC families to come along with their friends.

*What we are excited about for 2010:*

- We are always excited to meet new children, and to welcome back our regulars. As the years go by we see the children grow physically and intellectually and we appreciate that they offer us the opportunity to tell them about God's love for them.
- We also like the fact that many Explorers go to Rock Solid when they reach secondary school age.
- We are really looking forward to Rocky's Plaice = Explorers' Holiday Club 2010.

*Duncan & Tine Marsh*

## Football Project

Due to a drop in numbers the football project team decided to call a close to Monday night football at the moment. We are thankful to God for all the contact made over the years with this project. We praise God that five of the footballers now come to D-Caf regularly and that four are now Christians and one also has been baptised. Challenges for 2010 include finding ways to keep the contact with the many young people we have got to know through the project and for continuing relationships built through prison visiting and letter writing.

*Martine Woodbridge*

## Kings Ripton Court

We have continued to visit the Kings Ripton Court Salvation Army re-settlement hostel fortnightly on Thursday evenings during 2009. *Some of the blessings we have seen in 2009 have included:*

- Meeting particular individuals there and being a part of their journey to faith.

- The summer trip to Soul Survivor which made a big impact. It has been a real joy to see those that went sharing their new faith so naturally with their family, friends & those that live at Kings Ripton Court.
- The team has grown – now John George, Jonny George, Joe George and Cat Watson are visiting with me, each bringing their own unique contribution! Luke Todd was also part of the team until his move to Bury St Edmunds.
- Some of the new residents have started coming to D-Caf.

*Some of our challenges for 2010 include:*

- Keeping in touch with the young people when they leave KRC (facebook has been a big help with this!), and thinking of ways in which we can offer on-going support to them (+ some others that still come to D-Caf)
- Building relationships with new residents & staff at Kings Ripton Court – there seems to have been a big change in both these groups of people.

*For 2010 we're excited about:*

- Being a part of what God is doing & seeing changed lives!
- Continuing to spend time – it really is a privilege! The young people are always very pleased to see us and it's great to have a chance to share their lives and be welcomed into their home. They continue to be very open and talk about what's going on in their lives; a lot of their stories are heart breaking but I really value the trust they give us in doing this.
- Opportunities to share our faith – it's exciting to come away from an evening there and realise that you've had a chance to do this with someone who really wants to know!
- The chance to spend special time with some of the residents at the 'Shine' youth weekend and at Soul Survivor.

*Maria George*

### Littlefoot Club

Littlefoot Club continues to grow in numbers on an almost weekly basis. Currently on an average week there are about 50 carers and 75 children. Many regular attenders bring along their friends which continually swells our numbers. Word has spread and we get people from many places further afield than Godmanchester, eg. Brampton, Stukeley Meadows, Huntingdon and even as far as Chatteris. At present we have quite a large number of childminders as well as Mums, Dads and Grandparents. Due to the numbers who attend we continue to use 3 rooms including the worship area.

We have a good team who work well together to use our different giftings to be a blessing to those who attend. We feel that this ministry is as much to the adults as the children and so making people feel welcome and cared for is a priority. To help with this we have been able to arrange visits by our resident beauty therapist, a mobile hairdresser, chocoholics, Phoenix Cards and our twice yearly parties. Earlier in the year we ran a parenting course using Care for the Family material for several weeks which was attended by 6 parents. Most recently 3 of the mums and their husbands attended the marriage course. We have links with the Daffodil Children's Centre based at Godmanchester Community School. They run a toy library every other week during Littlefoot club on our premises.

The group is now quite large and so there is a need for a member of the Littlefoot team to supervise each room in order to help ensure the safety of the children who attend. The increased size of the group and the geographical spread of those who visit has started to present more problems with parking. This issue is beginning to be addressed and those who attend are beginning to understand and to be helpful by parking further away and not in East Chadley Lane.

Relationship building is an important part of Littlefoot Club and so in 2010 we look forward to people continuing to enjoy attending the group but for us also to develop more meaningful friendships and opportunities to be Jesus to people. We are also considering the possibility of running a day time shortened Alpha course or similar, later in the year. Several have also expressed interest in being part of another marriage course so we hope that there will be opportunity for that too.

*Christine Heaton*

### Marriage Course

The aim of the Marriage Course is to build a healthy marriage that lasts a lifetime. It ran during the Autumn and seven couples came along, three of which came via Littlefoot. Each night took the form of a candle lit dinner for two followed by a video and tasks enabling private discussion within each couple on topics such as communication, resolving conflict & good sex. In every day life some of these topics are difficult to raise with your partner and the course provided a safe and structured way to address difficult issues.

The guests really appreciated having a meal out together (especially the choice of puddings) and time to talk - married life is often too busy to talk about such things!

We think that this is a fantastic course - it was the 4th time we had been through the material and we still got plenty out of it. Many thanks to the Heaton, Blakeys and the Hicklings for help in the kitchen and setting up, and to the many talented chefs who provided the food.

*Vincent & Patricia Lynch*

### Rendezvous

Following on from Soul Survivor last year, Debbie felt a passion to provide an environment for the young people aged 14+ to meet in a safe and constructive environment where they can forge relationships with each other, have fun and just enjoy the time. It is also a place where they might bring non-Christian friends into church.

The evenings (on Fridays) consist of leisure games like snooker, table tennis, darts and air hockey, board games like Monopoly and Tetris as well as activities like pizza making, smoothie cocktails and craft.

The average evening's attendance of the first half term has been nine – with fifteen different young people in total. This is about the level that we expected and into the future we hope to see a more regular higher attendance.

Moving to the future we pray for additional leaders, the growing of the relationship between the youth and leaders, the young people starting to lead the planning and organising of the evenings and that they have the confidence to bring along non-Christian friends.

*Brett & Debbie Mickelburgh*

### Rock Solid

We have seen much blessing in Rock Solid, our Friday evening Youth Club for 11-14s, during 2009. Numbers have increased with a good balance between boys and girls and we have been pleased to see our own young people develop their leadership gifts. Rachel Storey has taken on leadership of the group from Abe. We saw God work powerfully and some of the young people became Christians at our spring term weekend away.

*Abraham Kalyapu*

We do have challenges to face though in 2010. One of our main prayer requests is for more male leaders. The majority of those who attend Rock Solid currently are young males and with Abe and Luke leaving it has left us with an amazing and dedicated (but mostly female!) team.

Another challenge is in the change of leadership. With Abe leaving I have been blessed with the privilege of heading up the club during 2010. It is a new role for me and I am certain the Rock Solid youth will keep me on my toes!

We are very excited about God moving among the young people and growing them in their faith. During 2009 the young people of Rock Solid did some charity work for Kenya and from that more evangelistic ideas have come about as well as relationships being deepened with not yet Christians. Rock Solid is focusing more and more on the Good News as well as issues surrounding these young people's lives. We're excited about taking some of the older young people to Soul Survivor and seeing what God will do there.

*Rachel Storey*

### Schools Work

Schools work continues to be a source of encouragement and a great outreach opportunity – we have made contact with around 1000 young people and children aged between 5 and 16 over the year which includes regular monthly assembly slots at St Anne's primary school and occasional visits to Godmanchester primary school. We have also led regular assemblies at Hinchbrook and St Peter's Secondary schools in Huntingdon through Churches Together. We have had positive feedback from the schools and bridges are being built with young people from our locality. We hope we can build on these opportunities as our relationships grow with schools as we make plans to take lessons into the schools.

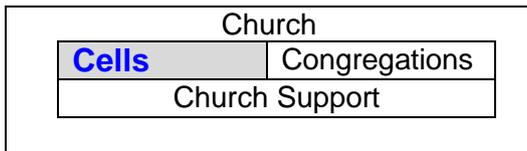
*Adrian Woodbridge*

### Soul Survivor

The team was sad to hear of Abe's loss when his Mum died last summer and his need to return home just a week before we left for Soul Survivor. Debbie took the challenge on and worked with Abe and Stephanie Brown to draw together all of the organisation of tents, food and transport. The team of Rachel Storey, Tine Marsh, Emma Marsh, Luke Todd, Brett and Debbie Mickelburgh blended together effortlessly as if they had been working together for years while the youth played their part and helped with all of the setting up, cooking and so on. Most were already Christians but two of those who were not made a commitment to Christ. The two main worship sessions each day were attended by all of the group and the teaching seminar sessions were also well attended. The week grew everyone in faith, the adults included, and the talk was quickly of Soul Survivor 2010.

*Brett & Debbie Mickelburgh*

## CELLS



We have 13 “small groups” which meet within our cell structure. It is in cells that we study the Word and apply it to our lives. It is where we can experience the Holy Spirit as we build up and encourage one another. It is where we can combine evangelism, spiritual growth, calling to

service and decision making. It is in small groups that we can use our gifts to serve one another and our world. We call this “**loving, learning, doing and deciding**”.

Cells have the flexibility to closely meet the needs of their members and to respond to their own mission opportunities. Our cell group leaders have reported many blessings over the past year – as well as challenges as they move on through 2010. Some of these are outlined in the following paragraphs.

As with most groups, the Fox Grove group have found the cell outlines popular and well used; they form the basis for their fellowship most weeks. Other evenings have included a slide show by John and Katie Stevens (a good way to visit the Holy Land), a meal out and two evenings devoted to prayer. By contrast, Friday Friends have been studying various themes over the year and at the moment are studying a book on the impact of being praying women! The Porch group study has reminded them of the glorious future we have in Christ as well as showing them areas ripe for both personal and corporate growth.

Fox Grove need to pick up the challenge of praying about the areas of special responsibility that they have committed themselves to. Prayer has been a vital focus for the Friday Friends supporting each other in prayer and practically, especially those who have faced bereavement in the last year. So too, the Lighthouse group have seen the Lord work in a variety of ways in response to their prayers not only for themselves but for others in the community.

Being committed to each other is a key to cell group life. The Porch group say that their deep love of the Lord and each other has formed a group where they can share both openly and honestly in complete safety. Their support of each other is a real blessing especially in difficult times and worshipping together is a real joy!

Cell groups often work together for outreach. The Friday Friends have had some social Friday mornings as an outreach such as at Christmas when they organised the Kings Ripton shoe boxes. They have supported the parenting course by helping ‘man’ the crèche, and most recently they raised money for Haiti. Their next project is a Fairtrade meal to raise funds for the youth of the church attending the Shine weekend in March.

Similarly, during 2009 the Millings Group have been blessed by building bridges with their immediate neighbours. Whilst relationships with one another have deepened, there is a disparity between the membership of the group and the number of people who attend regularly. That means they need to increase their core membership and support each others’ personal needs. They are excited that there is a new baby in the group and look forward to opportunities to witness locally.

The St Ives group are delighted that their cell group is growing in numbers and that their discussions remain as lively as ever with lots of laughter! They have spent time considering how to bless, support and encourage their families, friends, neighbours and colleagues. They began with a Christmas shopping outing and a ‘Drinks and Nibbles’ social and have many other ideas for activities to invite others to. The challenge now is to keep their eyes fixed on Jesus as their model for following this through. Some of the congregation from their monthly service at Langley Court Sheltered Accommodation now also attend the GBC Songs of Praise and have expressed their appreciation of this ministry. We pray that they will become empowered to invite others along too.

The Mizpah group held a great barbecue in the summer for the wider group and other contacts.

For the Lighthouse Group, 2009 was somewhat of a watershed. In May, they were looking at its viability; since then they have seen the Lord working in tremendous ways. The summer barbecue was a huge success with 19 guests coming along; the Coldhams Carol service on the green was only attended by 2 guests but nevertheless was worthwhile but a different format will be needed for next year. They have seen two new families added to the group, two Deputy Leaders appointed, and one family member baptised. The group covered babysitting for parents attending Alpha,

successfully catered for an Alpha evening, and managed to take their turn in providing Tea and Coffee after our Sunday services. One of the cell group members has joined the leadership team.

Cell groups are able to decide what they should do! The Porch group, for example, is seeking to increase their love for God, their Christian family (the church), to 'make' disciples (this is kingdom growth not necessarily group growth!), to become more Christ like (both individually + together), and to prayerfully review their membership and then faithfully follow God's plan. The Lighthouse group are challenging themselves to apply the principles and teaching from the studies and being prepared to change the way we live. They want to effectively integrate new members into the group and encourage them in their gifting, for the deputy leaders to grow in their role and ministry, to concentrate more on praying for their contacts, and to explore different methods of low-key outreach.

At the end of 2009, the Purpose Driven Group felt that the group had reached a natural conclusion, with leaders called on to other things, so its members are now settling into new cell groups. It has been a very close, supportive group and they have all grown in the Lord and shared happy & sad times together. There has been an interest in overseas mission, with several of the members having experienced it firsthand.

The Mizpah group has also seen changes with one couple moving to St Ives and adding to the growth in numbers there as reported above! Another couple are off to the States shortly. So the group ask for prayers for individuals moving on and for the group as they continue to support and encourage each other.

The Lions X group have seen big changes this year – with one of their leaders moving away and the other one stepping down from leadership. The group have expressed much appreciation for that leadership – but are now in the position where leadership is shared between members of the group. The age profile of this group has also fallen over the last couple of years and is now mainly younger couples and families with young children – they wonder if God might bring them some middle aged new recruits in 2010! The group are thankful for many answered prayers but they have also had to face difficult times together as many have faced tragic circumstances. They would appreciate prayer as they continue to support each other and especially those who need God's healing and blessing.

Thursday Fellowship group are encouraged as they have had several new people starting to come regularly. They have different speakers each week with members also taking part and they enjoy singing. For their outing they had a very enjoyable meal out in Needingworth. A challenge for the future is to make contacts at the Tuesday Lunch Club and draw them into Songs of Praise and Thursday Fellowship.

Buckden Manor Gardens group have taken on board some teaching from the church weekend about how in Biblical times lots of fellowship was done around the table – and they now meet for a meal and to study – with prayer needs being discussed over pudding!

Finally, a great example of cell group life comes from the Stileway group:

TeadrinkingbiscuiteatingdogsmoothingbiblestudyingquestionposingdoubtsexpressingmutuallysupportingproblemsharingsharingtogetherprayingfaithaffirmingspiritseekingGodworshipping – Stileway Cell Group – Blessed, Challenged and Excited!

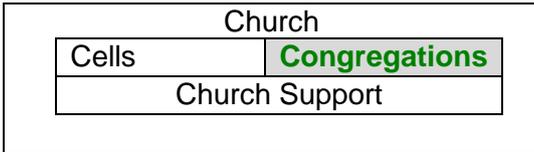
*Trudy Allan, Roz Ball, John Brown, Keith Doe, Jane Fasham, Ruth Gabe, Ruth Lasseter, Kath Pickersgill, Sue Ruckman, Delia Steer, David Taylor, Rachel Thurley*

## **Crucible**

Crucible started in September and is the name given to our yr10+ youth provision which meets in peer led youth cells and enjoys the flexibility of cell outlines we work through together. Crucible meets on Sundays at 6.15 pm and consists of 2 cells. Relationships are growing although there have been initial teething problems which we are due to review about times and places that work best for the young people. We communicate a lot through our facebook page which has proved popular. Please pray for us as we review with the young people the best way to run Crucible and the best time to hold it.

*Adrian Woodbridge*

## CONGREGATIONS



We gather together in larger numbers because this gives us the sense of festival. It is where we know we belong to something bigger than our cell, and are aware of God's activities in a wider context. Belonging to a congregation is our other visible way of 'being church'.

Currently we have four distinct congregations: **Sunday morning, Sunday evening, Songs of Praise** and **D-Caf**. They meet in different ways appropriate to those attending, but in each case allow us to draw closer to God and each other, to learn about Jesus and respond to him, and to offer praise and worship.

### Sundays

#### Worship

I walked into the worship area one Sunday morning, before the service had started to pick up my guitar amplifier, on my way to lead worship at Yelling Baptist and I was greeted with the wonderful sound of Paul Bradshaw's worship group practising some songs for the morning service. They looked up and smiled, and there was part of me that wanted just to stay and join in the morning worship at GBC but it gladdened my heart that worship starts long before the service begins not only in sung worship but also the preparation.

But knowing that GBC is not being neglected enables us to encourage and minister in other churches in the area. I had a conversation with John Martin from Medway Christian fellowship recently as he was asking for some help with leading worship as their current worship leader is needed every Sunday! It made me realise just how fortunate we are at GBC to have so many groups to lead worship. We are therefore hoping that from March we can help Medway on a regular basis as well as Yelling.

I am thrilled that David and Kelly Jackson are now leading a worship group and also Ed Newson has taken the reins with leading the young people's worship group. It was also good to see Iain Clarke lead the worship at a Sunday morning baptismal service recently, what a great service! However we all have our individual styles and favourite songs and with diversity comes the challenge of all going in the same direction.

We had planned to get all the worship bands together for breakfast on a Saturday morning but this had to be postponed. I suppose what is on my heart is that we will all retain our individual styles but at the same time share and support each other even more so that we can consolidate the new songs and learn from each other.

I suppose the other area that we need to go forward in is the place of dance in our worship as so often movement can bring a greater depth of meaning to the words that are sung.

We recently had a worship group leaders' meeting and I talked about the lady who brought the jar of perfume to Jesus and used her tears to wash his feet. Nothing was said by the woman and Jesus ended up justifying her in front of a dinner party of Pharisees! Sometimes we forget what it is to be forgiven, to realise for the first time that God has accepted us as we are and brought us into his kingdom despite our sin. There is a danger that we replace passion with simply words, and words without passion fall to the ground and people miss out on a God who turns despair into hope and freedom to sinners.

So what excites me? The open door of worship of God, that place in worship where we almost step into that heavenly dwelling, that place where we taste a little of heaven, that holy moment. That place where frailty meets eternity, where cold hearts are melted and sense the breath of God upon our lives and we thirst for the living God.

What a privilege to be a part of what God is doing to take us through that door into God's presence. That's what excites me!

*David Rootham*

## **Youth Band**

We have been blessed in many ways in 2009. We did some great worship training with Sam and Sara Hargreaves – worship leaders at St James Hemingford Grey and founders of Engage Worship. Ed Newson has taken on leadership of the Youth Band and has brought fresh ideas – with the Christmas social being the highlight of the year! There have also been more opportunities to lead worship with the launch of Furnace – our monthly Youth services. More young people have joined the band this year and it's been great to welcome Emmy Fennell (Vocals), Gemma Talbot (Vocals) and Poppy Alexander (Bass Guitar).

Some challenges facing us in 2010 include the lack of a female leader to offer support to the girls in the band; getting the right balance with leading worship at Furnace and also sometimes leading in the other Sunday services – especially with exam pressures coming up.

We're excited about leading worship at the Shine weekend away in March, and sending some of the older teenagers on leadership training in worship.

*Abraham Kalyapu*

There have been a lot of changes to the youth band over the last year and it is sad to say goodbye to Abe and maintain a vision and unity into what God has for us ahead. I continue to pray for us to grow and bond together, that we might be on a discovery together of what singing to worship him might mean. He has graciously given us great gifts of passion for worship and abilities musically, and I want to see the young people more and more desiring to worship and feeling that they can lead with me standing back as mentor and support.

*Ed Newson*

## **Movement in Worship**

During the first half of the year we met regularly to practice and some of us were able to attend a dance workshop day with Springs Dance Company. It was an inspirational day and gave us new ideas including using movement to Scripture. It was wonderful to use the flags in Services held outside, such as the Pentecost service and Worship in the Park. We were also invited to dance during the service held for the women's world day of prayer.

The second half of the year has been a mixture of joy and sadness. We are delighted that Wendy and Kenny have been blessed with their baby daughter Ruth, but continue to pray for Alison to be restored to health and now also Laura's sister in law. These events have meant that we haven't been meeting this term and would appreciate prayer for God's wisdom for how and when to move forward.

The children continue to be enthusiastic to use the flags during the morning worship and it is such a blessing to see their joy and lack of inhibition. We are looking forward to working with them to explore further ways of using movement and instruments to glorify God.

'And he said: 'I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.' Matthew 18 verse 3

*Delia Steer*

## **Drama**

The writer Nick Page talks about drama as "a powerful weapon in the war of communication". Like him, I believe drama can be an effective means of conveying or reinforcing messages. It has been a blessing to have new people involved in drama during the past year, many thanks to all those who have taken part. I am always on the look out for new people and new scripts so please do get in touch with me if you can help! My prayer is that God will continue to use drama to speak to people in the year ahead.

*Emma Blundy*

## **Furnace**

Furnace is the name given to our monthly youth service which started in September 2009 and caters for school years 7+. Each service consists of songs (led by our youth band), games, video and a short talk. We meet at Godmanchester Community Primary School at the same time as our Sunday morning congregation meets at East Chadley Lane. Our themes are linked to 'The Grid'

which are the Scripture Union resources our year 7-9 use in their Re:forge groups on Sunday mornings and this brings a sense of continuity in their learning.

Our first few months of running Furnace has been a real encouragement and the young people's levels of engagement have started to grow for which we give thanks. Our prayer for this coming year is for more young people to be involved in the service through readings, talks or testimonies and that our younger ones can start to feel a real part of Furnace as it is a big step for those coming from our children's work.

*Adrian Woodbridge*

### **GROW** (January – July 2009)

We were excited during 2009 to see some of our young people making Christian commitments and being baptised. The Sunday morning GROW group came to an end in the summer and the year 7-9 young people are now part of the new Re:forge structure.

*Abraham Kalyapu*

### **Re:forge**

We have been blessed in 2009 with dedicated and committed leaders with a real heart for young people and a strong sense of being 'one team'. The restructuring of Junior Church and GROW into Re:forge after the summer break has worked well.

*The challenges facing us in 2010 are similar to those of 2009 and include:*

- Maintaining sufficient leaders and helpers, and providing support.
- Maintaining a teaching programme that engages with the children, especially since many children do not attend every week.
- Attending to the individual needs of the children and providing support where necessary.
- Working in partnership with parents.

We are always excited about the new opportunity that each Sunday gives us to teach our children about God, Jesus and the Bible and we are looking forward to developing the teaching programme for the secondary school age groups. We are also excited about opportunities to develop the worship time for the primary school groups (a.k.a. Crispies and Time Together).

*Duncan & Tine Marsh*

### **Support for Sunday Services**

#### **Sound System**

I don't think anything broke in 2009 – that's good. Julian joined us on the sound team. That's good too. Jeremy went home early. That's not good (except for him). I keep seeing his fingerprints. He did electrical safety testing of all the sound equipment last year – green stickers everywhere. The Sunday after he died, I went to the sound desk and noticed he hadn't picked up the CD. Ouch – that hurt. I still don't know how much he did behind the scenes running the tape ministry/CDs. I'm going to try and take it over so speak to me if you need CDs.

Since the beginning of 2010 the sermon recordings are going up on the GBC website. It's actually quite a difficult and time consuming process at the moment, requiring 5 different computer programs. Hope to get that tidied and simplified in 2010. We've also put a temporary video link for an overflow into the small hall three times (although I don't think it's been used yet) and it's been a bit of bodge each time. We hope to get that tidied up too, but its technically quite difficult (and expensive!) to do it well.

*Ian Heaton*

#### **Other**

We are blessed that so many of our fellowship at GBC have servant hearts and willingly do the 'behind the scenes' tasks that are so essential in making our Sunday services happen. So thank you to those who: arrange flowers; prepare communion; prepare the baptistry; prepare and project songs etc; record services; serve tea & coffee after the service; set out chairs; wash towels and tea towels; welcome people and carry out other stewarding and caretaking duties.

Our challenges for 2010 are the same as always – to recruit more helpers and to continue to aim for excellence in all that we do.

*Ruth Blakey*

## **D-Caf**

We were blessed in many ways in 2009. The summer Soul Survivor provided a real lift for those who went from D-Caf, with some becoming Christians, who then went on to get baptised this term. Grants from various external organizations provided a financial boost, and GBC winning the INSPIRE awards ceremony for D-Caf encouraged the team to praise God even more for the way that this ministry is blessing the young people.

There are many challenges facing us for 2010 and we would value your prayers. We want to build on these young people's shaky foundations in terms of personal faith, and to build links and integrate them with the wider church. We would also like to find ways to increase the prayer cover for D-Caf, whilst still taking care of all of the practical things, including transport, setting up etc.

We're excited about opening up opportunities to integrate D-Caf young people even more into the lifeblood of GBC, and to see them moving on in their walk with the Lord. We're looking forward to the Shine youth weekend away in March.

*Paul Hamilton*

## **Songs of Praise**

2009 saw the launch of our Songs of Praise congregation which now meets once a month at GBC. Each service consists of traditional hymns, testimony, prayer, and a short talk and lasts about 50 minutes. Our attendance has been between 40-50 on average and each service is followed by tea together which has proved very popular and a great opportunity to get to know people. The Songs of Praise service draws from the work we do in local sheltered housing, the lunch club and also other contacts in and around GBC.

Feedback has been very positive and we have a great team in place looking after things like lifts, setting up, making and serving food as well as the many people that help in the service such as musicians and people who are willing to share. This is one of the many success stories of this year and we give thanks to God for all those involved.

*Adrian Woodbridge*

## **Sunday evenings**

On Sunday evenings, we have taken an opportunity to look in more depth at God's word, for example, an extended series from Hebrews and a series on Prophecy. Our worship is often gentler and more reflective and we have more time for open prayer. Our monthly communion service is usually centred on prayer for healing.

*John Smith*

## **Carol Singing, Hospital Services and Services in Sheltered Accommodation**

### **Carol Singing**

In December 2009 we visited the various sheltered accommodation in Godmanchester: Oak Tree Court, McCartney House, Rectory Gardens, Woodley Court and the Chestnuts.

We sang lots of carols (in total 19 different ones and 48 in all across the 5 locations!), had mince pies and spent time chatting with the residents.

This year it was great to see more people from GBC coming and singing with us as it is so appreciated by all the residents who look forward to this year by year as for them it is the start of Christmas. Thanks to all the different speakers at each location.

*Roz Ball*

### **Hospital Services**

Once again we have been involved in the local church rota to hold Sunday morning services in the hospital chapel at Hinchingsbrooke.

We thank God that all present are blessed through spending time together worshipping the Lord. We are also available afterwards to talk or pray with the patients if they wish. Many thanks to all those who have helped push wheelchairs and beds to and from the wards, and to those who have spent time talking and praying before and after the service. And finally to those who have led the service and preached.

Please pray for the new lead chaplain, Scott Watts as he settles into his new job.

*Gwynneth Fellowes*

### **Langley Court**

The St Ives Cell Group has continued to hold monthly services at Langley Court and it has been a privilege to be given the opportunity to share our faith at a deeper level. It was wonderful to see a large number of residents attend the Christmas service with the local school choir.

*Delia Steer*

### **McCartney House**

The monthly service at McCartney House has been blessed by the use of a recent new resident's organ played ably by Pat Jacobs. Colin's challenge is to strive to keep his message relevant. We are all excited by a growth in numbers able to attend regularly and increasingly warm fellowship. Our Annual Tea following the February service was a particularly happy occasion for which we are thankful.

*Hatty & Colin Borland*

### **Oak Tree Court**

The work has been encouraged by the faithful few by their support and comments. The challenge is to attract additional residents to join with us and the need for prayer to cover all the residents and staff at the home.

*Peter Harris*

### **Rectory Gardens**

Godmanchester Churches Together continue to lead a service at Rectory Gardens on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday afternoon of each month – John George leading each time it is GBC's turn on the rota.

## **CHURCH SUPPORT**



In order to be free to respond to God's Spirit, whether in congregational worship, cell groups, or mission opportunities, we need the exercise of another set of support ministries. These ensure that our church is organised well and we can therefore maximise the impact

of the God given work we have been given to do. These are servant ministries which often go unseen and this Review gives us the opportunity to recognise and appreciate this 'backroom' work.

### **Buildings & Maintenance**

This year I was particularly encouraged by the number of people that turned out to help at our work day in the autumn. As a result, we were able to complete a number of much needed jobs including painting the back wall of the main office building (to the joy of our neighbours) and cleaning drains and completing other much needed maintenance tasks. Thanks to all those who helped. Following the kind donation of a new set of doors, and the addition of some new fascia boards, we were also able to considerably improve the appearance of the old shop building in Cambridge Street (our contribution towards 'Godmanchester in Bloom'!)

One challenge is to know how much to invest in time and money in our existing building when we know that larger premises might serve our purposes better. May the Lord grant us wisdom to know what jobs to do and those to leave because He has some alternative building for us.

I continue to be amazed at the extensive use that our buildings are put to throughout the week and in particular the wide age range (from the youngest to the oldest) of those attending. Continuous usage of this kind makes any time spent on maintenance of our buildings worthwhile.

*John Stevens*

### **Child Protection**

It feels as though we have had a quieter year in terms of Child Protection administration. Perhaps that is because we worked so hard in the preceding years on updating the policy, 'processing' almost 100 people through the application, reference, interview and training procedures that we have in place at GBC, and renewing 50+ CRB disclosures for those who held disclosures that were more than 3 years old!

I'm sure there are requests in other entries in this Review though for more helpers with various activities – so we will never be able to say that we have finished!

We held a well attended training session in November which was led by Richard Lewis, one of our Eastern Baptist Association Regional Ministers.

It would be good in 2010 to be able to offer some short refresher training sessions for any who would find that helpful.

*Ruth Blakey*

### **Finance**

Gift Aid remains a key constituent of our income. 89% of our 2009 General Fund donated income was subject to Gift Aid which means that we were able to reclaim £37,593 from HMRC. Thanks to Stuart Harwood-Clark for administering Gift Aid until they moved away, and to Sally King for taking on this role.

The challenge for 2010 and 2011 is to maintain the growth in donated income during uncertain times. As things stand at the moment, we will see a drop in Gift Aid income from April 2011 as the transitional relief is removed and the effect of the drop in tax rate from 22% to 20% will be felt. The transitional relief was worth £4,272 in 2009.

Thanks, as always, to my co-workers in the finance team – Peter Harris dealing with monthly salaries and PAYE, Sally King with Gift Aid, the team of Sunday Offering counters (too many to list here) and to Ruth Blakey who is the conduit for a lot of the finance-related activity. Thanks to those who spend money on behalf of the Church, for being careful and frugal in your purchases. Finally, thanks to you all for providing us with the money to spend in order to extend God's Kingdom.

*John Pickersgill*

## **godmanchesterbaptist.org**

We have recently undertaken a major revamp of the website making it more accessible to people wanting to find out about us and our activities, as well as providing extra information and downloads for those who are part of the church. The website now carries notes for most sermons and the related cell outline. The most recent improvement means that our morning sermons can be listened to directly from the site, downloaded, or podcast to an mp3 player.

*John Smith*

## **Health & Safety**

Health and Safety achievements in the past year have centred on electricity. Our electricity supply has been thoroughly checked and remedial work carried out, both by EDF Energy to improve the supply before the meter and also by our contractor to improve the post-meter supply to fittings. We are now compliant with the latest regulations.

In addition, Jeremy Lange was able to check all of the portable appliances for electrical integrity (known as PAT testing).

We also responded to Government and BU advice regarding Swine Flu precautions. Thankfully the outbreak was not as severe as it could have been, possibly because the precautions were taken around the country.

In terms of Leadership Team responsibility for Health and Safety, this was in the hands of Nathan Blundy until his term of office ended in the summer. It then passed temporarily to me, but in 2010 is now in the capable hands of Paul Hamilton.

Challenges for the coming year include finding someone qualified to take on the task of annual PAT testing. We have our own equipment but just need someone who knows what to do with it! Offers to Paul please.

Health and Safety is the responsibility of us all and is mostly about common sense. We must think about the possible consequences of our actions on ourselves and others, such as putting something in front of a fire exit, or leaving out something which could be a tripping hazard. Thank you all for keeping GBC a safe place.

*John Pickersgill*

## **IT**

The church IT has enjoyed a quiet and reliable year with the only change being an upgrade over Christmas to the server which made it faster and gave it more memory. This was a gift which has meant that the costs of IT have been kept to a minimum this year.

We do need to make some changes and improvements in the year ahead otherwise our technology will be very far behind but we are investigating a charity scheme that might reduce the cost of new software by almost 90%.

*Brett Mickelburgh*

## **Library**

Throughout 2009 our library has continued to enable us to share our Christian books, DVD's, CD's etc with the church family here at GBC. People have said how much they appreciate the displays related to particular topics and I plan to continue these in 2010. Some new books have been donated to the library recently. Thank you! Donating recently published books is such a good way of blessing your Christian brothers and sisters here.

I think we now need to focus on updating the children's Christian media. The children do borrow such videos as we have available, but at the moment we have only one DVD to offer them. I hope to tell you next year how our library has finally moved into the 21st century with a reasonable collection of up-to-date viewing for our younger borrowers.

*Eileen Campbell*

## Office

As I sit down to write this year's report, two sayings spring to mind:

***Doesn't time fly when you are having fun?*** - can it really be a whole year since we last wrote a report for an annual review?

***And what a difference a year makes!***

John joined the team as Senior Pastor in January 2009 – and that made 5 of us!

Ruth has been Administrative Co-ordinator since April 2004.

Adrian has been Associate Pastor since June 2004.

Abe joined the team as Youth Pastor in March 2005.

And Luke worked with us as our Optimum Volunteer from September 2008.

We had a full house until May, when Luke finished his placement at GBC. He is now living in Bury St Edmunds and involved in his local church there. And we have very recently said goodbye to Abe who is currently waiting to hear about his visa application – and seeking God's guidance for this next phase of his journey.

And then there were 3!

It has been an absolute joy though for most of this year, after some struggles during the 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> year interregnum, for all of us to feel that we are part of a complete team – and, because of that, to have more freedom, time and energy to focus on our own areas of passion and gifting that God has called us to. We continue to meet weekly for prayer and planning and gain much support from each other. We have also re-organised and decorated our office space this year and are benefitting from the new layout.

Our team of office volunteers has grown and developed this year and their support and their willingness to answer phones, greet visitors, and do the more routine tasks such as stock checking, photocopying, data entry, minute taking and news sheet production, increases opportunities for the paid staff to focus on their calling whether that is pastoring, preaching, teaching, evangelism, community involvement, schools work or detailed planning and administrative support.

So a big thank you to Hatty Borland, John Brown, Maria George, Cathy Lane, Craig Rattigan and Martine Woodbridge who have all been part of the regular volunteer team throughout the last year. Thanks also to those who have helped on one off projects.

*Ruth Blakey*

## Activities in Cooperation with other Churches

### Cornerstone

Cornerstone is the Huntingdon crisis pregnancy centre, one of around 150 centres nationwide affiliated to CARE, a well-established mainstream Christian charity helping to bring Christian values and care to address specific issues in our nation and local communities. We offer free confidential counselling, support, help and advice to people who are facing an unplanned pregnancy or have post-abortion concerns or difficulties. We also deliver 'Sex & Relationships' lessons in our local secondary schools.

This year we can look back and see:

#### *Many blessings*

- The open door to us in the local hospital clinic and good relationships there with the staff members
- The invitation to return to both St. Peter's & St. Ivo schools to do lessons with their Year 11 classes
- Being invited to Sawtry Community College for an information day with their year 10's
- Funding from Waitrose and Grassroots to develop the schools work
- A good team for the schools work – with Adrian, Sue Ruckman and Laurel Fennell, along with Julie and Clair from Huntingdon Community Church

2010 will see:

#### *Many challenges*

- We would love to be available to women and their partners *before* they arrive at the hospital clinic
- We are working at full capacity both in the schools and crisis pregnancy work and are praying for new team members to join us in expanding the work
- Raising our profile in the community

#### *Much excitement*

- We will be celebrating 10 years of Cornerstone ministry by the autumn
- For the first time, last year, a man was taken through the post-abortion program – we would love to see more partners coming forward
- New material is being produced for the schools work
- New equipment has been purchased with the grants made available to us

*Sue Ruckman and Katie Stevens*

### Gala Day

Our annual Gala Day stall in July that runs as part of Churches Together in Godmanchester was a real joy to be a part of once again. We served drinks and cake as well as having many conversations with those who visited us. We also gave away 100 goody bags which contained Christian literature, an invite to church activities and also a free bottle of water. Gala Day continues to be a great opportunity to raise our profile in the community and is well received by both organisers and those attending. Please pray for this year's Gala Day as we seek to try something different; we are hoping to have an art competition in the community under the theme of hope, culminating in an exhibition on Gala Day.

*Adrian Woodbridge*

### GAP

Young people around Huntingdonshire have continued to meet every other month to worship God and hear from His Word. It has been encouraging to see some of our own youngsters involved in the theme team. We also hosted GAP at the end of the year with lots of our youngsters attending as it was held in our local school with the theme of Christmas and a slot to say goodbye to Abe. Since a few churches have moved on and have set up their own evening services, the numbers continue to go down. Another challenge facing GAP may be the leadership as the chair is coming to the end of her term of service. We seem to face difficulties in finding a representation on the team in the interregnum period. In the mean time Joe George will represent GBC at the meetings. I do not know where the future of GAP lies but there is great potential of new vision should they choose a new leader.

*Abraham Kalyapu*

## Lunch Group

The Churches Together Lunch Group, having met on a weekly basis for several months, faced a challenging time in the late summer of 2009 when notification of the closure of the Godmanchester Salvation Army Hall was received. A new venue had to be found if the group were to meet again after the Summer Break. The Membership of approximately 25 people were very keen for the lunches to continue.

Help and encouragement came in all forms, not least from Godmanchester Baptist Church with their offer of use of the kitchen and small hall facility at the Baptist Centre. Mary Jepp together with John Callaghan, both from St Mary's, took over the group's leadership from Major David Lewis of The Salvation Army. Offers of help came from both congregations and at the beginning of October 2009, Pastor John Smith and the Reverend David Busk welcomed both old and new members to the first lunch at the Baptist Centre.

Since then all has progressed well providing the members with food and fellowship on a weekly basis, with members increasing in number up to 40.

A challenge for 2010 will be to keep the group engaged with numbers regularly being 40 and more per week. However, the main challenge for 2010 is to encourage involvement beyond the Lunch itself and to perhaps to introduce another dimension, for example after lunch group activity.

A big thank you goes to those who help on a regular basis to keep things in order and running smoothly. Anyone interested in being involved would be very welcome.

*Elizabeth & John Callaghan*

## Mayor's Carols

On 2 December 2009 we played a part in Godmanchester Carols outside the Queen Elizabeth Hall. This is a yearly event we assist in as part of Churches Together in Godmanchester. We were invited to lead prayers and a reading as part of this time and the rest included carols, a speech from the mayor and a visit from Father Christmas. As part of our contribution we also distributed 60 goody bags which contained sweets, fruit, a cracker, Christian literature as well as an invite to local Christmas services. This is the second year we have distributed goody bags and they have been very warmly received.

We would appreciate prayer for 2010 as we (Churches Together) have offered to put this service together where hopefully we can provide a choir to lead the singing. We will be focusing on this initiative rather than Huntingdon Carols in 2010.

*Adrian Woodbridge*