



Annual Review of 2018

Psalm 107:1
"Oh, give
thanks
to the
Lord
He is
good;
For His
lovingkindness
is everlasting."

Welcome to our Annual Review of 2018 which outlines our activities during the year and brings much encouragement as we recognise God's many blessings over the last year.

I value Tuesday mornings. I get up early. I come down to the Church Centre, pop on a couple of lights, make a cup of tea, and often stand in the silent building. That's a rare experience in the hustle and bustle of our many activities and ministries through the rest of the day. I've come early to join others in prayer. We do so every Tuesday morning. There's not very many of us, but we pray. We pray for those in need in the fellowship. We pray for our activities. We pray for our community and our nation. We may well have prayed for you in 2018. "The condition of the church may be very accurately gauged by its prayer", observed the great preacher Charles Spurgeon. "It is a grace-ometer, and from it we may judge the amount of divine working among a people. If God be near a church, it must pray."

I value those involved in our ministries to those at the edge of our communities. The hungry. Those with mental health issues. Those in debt. The refugees. The lonely. For here we find the ministry of Jesus – at the margins. And, of course, during past decades, it is where we find Christians in our western societies, increasingly marginalised. The people at the fringes of our society are close to us and close to the heart of God. It's in that place that Christians must find a renewed voice for gospel truth and living. We were blessed for two years to have Joe Warton on the staff team with his passion to see us working out our faith in the places we spend our time.

I value those who bring their gifts and talents to our worship and teaching activities. Worshipping God is counter-cultural. It flies in the face of our entertainment driven, self-satisfying and self-interested culture. It therefore needs careful nurture of gifts and a listening ear to the Holy Spirit's leading. We often remind ourselves that we come to worship an audience of One. Together we worship with passion and focus on the One who has rescued us. After all:

There is good news for the captive
Good news for the shamed
There is good news for the one who walked away
There is good news for the doubter
The one religion failed
For the good Lord has come to seek and save

There is so much you and I can value about GBC. In these pages, I hope you'll discover more about us and be inspired to give thanks to God for what he did amongst us in 2018 and continues to do now.

John Smith, Senior Pastor

CONGREGATIONS

Almost everyone at GBC finds a place to worship in one of our congregations: Sunday morning Celebration, Songs of Praise, Generation Rising, or at Messy Church. The diversity of style and content of each congregation provides us with a meaningful place for worship, learning and prayer.

During the year many new people have begun to be part of our church family, six people testified to their faith in believers' baptism and nine people became church members. In October, about 30 of us sat down to a wonderful roast dinner provided by Hayley and her team. The guests were Leadership Team and 20 or so people who had joined us at GBC over recent months. We chatted and got to know each other over lunch and then John and Daniel shared some information about GBC and our values and activities. We try to host these lunches every time we have a big enough group of those new to GBC.

We support World Mission across all our congregations, regularly sharing news of people overseas who are linked to GBC.

Many people enable us to celebrate the goodness of God, to share our lives with each other and to make disciples in all our congregations. We thank them for giving their time and gifts and for sharing their servant hearts.

We share testimony in lots of places at GBC whether that is in services or small groups or prayer triplets or day to day conversation. It is so important to share what God is doing in our lives right now! Sharing our stories and answers to prayers can be hugely encouraging to those around us. You'll read about various people's stories and experiences throughout this booklet.

Here is Mary's story.

God met me in a way I didn't think was possible. I know anything is possible with God but I was in a panic! I needed a huge amount of help to sort my bungalow out. Through GBC I found I had friends I didn't know I had. Thank you to all those who put their hearts, minds, bodies and pockets in God's hands and let him use them to help me. People I hardly knew worked together and I was given a haven. Thank you to Karen for organising it all and the whole team for their hard work. All things are turned to good with God at the helm. Thank you Lord and thank you for more friends than I could count. MARY



Mary

SUNDAY MORNINGS

Our Sunday Celebration continues to grow numerically and spiritually. We always want to focus our teaching on Jesus. This last year began by looking at some of the more challenging moments in Jesus' earthly life. After Easter, we looked again at how we find our purpose in life as we serve God and others by understanding clearly our God-given passions and gifts. "The Big Picture" series helped us discover some of the great Biblical themes. And finally, an epic length series from Ephesians helped us considered "Who do we think we are?"

Many people appreciated our Lent series "Faith in Deed" which we considered on Sundays, in our small groups and daily as individuals.

We have valued the faithful service of our worship bands, some of whom also lead services in other churches, as well as those who form our welcome and prayer teams.



The Monk Family

2018 was a year of change for our family and it's been great to share it with our church family. In February we welcomed Joshua into the world and felt very cared for as we all adjusted to our new arrival and people shared hospitality with us.

In March we thanked God for him on a very special Mother's Day. We thought it was very important to do this as we are only too aware of the role the whole church plays in showing how God uses us all in different ways to work together with him to bless others.

Over the summer we went with the youth to Soul Survivor. Another time to share concentrated time together where we loved celebrating God at work in people's lives in many ways (big and small).

2018 then closed with another family celebration, this time all our physical family joined us and our church family to see Abigail express her faith journey in baptism. In her words this was "the 2nd best day of the whole of 2018", (after meeting Joshua for the first time)! It's been brilliant to share such special memories with you all and we look forward together to all that 2019 will hold.

Warren, Suzy, Abigail, Bethany and Joshua

I'm Lydia. I got baptised at GBC on 16 June 2018. I didn't really get to know God until I went to GBC. I started going to Furnace where I learned about God and started to build up my relationship with him. I knew that getting baptised was the next natural step but it wasn't until one night when I was struggling to sleep that God helped me and answered my prayers. After that I knew that God was always there and I was sure I wanted to be baptised. On the day of my baptism I was really scared as I had to stand up in front of everyone and share my testimony. As I stood up to speak, my nerves rushed away and I felt comfortable and peaceful. It was an amazing day and I would encourage anyone that is unsure about being baptised to – just do it! The friends that I have made at GBC have been really supportive and are my extended family. I hope to continue to deepen my relationship with God and support others through this journey too. Lydia



Lydia

SUNDAY EVENINGS

Our monthly Healing and Communion Service remains a key time when, in the context of worship and the Lord's Supper, we pray for the health and wellbeing of others. We've continued to take one evening a month to go deeper into the presence of God by leading one another in worship and prayer.

SONGS OF PRAISE

At 4 o'clock on the third Sunday of each month (except August) the Songs of Praise congregation meets. The services include testimony, prayer, and a time of singing some older hymns usually chosen by members of the congregation who explain why it is a favourite of theirs. Often too, we get an interesting explanation of how the hymn came to be written. Everyone is then invited to stay for afternoon tea with homemade sandwiches and cakes, and there is a real buzz as folk chat together.



Aimee & Janet

Thank you for praying for me during a tough time after a lump I found in my stomach had to be removed. It was amazing the peace I found after coming round from my operation. I know I was in good hands with the professor operating on me but felt reassured by the amount of prayers being said for me. The recovery was so much quicker than expected and I left the hospital 4 days after the operation. At my follow up appointment 6 weeks later the consultant was very surprised when she saw me at how well I looked and how well I had healed. I know that Jesus has been with me, helping me through everything. Thank you for your continuing prayer as I fully recover. Aimee

PRAYER

Prayer surrounds everything we do throughout the whole week, but from time to time we set aside specific times for concentrated prayer, including some prayer walks around our community.

Liesl Houghton who heads up our Sunday morning prayer team writes, “Prayer is a daily thing that many of us do personally on our own which is great, but there are occasions, when you hear a word given, that you feel is for you, when you feel challenged by something just preached about on a Sunday, or when you are in a situation that is so big you like to ask others to pray about it with you or for you. Sometimes we are asked to give thanks with people. Members of the prayer team are always happy to pray with people and it is done in confidence. Most Sundays we pray with someone, whether it is at the front of church or meeting them where they are in the congregation. Whenever possible, we do try and have both men and women on the rota for each week. I feel the prayer team offers a valuable ministry at GBC. I asked some of them what being part of the prayer team means to them.



Liesl

‘I find it a real privilege to share someone’s concerns, and to bring them to our Heavenly Father. I know from personal experience that having someone to pray with can be a real blessing.’

‘It has been a privilege to be able to support folks during their times of need, and to witness God working in their lives through His Spirit.’

‘It is such a privilege that God would trust us with the burdens of his people’.

‘Being on the prayer team is an awesome privilege. To be able to bring one another’s burdens to the Lord and see God at work.’

‘We feel this is an important part of our fellowship as a church to support one another in prayer in response to God speaking to us.’

‘For me, being part of the prayer team is an opportunity to reach out to people and join with them in their worries or concerns and to come to God together to ask for His perspective and His help and healing for their situations. It’s a ministry that can help people deeply and where they can share their burdens, and it’s a privilege to come alongside them.’

‘A privilege to be involved.’

James 5:16 ‘Pray for each other so that you may be healed.’

1 Thessalonians 5:16 -18 ‘Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.’

Come for prayer whenever you want to. You’re always welcome. We don’t know how and when God will heal, but we know he hears every prayer. We are told to pray without ceasing. I love being on the prayer team. You never know what someone’s need will be that day, but I am confident that God is always listening to our prayers.”

Liesl Houghton

SMALL GROUPS

Small groups are absolutely fundamental to GBC having a strong sense of community. It is where people ‘love, learn, do and decide’ together – whether that is in a prayer triplet, a team working together to support many of our services, activities and events, or a home group. Our seventeen small groups meet on various days and at various times for caring, sharing, praying, studying, worshipping and reaching out. Small groups are the key to our pastoral care for one another and this year we strengthened how we do that. They are a great place to form good accountable supportive relationships.



Members of one of our small groups have written the following about what belonging to their group means to them: *We enjoy our cups of tea, chats and prayer times each Monday. We are using the NiRV accessible edition versions of Matthew's Gospel and our folders are crammed with colourful pictures'*
Kath Pickersgill

A brand new group started this year and they report, *MC1825 started in September as a small group of young adults aged 18 chose to stay around GBC rather than leaving for university. We meet monthly to chat and support each other.*

One of our group said "It's great to meet up with each other even though we do our own things". Recently we looked at the parable of the sower and what that means for us today as we live our lives, doing our own things but all with a faith that we want to share in our own way. A highlight this year was in December when we invited all those that are away at university, who were back for Christmas, out for a meal on the evening of December 21. Most of those who were able to come, and it was a great evening catching up with everybody. We hope to repeat at Easter. Hayley Beckett



Holly & Christopher

If you would like to join a Small Group in 2019, please contact Ruth Blakey.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY



Delia

I stood in the shop staring at the hand creams with a range of thoughts buzzing through my head. How many should I buy? I don't want to waste money. Are they the right ones? Make a decision quick before people begin to wonder why I'm fixated on this shelf. Pray about it. Ok take all remaining 22! This led to a conversation with a customer in the queue who was curious as to why anyone would want this number and this gave me the opportunity to share that they were a gift for women attending the 'Shine' course (designed to increase self-esteem, emotional intelligence and a sense of purpose) that a team of us were about to run at GBC Church! 22 people signed up and throughout this new venture we were grateful to God for his faithfulness, impacting and teaching both us as a team and those who came. Glory to God that at the end of 8 weeks the attendees' feedback highlighted how the course had challenged and motivated them, helped them to

grow in confidence and to understand themselves and others better. You might like to look out for the course in 2019! The Shine course celebrates our uniqueness and in our Women's Ministry in 2018 there were a variety of different ways for women to engage with God and each other: a coffee morning, the World Day of Prayer, a craft event, a picnic in the park and the annual Retreat Day. What a blessing that we can say: 'I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful.' Psalm 139:14. *Delia Steer*

MEN'S MINISTRY



Mark

2018 has been a quiet year for Cutting Edge. In December, Joe Warton spoke at a breakfast where he explored the subject of anger, its purpose, where it comes from and how we can have a healthier relationship with it. The response was very positive and the attendees enjoyed the interactive approach to the talk, along with bacon rolls and black-pudding.

Throughout 2018 GBC men supported the Churches Together Men's breakfasts at the Barley Mow, one of which had Charlie Newcombe (vicar at Christ Church) calling for 'New Year's Revolutions', challenging men to take a prominent role in our times of corporate prayer.

Look out for details of more events taking place in 2019. *Mark Moughton*

WORLD MISSION

We held a World Mission Sunday in July welcoming Pauline and Alexei Rogoja who spoke at our Sunday Morning Celebration and at Songs of Praise about their work in Russia. They shared about a new opportunity God had given them to be involved supporting the work of a ladies' rehabilitation centre. This work has progressed well and they have been able to move on in this ministry with the setting up of a halfway house to help those who are leaving the rehab centre. Other aspects of the work in Russia include running a marriage course and a youth alpha course, a men's group, a mums and toddlers' group and so much more!



The Rogoja Family

We have shared financially and prayerfully through the year in the work of:

- Anglo-Indian Concern in Chennai, India;
- Cambodia Action;
- Kathryn Thompson working at Rehoboth to provide educational support;
- Mission Direct working around the world; and
- Rehoboth Children's Homes in the Philippines.

In November 2018 we were part of a medical team supported by Mission Direct. We travelled to Luampa Mission Hospital which lies about 480km west of the Zambian capital Lusaka. We spent 10 days at the hospital, made new friends and learnt a little of the culture. We were able to take with us a new portable ultrasound scanner, about 80kg of various medical supplies, £700 of medicines purchased locally and over 150 pairs of reading glasses. A highlight of the trip was visiting the village in which GBC's one-time Youth Pastor Abraham Kalyapu had been born and raised. Stephanie and John Brown



John & Stephanie

SENIORS MINISTRY

Our seniors ministry continues to flourish. Numbers are growing – not only because more of us are reaching the age (whatever that is!) that makes us eligible to be part of that category, but also because lots of older friends in our community are finding a warm welcome at various activities and services at GBC. We thank God for these new friendships. As well as our Songs of Praise congregation, more and more people are enjoying our Tuesday activities at GBC.

TUESDAY TREAT

If you pop into the Church Centre around 10.30 on a Tuesday morning you will find the Small Hall laid out café style with bistro tables and comfy armchairs. There will be a table laid out with a variety of delicious cakes and scones, to which you can help yourself, and a willing team of helpers ready to take your orders for drinks – good coffee, a variety of teas, or hot chocolate – and hot food such as sausage rolls, toasted tea cakes, crumpets and croissants.

Soon there will be a real buzz in the place as people catch up with each other, share the week's news, and make new friends. There is a lovely relaxed atmosphere and new customers will always find a friendly welcome and will soon be returning regularly.

We have the opportunity to invite folk to other events, particularly the monthly "Songs of Praise" which is now appreciated by many of our regulars. Tuesday Treat provides an opportunity to welcome many who would otherwise not be known to us, and to offer not just coffee but love and support in Jesus' name.

Tony & Rita Goodwin



Tony & Rita



Colin & Margaret

Tuesday's a treat, with the people you meet, you're certain to have a good time, there's plenty to drink, much more than you'd think, and the food that's on offer's sublime. The service, the fun, together we're one, a family enjoying this day, the comfy, soft seats, adding more to the treat, no wonder we all want to stay.
Colin and Margaret

We look forward to it every week – it's a great place to meet up with friends.
Pat and Janet

Well, Tuesday Treat – the clue has to be in the name! It's certainly been a great treat to come here on a Tuesday morning. I've found the atmosphere so warm and inviting, and the cakes and other treats are special too! A place where I've got to know so many people and week by week we see even more new faces. Good news travels fast! I love to just chat and relax in those lovely armchairs! Oh – and a massive thank you to those cheerful folk who so lovingly serve us. Amazing! Thanks again everyone. *Frances*



Frances

TUESDAYS@10



Philip & Jenny

A programme for Seniors was once more arranged on Tuesday mornings during the Summer holiday period, this time using the armchairs and settees set out informally in the Small Hall. On four occasions 40 – 50 participants enjoyed coffee and chat, table quizzes and games and a main speaker or activity. We had a return visit from a popular local musical entertainer and again enjoyed a morning of having a go at simple craft activities and playing table games. New this year was a visiting speaker from the Norris Museum in St Ives who gave a fascinating talk about the changes in shopping over the centuries with pictures to see and objects to handle. The

fourth morning was an occasion which included hearing about Colin and Hatty Borland's experiences as volunteer gardeners at Wimpole Hall and a sharing of accumulated knowledge and expertise in gardening from the assembled company. Each morning ended with a short Thought for the Day followed by a light lunch in the worship area.

A good time was had by all thanks to the hard work of a large number of people on the day and behind the scenes.

Philip & Jenny Thompson

SHELTERED ACCOMMODATION

Many of those who attend Tuesday Treat, Tuesdays@10 and our Songs of Praise congregation live in the various sheltered accommodation settings in Godmanchester. It was good to be able to make our annual visit to those settings on some evenings in December and share carol singing, the Christmas message and some festive refreshments with the residents.

There is also an afternoon service on the second Sunday of each month at McCartney House.

Colin and Hatty Borland write, "We are welcomed every month at McCartney House by residents and relatives for a service of worship, prayer, teaching and fellowship. Many of those attending are not always able to worship elsewhere and really appreciate this regular opportunity to spend time together with the Lord.

For many years this service was faithfully supported by Pat Jacobs, ably accompanying the singing on the keyboard, encouraging us all with her faithfulness in all circumstances and her dry humour. We were all saddened at her death last year, and we miss Pat greatly. However we give thanks for her life of faith and witness, and know she is now rejoicing in a better place.

We always value the encouragement when worshippers from GBC are able to join the service. Please do contact us if you ever feel able to take part, you can find our details in the Blue Pages. *Colin & Hatty Borland*

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

Daniel Beckett, our Youth and Children's Pastor, writes about an exciting 2018, including news from his well earned Sabbatical in the Spring.

SABBATICAL

In the spring I had a 3-month sabbatical which was a real blessing for me. During my sabbatical I had a pattern to my week which meant for one day each week I visited XLP in London (a youth organisation doing detached youth work on many estates in central London). I had one day reading, one day reflecting and one day visiting other children and youth workers and children and youth organisations around the country.

As I read and reflected it was clear that, even though we live in a different world and children and young people are growing up in a different world which is changing at a faster rate than before, our role in proclaiming the good news about God and teaching what God is like and supporting Christians in their faith has not changed. The way that we do this has changed and we need to continue to think about how we do this, but we shouldn't stop doing it.

As I met with practitioners around the country, I was encouraged about the stories of how God was at work in exciting and powerful ways. For example, Sam in Reading has an adult tricycle which he serves young people hot chocolate from in an aim to meet them where they are at and tell them about Christianity at the same time and Heather is helping older children get into the pattern of reading their bibles by having regular 'scrapbooking' sessions around bible stories.

As I worked alongside XLP in London each Wednesday it was great as I spent time with young people from very different cultures and backgrounds and a different day-to-day experience to mine; good to have my worldview stretched.

Thank you to everyone who made it possible for me to have my sabbatical, it was great to have time to reflect on what children and youth ministry is like at GBC and to see what was happening elsewhere.

Back at GBC we have 4 main age groups which we cater for within the children's and youth ministry: 0-5, 5-11, 11-14 and 15-18.

There are several groups and activities with the dual aim of introducing children and young people to the Christian faith and discipling them. Wherever possible we want to encourage and support parents in their faith development of their children as it is proven to be the most beneficial way to help children and young people grow up as Christians.

SUNDAY MORNINGS

On a Sunday morning we have 4 different groups for the children and young people to attend where they can discover more about the Christian faith in a way that is appropriate to their age. We have creche, Little Stars, Kids Kingdom and Furnace. These are all led by an amazing team of volunteers without whom we would not be able to provide these groups.



GENERATION RISING

OUR SUNDAY EVENING YOUTH CONGREGATION (15s+)

It has been another great year for Generation Rising. It is important to us that the young people get involved with organising and delivering this congregation as much as they can. This means they set the room up, control the PA, create and run the PowerPoints, lead worship, make cakes, clear up and preach occasionally. We aim at mixing up the delivery style of the sessions to help us learn in creative ways.

MESSY CHURCH

Messy Church meets at 4.00pm on the 2nd Sunday each month. We have an informal time together as families get involved with different crafts and activities around a theme. These can sometimes be very varied, and we always like to have at least one messy one. We then gather together for some songs and teaching about the theme which usually involves some drama. In the last year we have looked at different topics including the 'stairway to heaven', being part of the 'family of God' and 'which way we should live'.

RESIDENTIALS

As is our annual tradition, we took a big group (55 in total) to the Soul Survivor festival, which is now held in Peterborough. It was a fantastic time with the usual mix of worship, teaching, and camping. There was even an outside silent disco and UV party. Many of the young people encountered God in fresh and powerful ways.

Soul Survivor 2018 was a great year. It provided challenges but it was also great to see so many young people enjoying the Lord's presence. Abi



Holly & Abi

SCHOOLS

During 2018 I have continued to have contact with all the primary schools in Godmanchester: Godmanchester Bridge Academy, St Anne's School and Godmanchester Community Academy. I have done a variety of things with the schools including assemblies, collective worship, lessons including It's Your Move for year 6, visits to the church and prayer spaces.

I continue to lead the Christian Union at Hinchingsbrooke School and do assemblies once a term.

LITTLEFOOT CLUB



Littlefoot Parent, Carer, Baby and Toddler Club has continued to develop. With an average attendance of around 130 bodies, setting up, packing up, providing refreshments, running a craft room and so on really is a huge task for a relatively small team. Turnover is quite high, with many new families this year. We have welcomed a closer working partnership with the LA Children's and Family Support Workers who now attend every week and support our Mums with advice. We have also recently opened our new Sensory Room and it is already proving to be both popular and invaluable as a relaxing, calming space for Mums and children. We all enjoyed our 'Stir Up'

Christmas Pudding making event and are looking forward to our 'Rocky Road to Chocolate Heaven' Easter social. I wonder why?! Karen Smith



YOUTH CLUBS

Since September we now have 2 youth clubs on a Friday night. They are split into different age groups. We do Friday Night Project for those in school year 7-9 from 6.30pm-8.00pm and then Toast for those in school year 10-13 from 8.15pm-9.45pm. It has been good to have different clubs so that we can meet the needs of the different aged young people. We still have the great mix of craft, board games, table tennis, pool, bench ball, indoor hockey and the famous tuck shop!

On a Friday night we aim to have lots of fun and start to build relationships with young people. As we get to know them we are able to support them in their day to day lives and also invite them to other events and activities that we are doing as a church.

COMMUNITY

FOODBANK

Looking back at 2018 it would be nice to report that demand for the service had declined however this is not the case and all our performance indicators show upward trends. Each client who brings a voucher to the FoodBank is generally there because of a combination of different reasons that have brought about a crisis that is acute and challenging.



Low income, job losses, benefit issues for those in and out of work, illness, debt, rent rises and housing cost issues all feature as part of a picture that can put severe strain on people and their relationships.

When adverse life circumstances are coupled to shrinkage in available support services, people in crisis turn to the FoodBank in increasing numbers. In 2018 we provided over 1000 three-day food parcels to support 1500 adults and 1000 children. In 2018 some 38 tonnes (38,000 kg) of food passed through the FoodBank to make regular parcels; to provide the makings of Christmas Hampers and food for the School Summer Holiday Scheme. The FoodBank Christmas Hamper Scheme created 170 Hampers and in addition we were able to offer substantial support to the HCAP '100 Hampers' scheme to extend our help to families in the most deprived wards in Huntingdon. The Summer Scheme provided substantial support for 48 nominated families for the 6 week holiday when there are no Free School Meals or Breakfast Clubs in operation.

The profile of our partner agencies is changing and a number of new agencies (seeking to fill some of the need created by the decline in statutory provision) have joined us and recruiting other new agencies who are in contact with people in need is a priority for 2019. We have improved and developed our support partnerships with organisations like Grub Hub, Snack Shack, Medway Christian Fellowship Love Oxmoor FoodBank, Huntingdon Volunteer Shop, Coneygear Court Housing and King's Ripton Court Housing. The FoodBank is represented and involved in HCAP (Huntingdon Community Action Programme), Cambridgeshire County Council Child and Family Centre Partnership Steering Group and is working closely with the Department of Work and Pensions in Huntingdon to monitor the impact of Universal Credit on vulnerable clients.

The great generosity of individuals, church congregations, schools and businesses in supporting our work is humbling and it is this support that allows us to continue what we do. The Volunteer Team continues to work with great skill and sensitivity in face to face work with clients and with great energy in the preparation of parcels and the management of stock. *Peter Levitt (FoodBank Administrator)*

HUNTINGDON AREA MONEY ADVICE

HAMA continues to help those in debt in the surrounding area. 93 new clients registered last year despite only having 3 advisers.



We believe that being in debt is like being in prison and Jesus tells us to visit those in prison as well as feed them (with the help of FoodBank), clothe them by freeing funds for buying clothes and giving them drink when thirsty by helping them find the funds from their income for paying utility bills etc.

I was privileged to take emergency food parcels to HAMA clients as well as delivering 5 of the 18 food hampers ordered from FoodBank as a Christmas treat. The joy on people's faces when they realise they can have some treats at Christmas, their children can have sweets and other goodies is a wonder to behold. Not only do we have the pleasure of knowing we are doing God's will but we get the extra joy of seeing how much of what we do helps improve lives, lifting individuals and families out of despair.

Not everyone is grateful and not everyone continues to engage with us after the initial contact but so many do. We pray those we help see the love of Christ shining through the faces of our advisers as they struggle to help some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

If you would like to receive our e-mail prayer letter and join in prayer with us for those in debt please e-mail me: centremanager@huntsmoneyadvice.co.uk *Rob Allott*

THE CLUB

Monday Club is a meeting place for people who have experienced mental health struggles in the past and are on the path of recovery. We meet every week apart from the major holidays for a time of relaxation over a cup of tea and coffee and homemade cakes and biscuits. This year we have extended the time by starting at 2.00 pm and trying to finish at 3.30 as we enjoy each other's company. The following comments were made by members of the group.

- *A friendly welcoming atmosphere*
- *A supportive group*
- *This year our friendship with one another has deepened*
- *It is a safe place to talk because people respect one another's confidence*

We have lost some members this year and would welcome new people to come and join us. *Jane Fasham*

OTHER ACTIVITIES IN THE COMMUNITY, many of them in co-operation with people from other churches, which individuals and groups from GBC are involved in, have included

- Christian Aid Week Collection
- Gala Day and Worship in the Park
- Hospital Services at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital
- Mayor's Carols and Godmanchester Christmas Market
- Visits to new homes on the Romans Edge estate, welcoming our new neighbours to Godmanchester and giving out welcome leaflets and Christmas cards.

BUILDINGS – ROOM 5

This year saw the completion of the extension to Room 5 and the store room behind. There are many possible ways in which this room could be used in the future but one is as a prayer room, with direct access from outside, or as a sensory room for young children as shown in the picture above. Numerous sockets at low level round the edge of the room (and in the floor) make it possible for additional lighting to be used throughout the room. Coffee making facilities are also available there.



SUMMING UP

Ruth Blakey, our administrator, writes,

“It’s an enormous privilege to write this review because in collating all of the information about how God has been at work in the lives of so many people at GBC and in our community during 2018 I am reminded again how truly wonderful and humbling it is that God uses his people as part of his plan to demonstrate his saving love to his hurting world.

We long for everyone to feel included and to find a place here at GBC where they really belong. We love to see people using their God given gifts and passions to serve him, each other and our community. If you’d like to get involved in any of the ministries outlined in this Review, or to do something new, please contact any of the staff or Leadership team – we’d love to talk to you about it!

GBC is a big and busy place so we’ve included some photos throughout the Review to help those who are newer to GBC recognise people!

In addition to John Smith, Daniel Beckett and Ruth Blakey, from the staff team, the other members of our Leadership Team are: Hazel Bray, John Brown, Joe George, Tony Goodwin, Paul Hamilton, Jo Hitchins, Brett Mickelburgh, Delia Steer, John Stevens and Martin Webb.

We also want to thank our caretaking and cleaning team of Tony Davis and Maureen Game, who do a great job of keeping the Church Centre in good order for the hundreds of people using the place each week.”



Ruth Blakey & Daniel Beckett



Hazel Bray



John Brown



Joe George



Tony Goodwin



Paul Hamilton



Jo Hitchins



Brett Mickelburgh



Delia Steer



Martin Webb



John Stevens

AND FINALLY

By the time this Review is published in mid-March 2019 ready for our AGM later in the month, we will be getting ready to say our goodbyes and thank yous to John and Karen Smith when John retires from 30 years of ministry at the end of March. We will do that in various ways, culminating in a special morning service and lunch on Sunday 31 March. John has been Senior Pastor at GBC for 10 years and we will miss him and all that he has brought to GBC during his time here enormously. It is a measure of the success of his ministry here, and Karen's contribution too, that they leave the church strong and ready to continue all of the effective ministry and mission that GBC is called to be involved in. Thank you both. We pray for God's richest blessings on you in your next adventures and ministries.



John's Induction



John & Karen

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