

Heaton Baptist Church

ANNUAL REPORTS

2020

ANNUAL REPORTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2020



HEATON
BAPTIST
CHURCH



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MINISTER'S WELCOME



Dear friends,

I write this at a time when the little clump of bluebells in our front garden are coming into their prime. Proudly proclaiming their deep blue message of hope, they are not alone in peeping through – the hostas we feared we'd lost last year have also returned in our back garden. Everywhere you look, there are signs of new life springing up. At a time when the natural world is getting its own rest, we are reminded that God's natural order of things hasn't been unsettled by recent events.

A new thing

And as we look back on the last year, we can see the new life that God has been carefully co-ordinating among us, I want to thank you all for the dedication, care, time and prayer you have put into making the last year happen. God has done incredible things through your gifts and skills this year. I've been continually reminded of Isaiah 43:19 this year: 'See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up, do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness, and streams in the wasteland.'

Everywhere we look, God has been doing a new thing. We've seen new ministries naturally springing up – the gift of hospitality found in our weekly Place of Welcome café one of many obvious examples. We've seen the brand new Resources Area launch and a pastoral care team bedding in, which have brought blessing. We've seen a revamped website and social media presence, all of which has brought a freshness which has brought new connections with the church.

We've seen new and developing community connections. Heaton Community Network has begun to make real, meaningful connections between us and Newcastle City Council, the Jobcentre, local housing agencies, the NHS, the police, local councillors and other local voluntary and community-based organisations. I am so excited about the soil being dug here, the groundwork laid and the opportunities this will provide us as we seek to forge new ways of being church beyond our own four walls.

We've also seen God doing a new thing within Heaton Churches Together. The birth of Heaton's Listening Line - a clergy-based support service for isolated people has dug deeper roots into an already-strong network. It has been a powerful message to Heaton about the unity we share. Ties have been strengthened with Elim church (and its foodbank), and with St Teresa's (as Father Shaun O'Neill has landed in the last six weeks and thrust himself into ecumenical life). God is doing something within Heaton Churches Together - praise Him for this new and exciting season for us ecumenically.

God has also been at work cultivating children's work in our community. We've seen answers to prayer with the cross-church initiative of Open The Book now connecting with four local schools and exciting possibilities of school-based Messy Church locally. And I've become a Governor at Chilli Road Primary School. There is much to be hopeful for as we look forward, then.

And, of course, we've seen new faces in our staff. Over the last year, we've seen a whole range of changes in our staff team. We've said farewell to Aaron, Louise, Mark, Marius and Emma as they've moved onto pastures new. And we've welcomed in Vanesa, Shelley, Bryn and Heather, along with new roles for Aileen, Anna and Elaine. As we look ahead, I am really excited about the team that we have in place now. We have gifted, passionate and experienced staff who I know will do a superb job supporting us all as we seek to share the Gospel to Heaton and our wider community.

A new time

God has also been talking to us collectively about a new way of being. We felt the call to stop and take a brave and extensive Sabbath during Lent - a time where we lay pretty much everything down in order to stop and wait for the still, small voice of God. Rotas were stopped, groups paused and the collective journey through a daily devotional guide became the rhythm for a new way of being. It became liberating as we stopped to pray 'what are you calling us to next, Lord?'



And then this time of laying things down took a more intense and uncomfortable feel than any of us had expected. A year ago, we could never have imagined church not meeting physically, or using an online platform that most people had never heard of. But I've been so encouraged about how we've taken to Zoom Church and how we've been able to continue worshipping together on-line.

It has of course also meant that we've had to re-evaluate what is important in church. Pastoral care within the church and the wider community has been an astonishing thing to watch at work. You have done some truly amazing things to bless your local communities, neighbourhoods and fellow church folk. This is truly the Gospel in action, and I have been so humbled to see you at work blessing others. The green shoots of God's church are growing in new and unexpected ways. What a joy this is to see. May this coming year bring so many more examples of God's unexpected and unpredictable hand at work.

And so, as we look forward to this coming year, it is clear that Covid-19 will continue to play a massive part in how we live and love. Things will be different both in church and in the community for a long time to come. We may need to stagger our return into the church building, staggering or streaming services live so people can watch from home. We will need to follow guidance about when and how groups can restart. But more important than all of these is our sharing of the Gospel to our wider community. We have seen nimble, thoughtful responses from people in church and across the community at this time. And as we reimagine what it means to be Heaton Baptist Church, it will be important to continue practicing these skills, being ever-ready to change direction and to follow the winds of the Holy Spirit; and always beginning with the same question - 'what are you calling us to next, Lord?'

Isaiah 58:11 says, 'The Lord will always lead you, satisfy you in a parched land, and strengthen your bones. You will be like a watered garden and like a spring whose waters never run dry.'

The bluebells in our front garden remind me each time I pass them that God is faithful and that His purposes will prevail. It is He who waters, weeds and releases us to show His glory. Praise God that He has been faithful in this last year, and that whatever this coming one brings, He will be faithful into this one, too.

Blessings,

Dave



CHURCH SECRETARY'S REPORT

BY ROB WALLACE

As church secretary I have the opportunity to see at first hand the work that goes on behind the scenes to keep this large organisation running. This year I have been particularly aware of our wider responsibilities.

We are an employer, a registered charity, the owner of a large building and the focus for a huge team of volunteers doing God's work in the local community. We bear the responsibilities that these situations bring. We need to be good employers, following legal employment guidelines and paying our staff appropriately whilst providing for them good working conditions that meet all the relevant standards. We must report accurately to the UK Charities Commission how we spend the money donated to us and we benefit from the government's recognition of the good work of charities by claiming Gift Aid. We must keep our building safe, secure and repaired. This includes the upkeep of the old (over 100 years old) and new parts of the building and the maintenance of the equipment in the building which helps us to minister to the needs of the local community. We need to encourage the volunteers and provide resources for everyone so that by God's prompting they can share the compassion Jesus gives them for others. And of course we must promote the spiritual growth and discipleship of all those who choose to make HBC their home.

It's the Deacons and Elders of the church who coordinate all the efforts noted above. Is it any wonder that every meeting of deacons and elders starts with some heartfelt prayers? These prayers are often in the form- 'Lord help us!' We know we have no strength of our own so we seek God as we make decisions. We were joined by five new deacons and two new elders in May 2019 who took no time to get their feet under the table, rolling up their sleeves to join in with the leadership team. Many of our responsibilities have changed in their nature as we have responded to the unfolding horror and consequences of coronavirus, but our motivation remains the same. As part of the Body of Jesus we must show his love to all we meet, even if we can only get within 2 metres of them. So, to our 159 members, 200 visitors to church and zoom services, and to our 18 leaders- God bless you in the work you do for Him.

Rob Wallace

Church Secretary



HBC YOUTH REPORT

BY ANNA GIRLING

This years ACM report is being written in very different circumstances and our youth programme has looked a bit different for the last month since lockdown began. However, this past year has been another great year in the HBC youth, and we have a group of amazing and inspiring young people in our church, they are a huge blessing to journey with in faith and life! And there is plenty to share with you and be thankful for!

Firstly, we're hugely grateful to the amazing youth team - without them we would not be able to do the youth work at HBC. They are a group of servant hearted leaders, and they make the youth programme the fun, welcoming place that it is whilst also creating spaces for our young people to encounter God and grow in faith.

The youth team this year is made up of: Emma Foster, Ben Foster, Sarah Robinson, James Girling, Tim Howell, Rob Taylor, Jack Barraclough, Caz and Tom Onions, Rachel and Jon McNaughton, Jonny and Kirsten Bird and Neil and Lorna Davidson. They're amazing! And a special thank you to Emma, who has been my office buddy for the last 2 and a half years and who recently stepped down from her volunteer role on the staff team, we are so grateful for all she has done in the youth ministry in the last 2 and a half years, and are really pleased she is continuing to be part of the youth team going forward! And to Sarah who has made an exciting move to Birmingham in the last couple of months, we're so grateful for the time she has served as part of the youth team, she has brought much fun and joy, and we're praying for her in this new season!

We love seeing our young people grow in faith, build deeper in friendships with each other, and shine brightly in the world - this is what we're about! And so, here are some stories of what we have been up to this year...

Soul Survivor

Soul Survivor has to be one of the highlights of the youth programme in this year! Last summer a group of 18 young people and 14 leaders headed off to Stafford Showground, to join thousands of other young people and camp in a field for a week! Last summer's soul survivor event was the last one, so it felt very significant to be there and to worship God in that space for the last time. We're really grateful for the impact that Soul Survivor has had on the youth at HBC over the years. We heard from amazing speakers, worshipped together, saw one of our young people make a commitment of faith, were robbed in the football tournament, ate incredible food made by family Bird and had loads of fun. And when we returned home the young people led an amazing service to share all that happened, I will not forget sitting on the platform, on those camping chairs and hearing the young people's stories of vulnerability and what God had done in their lives - that is definitely a ministry highlight -amazing!!

The Oakes

Just before the summer holidays a few of our younger youth went on a trip to the Oakes in Sheffield which is a Christian Activity Camp. They had a great time over the weekend, learning lots about faith and the Bible, and enjoying fun activities like rafting, zorbing, archery and a bonfire. It was my first experience of the Oakes and I can see why it is an anticipated part of the junior church and youth programme!

New things: This year we have seen our young people get involved in serving their local community in a gardening project! On a street adjacent to church there were a couple of tired planters that needed reviving and a group of our youth spent time weeding and replanting new flowers and shrubs. We found out that some of the youth know a lot about gardening and with some help from Mark Ridsdale the planter now looks lovely and has been commented on by the local council and community! This year we have also launched a youth worship night. We had our first one in October and invited the worship team from Strathmore Road Methodist Church to lead us in worship, which was great! We heard testimonies, prayed together and had a new youth cafe! We are looking forward to these becoming a more regular part of our youth programme in the future.

HBC Youth on Sundays - On a Sunday morning our youth continue to meet in two groups: Grid and ID. The Grid is for young people in school years 7-9. There are currently around 18 young people in the Grid and we meet in the youth loft. ID is for young people in school years 10-13 and there are around 22 young people in this group. ID meets in the sofa room during the service on the first three Sundays of the month. On the fourth Sunday the young people in ID have the opportunity to serve in an area of the church. You will see them involved in the worship, PA, welcome and Junior church teams on these Sundays, and this is a great space for the youth to step out of their comfort zone and develop their leadership skills. Over the past year the Grid and ID have explored themes such as world issues, the life of Jesus, and Big Questions. More recently we joined the rest of the church in a season of sabbath. Sunday mornings give us a great opportunity to dig into the Bible together, wrestle with questions and explore faith together. There are times throughout the year for our Grid and ID groups to meet together, one of which is the Big Breakfast! At the beginning of each term we join together as a youth community and eat a delicious Big Breakfast made by our youth team. Over the past year we have welcomed Aileen to share what it means to have a life shaped by God, and spent a morning praying for the world.

Mentoring - The mentoring programme for the young people in ID has continued through this past year, and is an opportunity for the young people to meet with a member of the youth team or wider congregation. It looks different for each young person and leader: chatting over a coffee, reading a book of the Bible, exploring a difficult topic together or reading a Christian book. However, the purpose of the mentoring programme is for the young people to be supported and encouraged in their relationship with God, explore their gifting and to be intentionally invested in by their mentor. One of the young people said they 'love mentoring because it's good to have someone who they can trust and feel comfortable around, they enjoy being able to talk about anything, and that it challenges them to think about how God affects their lives'.

Jesmond Park Academy - We continue to be passionate about the schools work we are able to do in Jesmond Park Academy (Heaton Manor). Over the last year Emma Foster and I have mentored a number of female students, and I was going in to school on a weekly basis to mentor two young people (before lockdown). It is such a privilege to connect with the school and the students in this way and to journey alongside the students in exploring themes such as identity, anger, friendships and confidence.

I am hugely grateful for the continued support, encouragement and prayers from the church for the young people, the youth leaders and the youth programme! It is a privilege to be in the role that I'm in!

STUDENTS

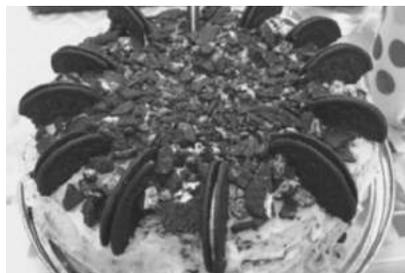
BY EMMA FOSTER

This year has been a bit of a different one for the student group at HBC! Back in September after a lot of thought and prayer we decided to have a rebrand and change the way we do things! The group is now called Focus and is for both students and those in their twenties, people who perhaps haven't gone away to uni or who have returned to HBC after uni. The group has grown in number significantly since this time last year which has been so exciting and encouraging to see. There are now about 15 of us in total. Focus really feels like a little community where we can all come and learn from each other and share with each other. It has been such a blessing to lead the group this year and a joy to lead alongside Ben Foster and Grace Bretnall.

We started the academic year back in September with some brilliant student lunches hosted very kindly by different people from the church. It was a great way to get to know the new students but also for them to get to know people in the church beyond the Focus team. Some great relationships have blossomed out of the lunches. Throughout the year we have studied new testament characters and also taken time to look at the early church in Acts looking at topics such as fellowship, communion, evangelism and one of our students Helen lead a great session for us on worship. Once a month instead of a study we cook food and eat together. Our monthly meals have helped us to get to know each other and just have fun. Socials have also been a big part of our year and they usually involve food in some form or another!

On the subject of food, as a group we were given the mammoth task of cooking all the pancakes for church pancake party. I think we cooked about 270 pancakes in total and I still don't think I'm ready to cook them again anytime soon!! Despite the stress it was a fun experience for us to share as a group and I'm so grateful to everyone who did their part to flip all those pancakes!

Over the last month we have taken a few weeks off our new Focus weekly zoom call to use the Tuesday timeslot differently, to perhaps spend the time reading the bible on our own or journaling or to maybe call a friend we know needs encouraging. I'm looking forward to our meetings restarting and to eventually being reunited and to hearing the stories that everybody has to share. I'm excited to see where the group goes next year as we sadly say goodbye to some of the group (a little earlier than we expected due to lockdown!!) and welcome new students in September.





TODDLERS

BY SHEILA FLETCHER

Over the past year toddlers has been as busy as ever, Mondays especially so. We've had a few changes in our helpers, Sarah Walton stepped down from Mondays, Helen Macfarlane has come to help temporarily and Caz Onions came to help on Tuesdays. We look forward to seeing Caz with the baby whenever we reopen. We held a Macmillan Coffee Morning last year, due to one of our Mums' having breast cancer and we raised £146.92.

One of our parents owns The Shoe Tree Café in Heaton where we were given free cakes and drinks as they are so appreciative of what toddlers does for them. Kath was able to give 2 mums a copy of the sabbath devotional and show them round the prayer room. At Easter time instead of being able to give out Easter cards we texted all the families with the verse John 16:33. Please pray this will have an effect on them. With thanks to Sandra Cowie, Heather Skee, Kath Liddell, Helen Macfarlane, Vera Franklin, Caz Onions and Sarah Walton for their continued service.





PASTORAL CARE & DISCIPLESHIP

BY AILEEN INNES



Hello once again. Whenever I come to write this report I can't believe how quickly the year has gone and how much has happened! Most significantly for me, my job role changed this year, moving away from the work with the young people to supporting the pastoral and discipleship work within the church. As much as I have grieved leaving the work with the young people, I know it is in very capable hands and this new role has been really exciting for me. One of the biggest developments has been the Places of Welcome Cafe that started in June. It is wonderful to offer something totally non-threatening to the community, and a place that has no agenda other than a warm welcome and good conversation. It feels exactly what we should be doing as a church - to offer the welcome and hospitality to Jesus. You can read more about it in the report from Mike and Viv later on. I've also enjoyed doing much more pastoral care and coordinating the pastoral care team, again a report from Gill follows. It's so good to be a part of a church family that so genuinely cares for one another, and there is so much of this going on around the life of the church. One of the things I am passionate about is equipping people in their journey of faith, and so to be involved in launching our 'resources area' was hugely exciting! The area at the back of the Sanctuary has been transformed into a library area with tons of books, dvd resources, cards and leaflets to allow people to get great teaching and deepen their walk with God. It was wonderful to see it being used by so many in the couple of weeks it was open before we had to stop meeting in the building. It will still be there when we return, do make use of it! Thank you so much to Fiona Veitch Smith for help with sourcing many of the books, and also to Bryn for making it look so good.



Lifegroups - Also as part of my role I have taken on coordinating Lifegroups alongside Andy Carlisle. Lifegroups are so vital to the health of the church. We currently have over a dozen Lifegroups meeting which vary massively in size, structure and focus but all have at the heart of them fellowship and community and a desire to walk closely with others as we seek to become more like Jesus. We have enjoyed our Lifegroup Leaders Gatherings, which now meets 3 times a year to encourage, equip and pray for leaders. I want to extend a huge thanks to all the Lifegroup leaders for their love and commitment to their groups. We had been working on starting up some new Lifegroups, including a daytime group, but the current situation has put that on hold for now. However if you are not a part of a lifegroup, and would like to be, especially during this season that we are scattered, then please get in touch with me. Most Lifegroups continue to meet via video calls, and also are a great source of support, phoning one another and looking out for each other at this time.

Messy Church - Messy Church continues to go well as we seek to provide a gentle, fun, interactive church experience for families and anyone else who wants to join in. Our format remains the same - We start with a Big welcome and tell the Bible story for the day, then all the families go into the sanctuary which is transformed into lots of creative stations and usually a fun game all around the theme of the story. Once people have enjoyed interacting with the story in fun ways, we gather for our celebration time which consists of a song or two, a 5 minute message, a prayer and the Messy Grace. We then head upstairs for a lovely tea and some time to chat to one another. This year from September our theme was 'Superheroes' and we picked a hero or heroine from the Bible each session including characters such as David, Esther and Elijah. Highlights have been families engaging who come regularly to Toddlers and getting feedback from parents who say their children would rather come to Messy Church than other events/parties they have been invited to! None of it could happen without the work of the fantastic Messy Church team who always give their very best to it. A huge thank you to you all.





BY VIV DAVIES

Our Place of Welcome café opened in September 2019. We built it up slowly, opening every other Thursday lunchtime until Christmas.

It is designed to be a safe, warm, welcoming place where anyone and everyone can come along and have tea or coffee and biscuits or a light meal of home-made soup, bread and cheese, for which there is no charge. The café caters for everyone, lonely or hungry, young or old, singles or families. We have a wonderful team of volunteers who come regularly who will just sit and chat to anyone needing company or who may need help in other practical ways.

This year the cafe has been open every Thursday from 12.00 until 2.00, and although numbers are still small we have seen a steady increase in people from the local community who come regularly.

Just before the lockdown Aileen was contacted by the link worker for the East End Primary Care Network who works with local doctors' practices to support those who have a social rather than medical need. She felt that our Place of Welcome café will provide a safe place for them to meet and talk. During this lockdown the church has been working with her to help support some of the more vulnerable people in our community and we are looking forward to liaising closely with her when the café reopens to continue this support.

The Team:

Team Leader: Aileen Innes

Soup-makers: Viv Davies, Sandra Cowie and Helen McFarlane

Befrienders: Aileen Innes, Dave Tubby, Anna McCall, Elaine Lord, Marie Borthwick, Heather O'Neill, Jonny Potts, Grace Bretnall, Michael and Margaret Stobbs.

Waiters: Mike Davies, Keith Wearn, John Taylor, and Viv, Sandra and Helen when really busy!

WELCOME TEAM

BY JAN PINDER

Over the last couple of years the Welcome Team has expanded and has settled into a good working pattern providing lots of different smiling faces to welcome people into church. The team also seek to assist visitors, new families and those arriving alone for the first time, giving information on where to take children, what to expect, and raising the profile of ministries of interest in our church life. Providing help and back up with queries and needs that arise during the service has also been valuable.

The newly decorated foyer is a lovely bright and warm entrance thanks to Bob Franklin and team for all their hard work in the transformation.

This year Kath Liddell, Vera Franklin and Mike and Viv Davies have resigned after many, many years of faithful commitment to Welcome and we wish them blessings as they continue to serve in a variety of ministries in church life.

A huge thank you is in order to all the team for their help in planning and their ongoing willingness to serve in helping to make everyone's experience of HBC a positive one.



PASTORAL CARE

BY GILL TAYLOR

The aim of this group is to lovingly serve the church family. With this in mind, we have reviewed the Church Directory with the intention of identifying any individuals who needed some extra support. As a result, several people were followed up and help offered. The importance of the link between this group and the pastoral work carried out by the Lifegroups was stressed once more. This appears to have worked well when arranging visits for people in hospital.

In the Autumn, Paul Smith, James Girling and Becca Scarr stepped down from the team. However, we are delighted, that following her appointment into the new role within the church, Aileen has joined the group as did Carol and Brian Tweddle, Elaine Lord, Sandra Cowie and Debbie Scarr.

Other practical matters discussed included the use of the Connect desk, the provision and distribution of the flowers and the organisation of the newly formed Craft group. More recently, our concerns and prayers have been for supporting people in the lock down period. With this in mind, several more people were invited to help to enable us to regularly keep in touch with all the folk in the Directory.

Please feel free to contact any of us to refer people who need the support of the team.

Members of the team:- Dave Tubby, Aileen Innes, Vera Franklin, Bill and Maureen Hayton, Dee Dick, Toks Fajemirokun, Sandra Cowie, Elaine Lord, Debbie Scarr, Brian and Carol Tweddle, Gill Taylor



BUILDINGS ADVISORY GROUP (BAGS) REPORT

BY BOB FRANKLIN

Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain. (Psalm 127:1)

Bob Franklin, Michael Stobbs and Tom Pinder have been responsible for the overseeing of the Life Centre, Church and Manse.

Last year we took on the challenge of making the entrance to the church sanctuary more welcoming. This was in response from members in business meetings identifying that the Vestibule area was dreary. Also, the old office at the rear of the church had become a place for unwanted items.

Estimates of the costs of the work were made and the deacons and church agreed for the work to be carried out. With Dave's encouragement and blessing work commenced early last year. We have now finished the Vestibule area.

The Old Ministers office is now completed and is now our New Resources area transformed and run by Aileen, looks very relaxing and well stocked with exciting resources (well done Aileen). Added to this a couple in the church funded the replacement of the under gallery fluorescent lighting for new LED lighting, many thanks for this kind contribution.

We then looked at state of the windows on the eastside of the lower sanctuary, which have been in a very poor state for a long time. It had been difficult finding a glazer due to issues with how the windows are installed (cemented into the walls which caused them to crack, thus having no guarantee). Simon from Heaton Glazers has now completed an agreed pair of windows to test for any issues at £600.00. None issues were identified, and an agreed quote of £3,600.00 for the remaining windows to be replaced. This last year has seen equipment in the Life Centre failing with age and constant use (hot water Heater in the Chillingham Kitchen and currently our Domestic hot water system), replacement costs have come in high, so alternatives are being sourced. The top floor of the Life Centre was repainted in line with our annual maintenance plans. Also, we have had an engineer looking at the movement of the East corner of the Sanctuary and a survey of the drains. As ever, constant week by week management of our properties has gone smoothly thanks to the dedication of the team, the expertise and time they pour into this ministry is a blessing to us all. Special thanks go to Tom Pinder, Michael for their time, dedication and passion for serving the church in this way. Bob, Michael and Tom wish to thank all of the members for their encouragement and support.



ENGLISH CLASSES

BY JEREMY & JEAN WOOD

Since May 2019

we have had 48 students with an average of 6 students at each of our 25 lessons. The students were from 20 different countries, as follows: Sudan (10) Brazil (2) El Salvador (6) Albania (2) Iraq (3) Eritrea (1) China (2) Argentina (2) Iran (7) Portugal (2) Chile (1) Germany (2) Morocco (1) France (1) Czech Republic (1) Poland (1) Italy (1) Bulgaria (1) DRC (1) and Jordan (1)

Since Lockdown

We had our last class on 5th March, before we went on holiday. When we came back, the country was in lockdown, so the classes stopped, apart from lessons to a student in Ukraine via Skype. We have contacted many of the students to offer support (on-line learning resources and help lines/WhatsApp group). We have had some nice replies from several of the students and as far as we can tell, they are coping well with the current crisis.

Thanks again to Dave and Dawn who have helped us on a regular basis.





PRAYER MINISTRY

BY JOHN AND MARY MACKENZIE

The prayer ministry team was set up to provide prayer support for those who would like to receive this ministry after services. This may be as a result of something said during the service or something that God has said directly to them during the service. Others may come forward to receive prayer about ongoing issues of concern.

The team is led by John and Mary MacKenzie, who are very ably supported by all the volunteers who help with the prayer. We meet on Sunday mornings on a planned basis, each person taking their turn every 2 to 3 weeks. Volunteers pray with people about a variety of issues, keeping all of it confidential.

In September 2019 we had a wonderful team away day at Shepherd's Dene in Northumberland. We received teaching from Wholeness through Christ, which is an international Christian prayer ministry organisation, and had breakout sessions where we had time to reflect and pray individually. We all benefited from the lovely grounds and beautiful weather and team members appreciated the opportunity to spend time with God away from the busyness of life. We would like to thank the church for supporting us to have this time away and we had very positive feedback from the team about it. Praying for others is a servant-hearted, pastoral ministry, and we would like to thank every team member for their much valued contribution to the life of the church through the prayer ministry team. We give thanks to God for the way in which he meets with individuals and ministers to them at their point of need. It is a privilege to be a part of this ministry.

We would like to say a huge thank you to all of those who have supported the prayer ministry team during the past year. The service which the team provides for the church is greatly appreciated by ourselves and by those who come forward for prayer. Those who have been involved regularly in serving on the prayer ministry team during the past year include: Kirsten Bird, Sheila Fletcher, Tim Fletcher, Sally Foster, Ed Foster, Paul Smith, Shotty Rai, Tom Pinder, Daniel Jegatheesan, Bill Hayton, Maureen Hayton, Debbie Webster, Anne Wales, Miriam Westfall.

MEETING POINT

BY MICHAEL & MARGARET
STOBBS

2019 was another year of food and fellowship, we enjoyed listening to many and varied speakers throughout the year, including David Lennox “the ministry of a Police chaplain” Dave Wilkinson “the work of a mural artist”, Rev; Neil Terry “ education in todays world”, Jeremy Pickard “ voices from ww2”, Tom Pinder “being a Newcastle city guide.

In June we visited Ormesby hall Middlesborough, this trip being ably organised by Mike Davies, although he was not responsible for the weather, (it rained all day), so the café did a very good business from us. As usual we had an excellent Christmas lunch at the Rising Sun Country Park. 2020 started off to the usual format in Jan/Feb, then we cancelled the March meeting for a time of Sabbath rest, and of course like all Church ministries we have had to halt during the corona crisis. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have helped with the group, and look forward to gathering together again, although we may have to change our name to **NOT** meeting point for a while.





iCONNECT

WRITTEN BY HEATHER O'NEILL

The aim of iConnect is to create a welcoming community for people from all over the world to share our faith and God's love practically through friendship, fun and hospitality. Heather O'Neill, Andy and Hannah Clarke currently co-lead iConnect. Priya Daniel stepped down from co-leading the group last summer after several years of service and we are very grateful for all her gifts of leadership in developing the group. Following their time out last year and their travels to Nepal and America, Andy and Hannah Clarke now co-lead iConnect with Heather O'Neill (since January 2020).

We meet once a month on Saturdays at HBC from 5-7pm with a meal followed by a variety of all age activities which also includes a short faith based talk/testimony and discussion and opportunity for prayer.

Every month we have a different theme often from a different country and try to involve those who come along to take part. There are often up to 50 people many of whom who are from a different faith background.

We also try to have regular social events to help deepen our friendships and provide a welcoming community to journey in life together. Food is usually involved in some way (!) and we have met in each other's homes as well walks/picnics and family friendly activities. As many of our members do not have access to transport, we usually have to stay very local with no/low cost activities.

For some of our members, their need can often be very practical and we are grateful to everyone in HBC who has responded to requests for assistance.

Some of our highlights

The day trip away to Warkworth in July where we have a picnic by the river and walk and then on to the beach for games and a dip in the sea for some brave folk! Many regulars invite their friends along to this event as it is a great opportunity to get out of the city and have fun together.

Our Christmas party, and this year around 70 people attended. There were the usual party games and food, photo booth, Santa and singing and this year we had a Christmas story and Christingle service.

Performing is always popular and every year at the end of the summer term we hold a cultural concert/talent show where everyone performs an item related to the culture of their country; this ranges from singing, dancing, powerpoint shows, poetry and drama! Everyone brings food from their country and we enjoy a delicious feast.

As part of our Sabbath rest this year a particular highlight was going bowling instead of our normal group...which was the first time ever for some of our members!

Our new normal since Covid 19 involves an active what's app group and some zoom calls with quizzes and games. It is particularly difficult for so many of our members as they are far from home and their families with limited support networks and language difficulties.

Our team of helpers are: Andy and Hannah Clarke, Heather O'Neill, Priya Daniel, Vera Franklin, Anne Wales, Adele Boakye, Heather Skee, Rachel, Shotti and Abbie Rai, Tim Knight, Vanessa and Raymond Ortega, Ligia Contreras, Sandra Cowie, Keith Wearne and Daniel Jegatheesan.

Our guest helpers who have special roles at Christmas and other events are Bob Franklin, Rob and Steph Wallace and Viv Weatherley. Thanks also to those in HBC who have helped out occasionally with providing meals and puddings - it helps enormously!

Not everyone is available to help every month so if you would like to be involved in some way, please let us know!

This can be anything from providing a meal/pudding, setting up the hall, doing dishes in the kitchen, playing with kids, serving coffee/food or just chatting to people and eating some delicious food!





JUNIOR CHURCH

BY JACQ HOWELL

So we find ourselves in extraordinary circumstances as I sit to write this report - very different to previous years!

Obviously, Junior Church was continuing as usual up until the end of February so I can update you and reflect on events which go back to summer 2019. In the final half term of last academic year (May-July 2019) some of the groups enjoyed a summer social.

Allstars had a visit to the Shoe Tree cafe before going into Heaton Park. They received a bookmark with a Bible verse on; "The grass withers and the flowers fade but the word of our God will stand forever." Isaiah 40:8

The children collected flowers and leaves in connection with the verse and also had fun playing on the play area.

Livewires had a Sunday Spy afternoon held at church. The children heard the story of Joshua in the morning session then stayed for a spy themed lunch (Her Majesty's secret sausage rolls, pop secret snacks, dynamite sticks and mole muffins) followed by spy related activities including a code breaking activity and a nerf gun battle!

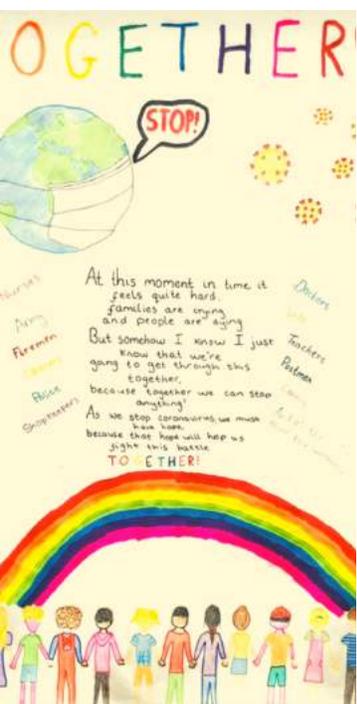
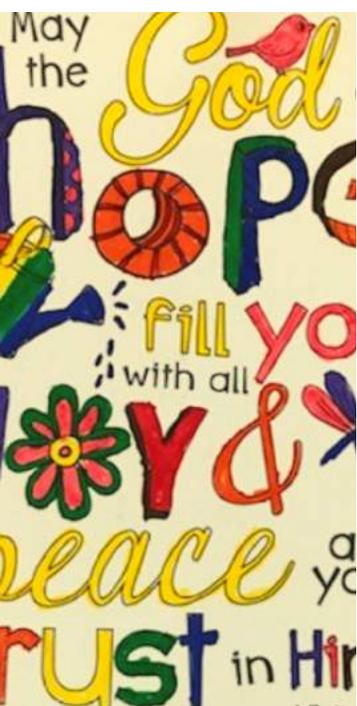
Lasers enjoyed a couple of morning visits to Heaton Park to play rounders and had their annual visit to the Oakes.

These events enabled the children to grow deeper relationships with each other, their leaders and God.

Since September we have had our usual groups on a Sunday morning alongside events for families to attend.

October saw us hold a Halloween alternative, in the form of a film night, which we know our families appreciate. After a light tea, families watched Aladdin together enjoying sweets and popcorn to mimic a full cinema experience! Christmas was celebrated in the usual way with a party for all groups on 15.12.19 Children enjoyed games, a craft activity and snacks in their groups and received some Christmas chocolate to take home. Creche children enjoyed the ball pool which is always a big hit.

The pool party we organised in January has become a bit of an annual event as it is loved by all of the children (and even some adults!) After an hour of fun in the water and some competition on the large inflatable, the children received a picnic tea and adults enjoyed light refreshments.



There was considerable thought and planning that went into Junior Church leading up to the Sabbath period. Junior Church groups were merged during Sabbath. We had a few weeks before Sabbath was cut short due to current circumstances. I led the first week and thought the children engaged well in the session and adapted to the changes brilliantly. We had some activities planned which the children didn't get to try, namely the use of the prayer space, but I hope we can incorporate these ideas into the Sunday morning groups when they resume.

It goes without saying that our Junior Church would not be what it is without all of the support of the Junior Church volunteer team. They are an incredible group of people who are dedicated, creative and have a heart for sharing the good news of Jesus to the children of HBC. Thank you to each and every one of you for your time, commitment and energy.

We continue to follow our vision of faith, fun and family to ensure our children connect to God, make memories and have a sense of belonging. I am looking forward to resuming normal activities and seeing the children face to face again.



BY KATH MOFFITT

Over the last financial year the Partnership Fund has been able to give some support to:

- Jack Barraclough working for Agapé in Newcastle
- Andrew and Kimberley Carrabine (and now baby Josiah James) training with YWAM
- Heather Farrow studying for full time Christian Ministry
- Rebecca Mayo, working for Youth for Christ in Newcastle
- Anna McCall, Agape staff member working in the UK for Agapé
- Jonny Potts working for Agapé in Newcastle
- Rebecca Scarr, doing a Gap year course at Cliff College
- Ben Wallace, working as a relay worker with UCCT at Leeds University
- Miriam Westfall working for Agapé in Newcastle

There are three main ways the fund is financed:

1. Some comes from the church funds
2. Some gifts given through the partnership funds are given for specific individuals (these are added to the allocations from the fund)
3. Where applicable we recover and distribute the gift aid.

As you can see, the majority of the funds come from the church with only a small amount coming from members of the church giving direct to the Partnership Fund. The Partnership Fund has also taken over the functions of the short term bursary which was previously administered by the Church Treasurer. If you are interested in giving to the fund in general or to a specific individual please talk to one of the trustees. If you feel you would like to be partnered by the Partnership Fund in training for full time Christian work or in full time Christian service or for the Short term bursary, please approach the elders.

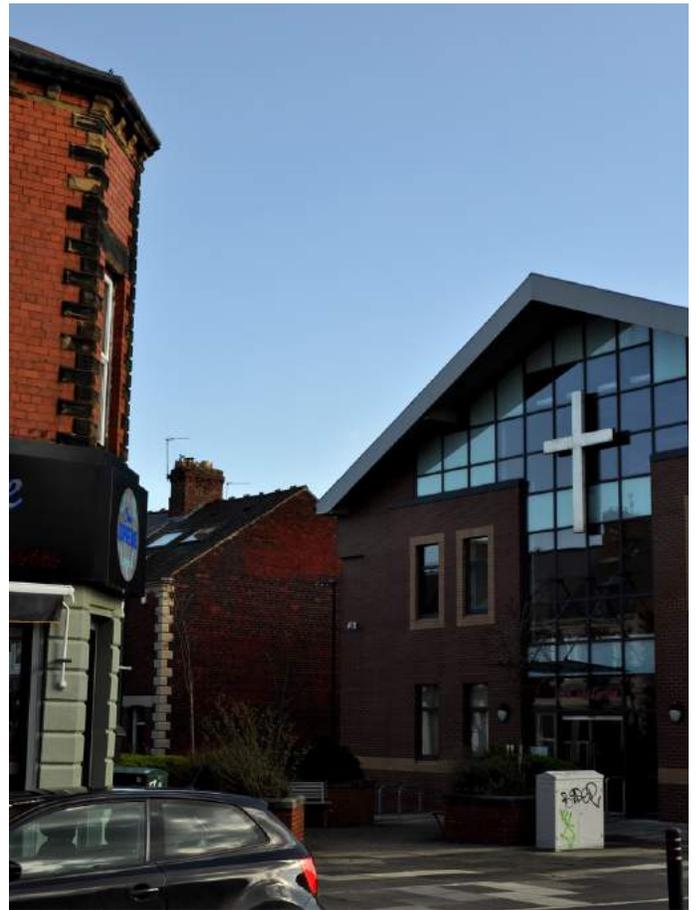
Heaton Baptist Church - Partnership Fund Accounts 2019/2020

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| 2018/2019 18520 0 (bank charges) £18520 | <u>Payments</u> Members in full-time / training/short term bursaries Other payments Total | 2019/2020 20734 0 (bank charges) £20734 |
| 1892.15 530 0 17000 177.56 0 17707.56 | <u>Receipts</u> Brought forward Gift Aid giving Non-gift aid giving Church Funds Gift aid income tax refunds 2018 Gift aid income tax refund 2019 Bank Interest Total | 1094.71 200 680 22200 0 23080 |
| -£812.44 £1094.71 | Outgoings vs Income Balance in hand | £2346 £3440.71 <i>Kath Moffitt</i> 31/03/2020 |



Whatever strategies you use, the greatest gift any of us can receive, when our world shrinks and seems to shift on its axis, is *the joy of encountering Jesus face to face*. In Exodus 33:18 Moses makes a bold request of God: “Now show me your glory.” *Will you join me in making such a bold request of our heavenly Father?*

REBECCA MAYO
STRATEGIES FOR SURVIVING SELF-ISOLATION





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