

Annual Profile 2020



***Knowing Jesus,
Making Jesus known***

Welcome to Hailsham Parish Church – an Annual Profile 2020

Jesus said that if I thirst,
I should come to him.
No-one else can satisfy;
I should come to him.

Jesus said if I am weak,
I should come to him.
No-one else can be my strength;
I should come to him.

*For the Lord is good and faithful:
he will keep us day and night.
We can always run to Jesus,
Jesus, strong and kind.*

Jesus said that if I fear,
I should come to him.
No-one else can be my shield;
I should come to him.

For the Lord is good and faithful...

Jesus said if I am lost,
he will come to me.
And he showed me on that cross,
he will come to me.

For the Lord is good and faithful..

*For the Lord is good and faithful:
he will keep us day and night.
We can always run to Jesus,
Jesus, strong and kind,
Jesus, strong and kind.*

Electoral Roll

Following the completely new Electoral roll produced in 2019 there have been a number of changes in 2020 and it is a joy to welcome new people to the church family.

However, during the year, we note with sadness and yet resurrection hope the deaths of: John Brown, Bryan Fullick, Sue Gross and Lilian Rycroft. We also said farewell to a number who moved from Hailsham: including Catherine and Mark Bridger and Val Honney.

Due to the current situation re Covid 19 there has been a delay in some electoral roll forms being returned and at present the new electoral roll stands at 191 and a full update will be given at the AGM later in the year.

The Churchwardens' Report

As we move into a new decade, we continue to thank God for his love and provision. We thank him for the wonderful teaching that we receive and with that, how we are growing in our love and praise for Him. We have had some challenging sermon series throughout the year, including the Letters from Heaven (Revelation), Out of the storm (Job), The Servant King (Isaiah) and Kingdom Life – living in a broken world (Matthew). We also looked at issues we struggle with, sickness and suffering, dying well and living with depression. We thank God for his word and for all those who take time to prepare and teach us.

We praise God for bringing many new people to HPC through the last year, whether that is the visitors we have on a Sunday, with many deciding to stay and be part of the HPC family, or those that come along to the weekday activities and events. We thank God for those who have attended the Christianity Explored sessions and for those who have come to Christ.

As we look back over the last year, we are thankful that HPC continues to be fruitful in so many ways and we thank all those who contribute to this. We are thankful to the staff team, David, Rory, Chris and Lyn for their faithful ministry and teaching to the church family and beyond, as they go into schools and into care homes and spread the good news across Hailsham. We are thankful that we are still allowed to take school assemblies and care home services and that Jesus is being made known. It is wonderful that we also have many people hearing the good news in ABC's, Pulse, Holiday Clubs, The Bite In, Open Church and the annual Pantomime and we can see this bearing fruit in people coming to Christ.

Our thanks also go to all who contribute to the life of HPC week by week through faithful witness serving God in many ways. Those who welcome, clean, move chairs, arrange flowers, serve refreshments, as well as our musicians led so competently by Chris, and Roger and Francine who look after our finances.

Easter and Christmas are special times in the Christian life, and this can be seen at HPC with all the services and events that happen in the weeks leading up to them. It is great to see so many coming especially those who do not regularly attend church.

We are pleased that some of the new events and services worked well over Christmas, these included Christmas Cracker an interactive Christmas experience for families with younger children, including crafts, stories, songs and a delicious tea and also Christmas unplugged, a relaxed more informal service, café style, with a glass of wine and nibbles to keep us going. Both events were very well attended, with many new folks coming along. It was also good to see people from outside our church family come along to the many other services, with over 800 attending the 3 Christingle services on Christmas Eve.

Our prayer is that those who attend will have their hearts softened and opened to Jesus and come to follow him.

We are delighted that at the time of writing the new West End entrance, new meeting room and update of the ringing chamber is nearing completion. There have been a few “hitches” on the way, and it has taken a bit longer to complete than was first expected but we know that God’s timing is always perfect, and we thank him for his provision. We look forward to using the new entrance, to have a church that is open so all can see in and hope that they will want to come in and hear the good news of Jesus.

Special thanks to Ken Thomas who has been very busy in working together with architects and builders and also completing some of the work himself. We also continue to thank Ruth Deacon who left HPC the legacy. We thank her for her foresight that has allowed us to complete these works to the building and also to invest in ministry work for the future.

This has enabled us to invest in a curate and we are very much looking forward to David Griffin and his family joining us in June.

You will see as you continue to read this report details of the many and varied activities that take place in and around HPC. We thank all those who help to make these things happen, for their loyal service that helps others see what it means to follow Jesus.

We look forward to the new decade and beyond and pray that more and more will come to know Jesus.

Margery Luffingham and David Gooding

P.C.C. Secretary’s Report

The PCC met 6 times since the last Annual Parish Meeting. At the beginning of each meeting we have been working through the 39 Articles of Religion (we are up to Article 16!), understanding what they mean and why they are important to us in helping define foundational gospel truth.

We have had reports and discussion on important Church of England issues. At each meeting there is a buildings and finance report. There has been a lot of activity in these areas over the past year and we look forward to the imminent completion of the West End project and acknowledge with gratitude to God the gospel impact of legacies. We also look forward to welcoming David Griffin as Curate and his family who will be joining us at HPC in the summer. Thanks are recorded for the hard work of the Buildings and Finance committees which help to inform the PCC as they meet to encourage one another and make decisions on behalf of the church as a whole for the continued gospel witness of HPC.

(The 39 Articles can be found at the back of the book of Common Prayer.)

Denise Sinden

Safeguarding

At Hailsham Parish Church we aim to keep our children, young people and vulnerable adults safe and so we take safeguarding seriously. It’s important that we provide a caring and safe environment, not just on a Sunday morning for our church family, but during the week too with all those we meet at Pulse, Salt, ABCs, Bite In, Bridge Racing, holiday clubs and during pastoral visits.

The Diocesan Children’s & Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policies have been adopted by HPC and are implemented in all our work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. ‘Simple Quality Protects’ a safeguarding programme introduced by the Diocese of Chichester is designed to resource and improve safeguarding at parish level. This is a more structured approach and helps churches to achieve safer practice and activities. We continue to ensure that all clergy, wardens, PCC members and those who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults are up to date with their safeguarding training and have current Disclosure & Barring checks (DBS).

Until recently, Alan Baldock has been the Deputy Safeguarding Officer and Lead Recruiter, which means that Alan was responsible for organising the DBS checks. Alan has now decided to step down and I'm very pleased to say that Julie Harden has taken over this role. Very many thanks to Alan for all his hard work and welcome to Julie! Please pray that we, at HPC, would continue to be wise and committed to the safeguarding of those in our care as we seek to point them to Jesus.

Lyn Gooding & Julie Harden

Deanery Synod Report

Deanery synod is the most local level of Church of England governance, with a membership comprised of clergy and elected lay members from each parish in the deanery. HPC is entitled to four elected members; this year we have welcomed Francine Newton and Denise Sinden, who joined Margaret Surrey and Cori Bromfield, and filled our entitlement. We are thankful for their service in this way.

Deanery Synod usually meets three times per year. However, this year's summer meeting was replaced by an Open Consultation Event on the Diocesan Strategy, held here in Hailsham. In the two meetings since last year's report was written, we have received reports from Diocesan Synod (including further details on the Diocesan Strategy), and heard a variety of presentations on vocation, as well as reports from churches across the Deanery.

Please pray that those who serve on Deanery Synod will do so with a desire to glorify God and make Jesus known in our area. Please pray for the election of a new Deanery treasurer, and for other important votes coming up – that suitable, godly people will stand and be elected.

Cori Bromfield

Pastoral Care Team

*'This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.
And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.'
1 John 3v16.*

'Knowing Jesus and making Jesus known' is the foundation of our church family at HPC. By His love and care for us we reach out to one another both here at HPC and in the wider community through our words and actions. It may be in a practical way by shopping, gardening or cleaning or giving a lift for a medical appointment. It may be by listening or encouraging with a comforting word, smile or hug or praying for one another. We are thankful to God for the love shown to so many during the last 12 months, often in a quiet and very personal way.

A team from our church has continued to take services in seven care homes (and other similar residential settings) within our parish. Generally we make visits at four points through the year – harvest, Christmas, Easter and summer. At present around 28 people are regularly involved, with a core team of four people who plan the services and share in the tasks of leading, speaking and praying at them. Thanks are due to all who have helped in a range of ways, up-front or otherwise. Particular thanks are due to Michael Partridge, who after many faithful years is stepping back from this area of service. Please pray that God would soften the hearts of all those we engage with – residents, staff members and visitors – to respond to him, receiving the grace of Jesus.

Margery Luffingham (Pastoral Care Co-ordinator)
Chris Taylor (Care Homes Services Co-ordinator)

Finance Report

Accounts (1)

Statement of Financial Activities - For the Year ended 31 DECEMBER 2019

The following figures are an extract of the key information contained in our Accounts
copies will be available in the Church or upon Request.

Unrestricted Income:		
2018		2019
£		£
6,190	Collections	5,066
78,963	'Giving' Direct to Bank	67,989
17,627	Weekly Envelopes	17,407
1,030	Pledge Sunday' Donations	210
260	Emmanuel Giving	413
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104,070	Collections & Committed giving:	91,085
21,019	Tax recovered Gift Aid and VAT on Listed Places of Worship	71,011
0	Chancel Fund	0
15,102	Hire of Emmanuel Hall	14,631
22,372	Donations / Gifts	16,531
10,830	Rental Income	11,360
37,564	Interest Income	39,872
2,713	Bite-In	3,285
4,960	Fees / Grant / Magazine Income	4,723
3,062	Youth Groups	1,604
13,130	Sundry Income	11,581
0	Insurance claim	0
20,910	Legacies	0
<hr/>		<hr/>
255,732	Total Unrestricted Income	265,682
2,748	MEMO Donations for Mission and other Restricted Donations & Gifts (see page 3)	2,723
<hr/>		<hr/>
258,480		268,405

Accounts (2)

Unrestricted Expenditure:

2018 £		2019 £
88,162	Parish Contribution	91,000
58,995	Staff costs and Clergy Expenses	59,746
22,976	Staff Housing	19,845
1,595	Service costs / Flowers	2,247
9,510	Lighting / Heating / Water rates	8,661
3,188	Insurance	3,804
6,743	Training fees and study materials	2,512
73,398	Repairs - including roof repairs	35,163
3,777	Caretaking and Cleaning	3,684
4,473	Youth work and Music	2,888
9,116	Print/Post, Photocopier, Stationery, Hire of Equipment/premises	9,165
746	Telephone and Fax	682
1,719	Churchyard upkeep	1,755
3,041	Lynton Management Fees & Repairs/Refurbishment	3,406
10,381	Lynton New Project Costs & Professional fees	3,456
13,264	Mission giving / restricted funds (see page 5)	15,349
3,548	Legal and Professional fees /insurance	1,086
1,074	Accountancy Independent Governance costs	1,260
9,576	Investment Management Costs	8,021
14,509	Sundries	9,521
32,875	Depreciation Assets : kitchen/sound system/chairs	32,875
406	Loan Interest and Bank Charges	346
<hr/> 373,075		<hr/> 316,473
255,732	Income (see Accounts page 1)	265,682
<hr/> <u>(117,343)</u>	General / Unrestricted Fund: (Deficit 2018) : (Deficit2019):	<hr/> <u>(50,791)</u>
	Extraordinary Items: Income (Expenses)	
-	Gain on sale of Investment Property "Designated Funds"	-
(90,820)	Investment Revaluation / Amortisation : Increase 2019 (decrease 2018)	59,511
2,443	Adjustment Chancel Trust/Endowment Revaluation	1,646
-	Gains On Investment assets	28,412
<hr/> <u>(205,720)</u>		<hr/> <u>38,778</u>
	Memo	
	Restricted Outgoings	
8,927	Restricted funds expenditure (see page 3)	2,457
	Incl restricted Mission giving	
<hr/> <u>8,927</u>		<hr/> <u>2,457</u>

Accounts (3)

In addition to the unrestricted Funding we received and spent the following 'Restricted' Funding:
(ie money given for a specific purpose)

2018 £	Restricted Income:	2019 £
0	Foodbank Donations	0
1,875	Riseley Trust plus other donations re Asha & Sangster	1,650
0	Discretionary Donations	0
538	Women to Women	596
0	Men at HPC	68
35	Youth Zone	106
0	Restricted interest	5
300	Friends of St. Mary's Donations	300
<hr/>		<hr/>
2,748	Total Restricted Receipts/ Transfers:	2,723
	Restricted / Other Expenditure:	
	Spending in Year:	
5,030	- Connect mission payments	0
1,725	- restricted outward giving	1,745
496	- Women to Women payments	712
0	- reordering repairs Sundries	0
50	- Fund payments ie foodbank etc	0
0	- trf Contribution to Training and studies	0
1,626	- trf Contribution to Children & Family Worker cost	0
<hr/>		<hr/>
8,927		2,457
0	- Funds / transfers closures	0
<hr/>		<hr/>
8,927		2,457
<hr/>		<hr/>
(6,178)	Movement in Restricted funds: (Deficit 2018) and Surplus 2019	266

And

- N.B.
- At the beginning of the year HPC had Loans outstanding totalling £40,000. This balance was made up of a Loan from an HPC Member of £40,000.
 - The loan is interest free, no repayments have been made in the year and remains outstanding at year end.
 - The bungalow known as Lynton is still owned by Hailsham PCC and the rent received helps to fund the activities of HPC. The related costs and value of the remaining property asset are reflected in the accounts.

- Extraordinary Items are made up of: Net Gains on sales and purchases of investment assets of £28,412 during the year to 31 December 2019 plus Investment Revaluation increase of £59,511 which gives a total of £87,923 increase to the revaluation of the Investment fund at 31 December 2019.

There is also an increase in the valuation of the Chancel Trust endowment fund of £1,646.

Trust Investment value at 31 December 2019 £822,583. (value 2018 £880,084.)

Accounts (4)

Following the Unrestricted & Restricted Income & Expenses, and the loan, detailed overleaf we show below our Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2019

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2019:

(extracted from Balance Sheet in Accounts)

Balance as at 31.12.18 £			Balance as at 31.12.19 £
	Fixed Assets		
194,088	Tangible assets-Kitchen & Toilet/Organ/Office Screen/Chairs/West End work		418,166
1,264,003	Investments (included Investment Property)		1,208,149
<u>1,458,091</u>			<u>1,626,315</u>
	Current Assets:		
214,017	Cash at Bank	120,653	
26,502	Debtors	<u>23,577</u>	
<u>240,519</u>			<u>144,230</u>
	Less : Current Liabilities		
	Creditors (due within 1 year)		
21,539	Trade creditors and accruals	51,972	
-	Loan due within one year	<u>-</u>	
<u>21,539</u>			<u>51,972</u>
218,980			92,258
<u>1,677,071</u>			<u>1,718,573</u>
	Less:		
40,000	Loan (repayable within 10 yrs)		40,000
<u>1,637,071</u>			<u>1,678,573</u>
	Restricted Funds:		
465	Discretionary Fund		359
784	Children & Family Worker Fund		789
444	Women to Women fund		328
1,829	Friends of St. Mary's		2,128
123	Youth Zone		239
-	Kitchen & Toilet Fund		-
-	Connect 18 Mission		-
23	Men at HPC		91
1,476,873	Designated funds		1,625,788
144,854	Unrestricted Fund:		35,197
11,676	Endowment Reserve:		13,654
<u>1,637,071</u>	Net Assets:		<u>1,678,573</u>

Accounts (5)

Mission & Outward Gifts – Year 2019:

We are pleased to report that we made the following gift donations during the year:
(enhanced by Charity Donations from 'Riseley Trust.')

2018		2019
£		£
3,000	BCMS-Crosslinks	1,900
2,000	Crosslinks - Milsons	2,000
3,300	Sangster & Asha	1,500
1,050	Tear Fund - Philippines appeal	550
1,550	Sussex Gospel Partnership	1,300
400	Meg Northcote (WEC)	300
3,400	Food Bank	1,900
1,350	Bible By The Beach	400
650	Chichester Diocese - Family Social Work	700
550	Childrens Society	550
600	Release International	550
1,250	Church Society	300
1,168	Other Donations	942
(9,250)	Pledged Giving from Lynton provision	0
11,018		12,892
	Add:	
50	Restricted Gifts for Food bank	0
1,700	Riseley Trust & Warbleton Donations Asha & Sangster	1,600
0	Discretionary Fund	145
496	Restricted funds used on Mission outreach	712
£13,264	TOTAL:	15,349

Riseley Trust support the ongoing development, training and support of Asha and Sangster.
Funds are sent along with HPC to save on bank charges which are shared.

Treasurer's Report

As always, my thanks to everyone who has supported the Church with gifts both financially and with their time and efforts, of physical gifts during the year. Always very much appreciated, we give thanks to God for our Church family.

Finances are always a challenge and this year has been no different. With increasing costs on the West End Project, and the delay in the Lynton Stage two development, which will release further funds to HPC to continue to support the improvements to the church building, contribute towards staff salaries, running costs and mission work. A busy year with lots of invoices to process but wonderful to see the results of all this paperwork when you look back at the West End and how the building is taking shape and nearing completion. We should all give thanks to Roger again for his diligence and in helping with the finance works of the HPC and also to my finance team in sharing the responsibility of verifying the data and decisions required to enable the preparation of the accounts. For their back up and ongoing support, advice & guidance on the normal day to day running of the activities at Hailsham Parish Church. Also, we should give thanks to Ken for his hard work with the West End project which has saved substantial funds and time on the project.

More importantly I give thanks to our Lord for his strength in all that he enables us to do at Hailsham Parish Church.

General Overview

The main issues to this year's finances has been :-

- A) The continued major works on the West End Project which at the year end is nearing completion. This project has been possible through the funds raised from the Estate of the late Ruth Deacon. The balance of the proceeds of the sale of the property had been invested during last year.

The second Stage in development of the Estate of Ruth Deacon has been delayed and further costs have been incurred due to this delay.

The Investment has been planned, to be held to generate income to help to maintain future staffing of HPC. It is also planned that the Capital element will be maintained as tangible fixed asset and is shown in the accounts. As previously reported the PCC, as custodians of the church property, under the Charities Act have a duty to maximise the return on any gifts to the church. To this end we are holding the asset of the Investment Fund plus the Bungalow "Lynton" and remaining land, while continuing to seek advice on potential future, further development.

The property as in prior years is fully reflected in the accounts and is continually being rented out, providing an income towards costs, which are being incurred in the maintenance, insurance and management fees.

- B) Cash Flow: Drawing on the funds invested from the sale of the land enabled us to meet our obligations in maintaining the current level of Church Activities. Cashflow continues to be an issue affecting finances for HPC. As shown by the General unrestricted funds accounts (see pages 1 and 2) which had deficits both last year of £117,343 and current year a smaller deficit of £50,791.

Our regular and planned giving has decreased by nearly £13,000 pa which is approximately £1080 per month. This decrease is resulting in the requirement of the finance team to use funds from the investment to cover day to day running costs due to diminishing general funds available. Shortfalls have been supported by reserves brought forward from previous years and investment funds held since the sale of the land.

As mentioned above the remaining funds are designated for future projects and support staff and should not be used for General purposes. Any increases to planned giving would be much appreciated.

The Parish Giving Scheme has continued to help the Cashflow in the prompt collecting of Gift Aid Tax relief. The scheme has been successfully taken up by a large portion of our members. Should anyone, who is a tax payer, like to join the scheme please see Roger Booth or myself for a sign up form. Your help in joining this scheme would be very much appreciated.

Without these gifts we could not have met our committed outgoings, we give thanks to God.

Unrestricted Income: (Page - Accounts 1)

As reported above regular collections & 'Committed giving' Income decreased from £104,070:2018 to £91,085 in 2019. Regular Giving is below our budget target of £110,000 per annum (£9,170 per month), by £1,500 per month.

This 'giving' has been boosted by a further £71,000 refund of Tax, from the Inland Revenue due to Gift Aid Relief and Vat refunded from Listed Places of Worship Scheme. The total amount received for Unrestricted Income was a total of £255,732 in the year.

Restricted income received in the year totalled £2,723.

Unrestricted Expenses: (Page – Accounts 2)

The combined Parish Contribution (pays for cost of clergy, housing etc.) was £91,000 in 2019. Our Total Expenses were £316,473, leaving a deficit of £50,791 for the year on the unrestricted figures.

Restricted fund income amounted to £2,723 so after deducting costs of £2,457 the surplus is £266.

Restricted funding: (Page – Accounts 3)

Page 3 to the accounts provides details of the Restricted fund movements in the year and an explanation of how we arrive at the small restricted fund surplus of £266 mentioned above (deficit 2018 £6178).

Balance Sheet: (Page – Accounts 4)

On this page you will see a list of our Assets & Liabilities as at 31 December 2019.

The above Financial reports are based on financial statements prepared by Plummer Parsons, external Accountants.

Francine Newton – Hon. Treasurer

Music

Our **aim** for the music at Hailsham Parish Church is twofold:

- a) to ensure that the **hymns and songs** we sing will build us up in Christ as they serve the purposes of church (e.g. teaching and reflecting on biblical truth; encouraging one another in the faith; praying to and praising God); and
- b) to make good use of the **musical gifts** with which Christ has blessed our church, using them for its edification and to God's glory.

The **hymns and songs** we sing are chosen by me and David Bourne, often with input from others, including staff and musicians. Over the past year ten new songs have been introduced.

The **team**, incorporating those involved in sound reinforcement, visual projection and action leading, currently consists of sixty people, of whom fifty serve on a regular basis. Twenty-three people serve regularly as singers in the **choir**, eight as **lead singers** in a band and/or choir context, twenty as **instrumentalists**, seven as **audio technicians**, six as **visual technicians** and four as **action leaders**. Roger

Tipping, our organist, plays for 6.30 p.m. Sunday services (as well as many 10.30 a.m. services). Colin Dadswell co-ordinates the team of audio and visual technicians.



Musical activity continues to centre on our **10.30 a.m. services**, and a small informal ensemble continues to accompany the singing at our **6.30 p.m. services** roughly once a month. In addition to serving the regular Sunday congregations, musicians lead songs at **Pulse**, at **special services** at church and in the community (e.g. in local care home), at **meetings** such as the monthly evening *Meet and Pray* and at **events** such as the Church Weekend Away.

In 2019 **special music** was prepared for Good Friday and Easter Sunday mornings, a Harvest Praise evening service and, of course, Christmas! A week before our traditional Carols by Candlelight service, a more informal, cafe-style carol service, *Christmas Unplugged*, took place for the first time. Whilst there was some overlap in the music (and the musicians) for these two services, lots of hard work went in to preparing different music to help give each service its distinctive flavour. More generally, Advent and **Christmas** kept us very busy, with twenty-nine services/events, each involving one or more musicians, taking place in as many days.



Two **whole-team events** have taken place within the past year – a **prayer, review and planning meeting** was held on 9th July, and a **meal out** at Callenders on 10th January was enjoyed by thirty-nine team members and spouses. We're looking forward to attending a Sussex Gospel Partnership **training morning for music teams** on 25th April.



Junior Band, presently involving four children aged 7-11, continues to meet on Saturday afternoons about six times a year, and is supported by Susie Graham and John Kimble. **Youth Band**, supported by Sylvia Robinson, continues to meet on Tuesday evenings during term time, usually fortnightly. Currently six young people (aged 11+) belong to the band. For a third year Youth Band (boosted with a little additional grown-up help) led the music for the 3 o'clock Christingle service on Christmas Eve.

After school on Wednesdays, **Music Club** at **Phoenix Academy** now includes a handful of pupils from **White**

House Academy too. Margaret Booth and Jazz Dixon continue to support the club. More recently Alex Dixon has joined us and is contributing her skill as a percussionist in our samba project, which may finally culminate in a performance as part of Hailsham's VE Day 75th anniversary celebrations. The club contributes to strengthening links with both schools, where I also serve as co-chair of governors. We were delighted, for example, to welcome a couple of Music Club attendees and their families to our church's Light Party in October.

Thank you to everybody who has helped with church music in any way over the past year.



'Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth, burst into jubilant song with music...'
Psalm 98: 4

Please pray for the music team, especially that we would have an increased desire to sing, play, lead actions and operate equipment for the encouragement of our brothers and sisters in Christ and for God's glory.
Chris Taylor

Reports from our Sunday Groups

Little Diggers

Little Diggers is our Sunday group for babies and pre-school children. The group gives little ones a safe place to play, enabling their parents/carers to participate in the main service without distraction. In addition, Little Diggers sessions include a short Bible story/teaching time plus a related activity. We usually have between two and eight children in the group. At the moment our team is made up of four main leaders as well as seven others who help.

We're thankful for those in Little Diggers and for the opportunity to introduce them to Bible truths at a young age. Please pray that they would come regularly and grow up knowing and loving our Lord Jesus.

Emily Taylor

LITTLE DIGGERS

Seekers

The Seekers group covers the Key Stage 1 and Reception at Primary School.



After a disappointing start to the year from September with no children for three weeks, with our amazing God's help and your prayers we now have eight children on the register which means that most weeks we have 4 to 6 children in the group.

We see the children growing in confidence and now really interacting with their answers to our questions and they love it as we act out the stories.

With the TnT Ministries Mustard Seeds programme we have from January been looking at Exodus as God leads his people to the promised land. With the story following on week by week it really helps both the children and the teachers if they can try to come along each week.

The continuing prayers of the whole church for the children - Flynn, Lara, Sophia, Sophia, Orla, Lily, Ethan, Dylan, and the leaders - Margaret, Margaret, Sara and Charlotte are so appreciated, as we continue this very important and sometimes challenging work of teaching the young about Jesus and showing his love for them .

Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me. Mark 9: 37

The Seekers Team

Discoverers



Discoverers are Key Stage 2 children (7-11 years) that meet during the Sunday sermon time, in the church lounge. We see between 6 to 8 children most weeks and follow the TNT ministries Mustard Seed programme. Last year we welcomed Susie Graham to the team of leaders, joining Tim Robson and Sylvia Robinson. Leaders gratefully rely on a team of helpers to support them; Julie Bell, who organises our rota and Lyn Gooding for training and teaching material as well.



Can you guess which true story from the bible this is about? Clue, it's in the Old Testament

During the past year we have moved between the Old and New Testaments, looked again at the big biblical themes of Easter and Christmas, explored the relationship between God and his people. How he chooses and uses individuals such as Elijah, Joseph and Moses to rescue and lead his people and how they point towards the coming of the even better, perfect leader and saviour, Jesus. We also saw how the early church developed through the work of the disciples in Acts; then how Paul took the unstoppable gospel message out to the nations and how lives were changed through knowing about Jesus.

We try to make the bible accessible through study and life application, how it can apply to us today, using different teaching styles, games, craft, drama video clips, fun visual aids and discussions.

Often, we can see similarities between the relationship that God had with his people then and now. It has made us consider our own behaviour and attitudes and has led to some interesting conversations.

It is our prayer that through our teaching the children would come to know Jesus with a personal faith and move into a deeper understanding of the scriptures. Please join us in this and pray for our teaching also, that we would have time to faithfully prepare and truthfully teach.

Sylvia Robinson

Quest

Our Sunday group for school years 6-9 continued to meet in The Link throughout the year. It has been an encouraging year with lively discussion and searching questions as we have studied the scriptures together.

As well as following the same pattern of teaching as the younger groups, we spent 5 weeks looking in more depth at what 1 Peter tells us about living as a Christian with hope and holiness and living in the light of eternity. These were challenging and encouraging sessions which made the group consider their faith and how it impacts their lives.

The group saw many changes during the year with some of our older members 'graduating' from the group to the main Sunday morning services and other joining the group for the first time. Do please pray for those older young people, now part of the main services, that they would find their place in this new setting and grow in their faith through the weekly preaching of the word.

Special thanks go to Cori, Linnie, Rory and Lyn who have all led sessions during this year as well as our faithful helpers Ruth, Helen and more recently Julie.

Colin Dadswell

Families at 4

Families at 4 was aimed at reaching families with primary aged children. We met on a Sunday afternoon once a month for an informal service involving Bible talks, songs, creative prayers, puppets, craft and finishing the afternoon with a tea together.

However, over the two and a half years that Families at 4 ran, numbers were inconsistent – one month 25 children and adultsthe next month only 6. Families at 4 just didn't seem to be hitting the mark and engaging the families of Hailsham. Each session required a lot of planning and preparation and the lack of attendees left us frustrated and disappointed.



After much prayer and discussion within the staff team, it was decided to 'shelve' Families at 4 for the time being. Despite our creative ideas, vision and human plans, we had to trust that Families at 4 was not part of God's plan for HPC's ministry at this time.

Following more prayer and discussions reflecting on things that did appeal to families, we decided to put our energy and resources into organising 3 or 4 bigger events each year to invite them to. This resulted in the Light Party in October half term and Christmas Cracker in December. Both of these events were popular with around 120 children and adults coming along to each event and gave us great opportunities to share the good news about Jesus with those families.

Please pray that God might use these events to change the hearts and lives of those who come and hear about our Lord Jesus.

Lyn Gooding & Chris Taylor

Reports from our Midweek Groups

ABC Playgroup

ABCs – our **A**dult, **B**aby and **C**hild group continues to grow and attract many local families looking for a safe place for their children to play and develop the skills they will need for school. The parents and carers too, enjoy a chance to interact with their little ones and with other adults. We at HPC also see this as a great way to meet and build relationships with those who come and as they get to know and trust the team it gives



us the opportunity to share Jesus with them. The mums, dads and grandparents appreciate the friendly welcome and the chance to chat. It's amazing the conversations you might have at the craft table or whilst making playdough shapes or just over a cup of coffee! It's great to be able to personally invite families to services or other activities and it's been such an encouragement to see some of the families come along to Pulse, the Light Party, holiday clubs, women's events, Christmas Cracker and Christingle services.

We were sad to lose Sara Dadswell from the team earlier this year. We are very grateful for all her help over many years. Katie Allcorn has been a welcome addition albeit temporarily before she begins her new job, so we do have some vacancies on the team!

During the year we enjoyed another sunny Teddy Bear's Picnic at Abbott's Wood and three bouncy castle parties at Christmas, Easter and Summer (when some children 'graduate' from ABCs to school). We love to teach these little ones about Jesus each week during our story and song time and use these special times throughout the year to give them bibles and books to take home to read more about him and share with their families.



Please do pray

- that these children and adults might see how amazing Jesus is and want to find out more.
- thanking and praising God for the encouragement of some families responding to invitations to other activities and church services.
- for the ABCs team to grow in number and dependence on God for wisdom, boldness, patience and faithfulness as we seek to build relationships and point people to Jesus.

The ABCs Team

Pulse

On Tuesday afternoons during term time HPC is transformed as chairs are moved by a team of willing helpers – thank you guys! Games, activities, craft and snacks are got ready to welcome in hungry, energetic children and parents who need a cuppa and a chat. It seems that Pulse is the highlight of the week for some of the children. One little boy asked me the other Sunday morning, ‘How many sleeps till Pulse?’ How lovely is that?!



We end each session with a Bible talk and songs. During the year we have been teaching the children how God saved his people in the Old Testament, that Jesus performed miracles to show that he cares and that he was the One sent to save us. This term we are looking at stories that show us how God made everything just by speaking and that Jesus also could make and heal just by speaking.

At the end of each term all the families are invited to stay for the Pulse family meal which is still very popular.... especially the puddings! We continue to thank God for the amazing provision of

the kitchen and the ladies who provide the delicious meal. Sadly, Jackie Hayden decided to step down from the Pulse team, after faithfully serving refreshments each week since Pulse started 5 years ago. We are very thankful for all Jackie’s help and for Joan who has taken over the task!

We praise God for the many encouragements of this past year – seeing a core group of families continue to come each week and new families joining them, relationships building between the team and the families, a growing engagement and participation with the Bible story and songs, opportunities to meet with some of the mums at other times during the week, one family regularly coming to church on a Sunday morning and three mums coming to Christianity Explored. This has been a real answer to prayer.



Please continue to pray

- That the children and adults would listen well during the bible story time and hear the good news of Jesus and want to follow him as their Lord and Saviour.
- That more of the families would want to come to church on a Sunday morning.

I love the snooker, table football and the table ice hockey game....and also the snacks! **Finley**

I get to learn about God and Jesus, sing fun songs and I enjoy taking part in the craft activities. **Jasmine**

As a parent I think the child friendly approach to bible stories is brilliant and the themed activity really helps to get the message across. It’s a great way to meet other parents and enjoy a cuppa and a chat in a welcoming and friendly environment. **Kayleigh**

We all love coming to Pulse. We wanted our children to have some knowledge of the Bible. Joanna and I also like the social aspect of coming, we have made new friends, other mums and dad's, and church staff and helpers as well, everyone is so friendly. **Steve**

Youth Zone

Youth Zone, a Saturday evening group for youngsters in Years 6-9+, has recently resumed, and is currently meeting once a month, usually at Emmanuel. It provides a context for those from our church in the lower 'youth' age band to enjoy spending time with one another as well as to welcome friends who don't tend to come to church. The programme offers a variety of activities to engage in. For example, a range of indoor games were set up for our March session (see photo), and we're looking forward to scavenger hunt around Hailsham in April. Some brief, low-key gospel input in the form of a 'Bible chat' is being included in each session around refreshments/tuck shop time! Youth Zone is currently being run by eight leaders, serving on a simple rota so that there are four or five present each time.



Please pray for Youth Zone – for momentum to keep gathering and then carry on – for the continued availability and energy of leaders, and for the attendance of a growing number of church and non-church youngsters. Above all, please pray for more and more opportunities to build up and reach out with the gospel in this informal setting.

Dan Saxby, Chris Taylor and The Youth Zone Team

SALT – 14+ Youth Group

SALT is the Bible study group for 14-18 year-olds at HPC.



We meet weekly during term-time at Cori's flat, where we enjoy snacks, games and getting to grips with God's word. Last summer we thought about Christian responses to the media; and since September we have considered the importance of prayer in the Christian life, before using some Psalms to help us to pray. We recently finished some studies on the role of preaching in the local church, aimed at encouraging the young people to engage with Sunday services. This has been reinforced with a new initiative – doughnuts and chat after the Sunday morning service. Our regular Q&A evenings are also very popular and helpful.

Please pray with us for the continued development of encouraging friendships among HPC's young people. Please pray for those who are considering baptism/confirmation, giving thanks for their faith and praying for them and their families as they prepare. And please pray that all members of SALT will know the love of the Lord. Thank you.

Cori Bromfield & Rory Graham

TNT

TNT Is our group for 20s-30s at HPC meeting Thursday evenings weekly during term.



We are a small but select group mostly at similar stages of life, seeking to honour Jesus in our day to day lives. As we've studied the book of *Ruth*, and *Revelation* together we have learnt more about God's big picture of salvation through his justice and love mingled together, seen both on a personal level and a world-wide perspective. We have grappled with some hard truths together

and so grown in our love of our gracious saviour Jesus together. In September we had the privilege of Sophie and Naomi joining us for a term. Sophie moved to Scotland and Naomi is about to have some months in Africa.



We are presently 'trailing' a course by Tim Keller called *Gospel in Life/Grace changes everything*. Many encouragements and challenges examining how we as a church and group live as God's people in a broken world.

Kim Bourne

Bellringing

As I am sure most church members will be aware, the bells have been subject to an enforced silence for most of the past year. This has been due to having to comply with insurance and health and safety requirements whilst the builders have had possession of the tower when carrying out the re-ordering work. The last occasion on which we rang prior to the work being started was Easter Day and then the next time we could have access was for Christmas. We are grateful to Ken Thomas for making the necessary arrangements with the builders enabling the Christmas ringing to take place. Regular ringing has now recommenced in the middle of February. We have been very appreciative of the many comments received saying how much the bells were missed and again saying how good it is to hear them again.

The work carried out in the ringing chamber by glazing in the archway to the nave and that to the west window is of mutual benefit to both the ringers and other groups using the church because acoustic glass has been used for the glazing enabling each to carry on their separate activities without disturbing the other.



Ringling is one of those activities where it is essential to keep in practice together regularly as a band. We have therefore been fortunate in being able to continue to meet together on a Monday for practice at several other churches in the area and we are grateful to all those churches for giving us permission to do this and to Elizabeth Munday for making the arrangements. Ringling on different bells has been of benefit to our members - particularly those less experienced - enabling progress to be made.

Now that we are back in our own tower, we would be very pleased to hear from anyone interested in finding out more of what is involved and, hopefully, wishing to learn. Alan Baldock, Hugh Bell or Elizabeth Munday would be pleased to let you know more.

Alan Baldock

Creative Craft Group

The Creative craft group once again have had a productive year. Mary Laxton gave us a talk about Kids Count which was most informative.

Pam smith offers her views concerning the group:

"Thank You morning craft, for being so friendly and helpful to a relative newcomer. For example, I stagger in on my walker to find two cushions ready to soften a hard chair, then a cup of coffee is made for me and biscuits are pushed cross the table, together with the money pot!

We all vary in age and skills, and once a month we bring our own work, some of which is really amazing, especially by the nonagenarians, whilst I even found Sue prepared to thread a needle for me!

We begin by reading a prayer together, then chat about various topics while we sew, for example, or do other craft. After roughly an hour, when we have finished putting the world to rights, we go on our way, promising to meet again next week if possible". Pam Smith



We all feel the craft group offers opportunity to meet up with other people we wouldn't otherwise meet, to share our talents and learn something new, we also give support and companionship to each other.

We have had a few people move away or unable to attend, so we would welcome any newcomers on Wednesdays 10am - 12pm

Sue Wilson

Crafty Companions

"He has filled them with skill to do all kinds of work as engravers, designers, embroiderers in blue purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen, and weavers - all of them skilled workers and designers" Exodus 35:35

At Crafty Companions, we attempt to use the skills we have been given, while enjoying fellowship and fun. We meet in the Church Lounge on Wednesday afternoons in term time and are grateful for the use of the room. We start each meeting with a prayer and have carried out a wide variety of projects, including a variety of cards, bags, boxes and a pot holder, under the guidance of a guest speaker, Ann. We are blessed with a number of skilled members who are willing to lead sessions, a great support to me.



Items made for our £1 challenge

We have had social events, afternoon teas, Christmas lunch and a highlight was celebrating Win's 95th birthday in Barbara's summer house. Dawn Kimpton moved to Tonbridge last year and we miss her, but were pleased to welcome new members, Gill and Irene. We would love to welcome more members, please speak to Katy Layer for more information.

Katy Layer

Men @ HPC



We continue to thank God for the many men at HPC who serve their church in many ways. We meet regularly, usually every other month, and this year we have slightly changed the programme. We have focussed on meeting together and sharing a meal and following this with a Bible study. It has been great to open up the word of God and to look at what it means to be a man of God. The Bible studies aim to unpack the answers the Bible gives to the question of identity that men face today.



We have learnt about our God-given role in creation, and how that has been ruined by the fall. We have discovered how we can be restored through the man above all men – Jesus Christ. Through this we have been challenged to walk together as Brothers in Christ and to take our responsibilities seriously. Of course, we ensure that the food is good and wholesome too!

In November we had an outing to the Hornby visitor centre and to the Spitfire and Hurricane visitor Museum at Manston, this included testing our skills at Scalextric and seeing some classic WW2 planes.

Thanks to all those who come and along and help to make this happen and don't forget we welcome men of all ages.

David Gooding, Rory Graham and Tony Cannon.

Women2Women

Women's breakfasts (building Christian women up in their faith)

On a Saturday morning once a term, we meet around a continental breakfast, share our lives, listen to a passage of scripture opened up, discuss and pray for each other. Generally we are taught by one of the ladies from our church family, many of whom have been learning to teach the bible at our local Sussex gospel partnership. The aim is to build each other up following the NT pattern of women teaching women in 1 Titus.

2019 February brought a post-Christmas breakfast to feed the souls! Cori Bromfield is a member of the congregation who we as a church are supporting as she studies part-time on the Youth and Children's course at Oak Hill Theological College. Her training has led her to branch out and teach the ladies of HPC from the Old Testament; in February we had a very challenging look at Joseph, his brothers' envy, yet Joseph's trust in God's sovereign plan of salvation pointing to our saviour Jesus.

In June we had the exception, an outside speaker; however Yolanda Ibbett is no stranger to HPC! Yolanda being a very capable business woman alongside her husband John, is not new to speaking but new to teaching the Bible. Nonetheless she very thoughtfully helped us to see Jesus from Mark 8 and encouraged us to take up our cross and follow him in all of life.



Linda Garvican spoke at our breakfast in September. She showed us two images of the Messiah, one in Zechariah, riding triumphantly into Jerusalem on a donkey and riding in judgement on a white horse in Revelation, yet with robes dipped in his blood. Were we ready to meet Jesus?

Reaching out (encouraging Christian women to share their faith)

In addition to breakfasts, we have evening events which are fun and engaging and easy to invite non-Christian friends along to, but always with a talk/testimony which introduces the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who he is and what he came to do. These events are encouraging Christian women to share their faith.

Joan Guile kindly made herself vulnerable and shared how God lead her to trust Jesus in her early years and yet through many years and some tough times helped her to grow to trust him as her gracious Lord and Saviour more and more. She shared this to 50 or so ladies at our summer Pimms and Pudding event in the vicarage garden. Yet again God graciously supplied a warm, sunny evening to chat, enjoy homemade desserts, and consider Jesus.

For another year, in November we gathered a crowd with a bit of creativity in mind, building and decorating gingerbread houses, ready for the Christmas season. Jenny Rees, from All Saints Crowborough kindly came and engagingly showed us who Jesus is and why he is worth listening to, and staking your life on from John 1.

The planned Chocolate Evening for ladies from ABCs and Pulse happened at Lyn Gooding's home in early April. It was a great evening of making truffles, enjoying a chocolate fountain, hearing a testimony, chat, questions and relationship building. Three of those ladies are now exploring things further on our Christianity Explored course.

Please be praying that God might mercifully take His word spoken at these events and bring new life to friends, neighbours and family brought along.

Kim Bourne

Oasis

Oasis is a women's Bible study group that meets on a Tuesday morning during term time. Many, though not all, of those who meet have children of varying ages. It is a huge encouragement to meet together, to enjoy refreshments together (sometimes in the form of cake!), to share our lives and our struggles, to delve into God's word together and to pray for one another. We enjoy meeting together and there is often the sound of laughter during the morning. There are usually 8-10 ladies that meet, though occasionally it can be as few as 4, and then the group feels quite fragile.

We usually use pre-prepared study books, which gives confidence to different members of the group to lead the study. This year we have thought about the biblical idea of contentment, studied some of the Psalms, the book of 1 Timothy and have just embarked on Daniel. Do pray that these studies would help us to apply God's word to our lives.

We are very thankful for our faithful crèche ladies, Di, June and Pam who are on the rota to provide a crèche so that those with young children can study the Bible and pray together with fewer distractions. We would welcome any others who could help with the crèche - do chat to Susie or Lyn if that is you.

We are delighted to have seen one or 2 new faces over the past year. We would love to see even more; do join us in praying that we continue to grow and to be



accessible to those who are new to the Christian faith. Do pray that any new mums (or other women who could be there) will deliberately aim to make their spiritual life a priority and so arrange their week /return to paid work, in such a way so they can be there regularly.

We are a friendly group and would love to welcome ladies of any age who want to know Jesus and love him more. Do be in touch if you'd like to know more,

Susie Graham and Lyn Gooding.

Open Church – At the Heart of Hailsham



Being located in the centre of Hailsham, just off the High Street is a great privilege – and it is good to be able to open the church building to welcome visitors during the summer months (midweek lunchtimes). It's an opportunity to welcome people who visit for a variety of reasons and engage in conversation. As well as seeing the building and the historic features many comment positively on hearing about how many activities take place during the week and are warmly welcomed to Sunday services.

Importantly too we are able to engage with community events going on in the town centre throughout the year: Hailsham Festival (September), Bonfire Night (October), Christmas Light Switch on (November), Christmas Market (December) as well as being the host venue for the annual large community event "What can I join in Hailsham?" (January).

These are all good opportunities to welcome larger numbers of visitors from the community and offer them literature and we are grateful to the Town Council for advertising Open Church as part of the town events.

In December a housegroup took responsibility for running Open Church as a team (followed by their Christmas social) and it was great to be serving alongside one another in this way. If you are part of a housegroup or particular group would you consider serving Open Church ministry in this way in 2020?

We look back with gratitude to the Lord and we look forward to 2020 with great excitement and anticipation.

From the recent Hailsham Aspires survey it is encouraging that the church building and church yard/green space is seen by Hailsham residents as being central and important in the town and this is being recognised as the initial stages of regeneration planning of the town centre begin.

What doors of gospel opportunity open up in 2020 with the opening of the new west end entrance which is so centrally placed, and more visible off the High Street.

We would love the building to be open more – will you serve as part of a team? We pray that the Lord would graciously lead us and help us as we seek to engage with those who come through the doors and would be used as part of His purposes in this town to point people to Jesus.

Denise Sinden



Meeting Point

Our monthly Monday afternoon meetings have continued to be well attended and we have welcomed a number of new members during the course of the year. Starting at 2p.m. with a cup of tea or coffee gives the opportunity to enjoy fellowship together before the more formal part of the meeting.

As usual we enjoyed speakers on a variety of subjects, the Beachy Head Chaplaincy, umpiring at Wimbledon, life in Bermuda, and travels in Japan among others.

The decision to move the carol service to the afternoon was popular and led to an increase in numbers attending.

In August we held Holiday @ Home once again, this year with a daily theme which added interest and gave variety to the activities on offer. As usual everyone who was there was very well fed by Elizabeth and the catering team. It is a very good opportunity for folk to spend time with friends, join in with all that is going on or sit and read a newspaper if that is what suits.



Waiting for Meeting Point...

We are so grateful to the Lord for His goodness and look forward to His continued blessings in 2020.

Margaret Surrey and Pam Brooks

Bite-In

Our numbers have significantly increased since Christmas, in no small part due to the introduction of a group of ladies introduced by Pam Fisher who visit us following a session at Freedom Leisure. On the one hand increased numbers are to be welcomed, but on the other it puts increased pressure on the limited volunteer team and restricts the time available to talk to customers who would welcome a chat.



Each Friday our day starts with a time of prayer for those customers and others known to us who are suffering from illness or other need and by our chats with customers we are better able to ascertain need. Accordingly, offers of help for our volunteer team to Elizabeth Munday or Ron Timms would be most welcome or the offer of a cake on a regular basis.

Why not pop in for a coffee and take the opportunity to chat.

Ron Timms and Elizabeth Munday

Homegroups

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4

I wonder what the last thing you ate was before reading this? Jesus says that Christians need God's word just as much as they need food. Reading the bible can be daunting which is why Home Groups are so brilliant. Meeting with other believers and feasting together on the word of God, makes it all much more digestible.

At their best Home Groups are a way of growing in love for Jesus, growing in love for our church family and growing in love for the world. They are not supposed to be merely academic studies of the bible, although the bible sets the agenda for all that Home Groups do, they are supposed to be about encountering Jesus and being empowered to live for him.

Since I last wrote we have spent two terms wrestling with the teaching of Revelation. It wasn't always comfortable, it wasn't always easy to understand but it was hugely nourishing and gave many of us a fresh reverence for Jesus. Currently we are exploring the call to live whole lives of discipleship. Home Groups meet fortnightly during the day and in the evening, in homes and the church lounge. They are a great place to make friends and grow in your walk with Christ.

Rory Graham

Evangelistic courses

"We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God." 2 Corinthians 5:20

I don't know of anyone who isn't intimidated by the privilege we have to speak about Jesus to those who don't yet know him. The (usually) termly introductory courses to the Christian faith that we run at HPC are some of the easiest ways to do it. In fact all we have to do is bring along our friends and (usually) Christianity Explored does the talking about Jesus for us.

The last couple of courses have been tremendous fun; not everyone who has been on them has become a Christian but everyone has enjoyed the opportunity to hear Jesus in his own words and to have their questions taken seriously. In fact some of the people who have benefitted the most from Christianity Explored have been people who are Christians but who have wanted a refresher in their faith.

Please pray that as a church we would grow a mentality of 'who could I bring?' so that we are all praying for and inviting people who we meet in church or outside to come along with us.

Rory Graham

Bridge Racing

Another good year for the team who run Bridge Racing. We have several dads and their children who come along on a regular basis, which gives us a great opportunity to build some very good and positive relationships. In this way we can build links between HPC and the wider community. The plan is to continue with this in the hope that we can invite these dads to some of the more social events that the Men's Group provide. Please pray for this softer type of outreach work into our community as it often takes a longer time to see the positive results and rewards such initiatives can lead to.

In terms of the next 12 months we are planning to arrange another joint Bridge Racing/Men's Group trip to the Hornby Visitors Centre and Margate at some point in the (hopefully) near future.

One final point, if there are any men at HPC who feel they would like to help with Bridge Racing then please come and speak to one of the team. You do not need to know anything about Scalextric but just be prepared to get alongside the dads who come along and help to build those relationships.

The Bridge Racing Team

The Link Coffee Shop

2019 saw our 25th anniversary, which was marked not only by a disco (Yes! Really!) for our young of heart, but also a service of thanks and recommissioning in November. This was attended by very nearly 100 people and we are so grateful for this continued support throughout 25 years.

Our volunteers are still working hard, and we are thankful for new cooks on Wednesdays. The Link continues to be greatly helped by our volunteers with learning disabilities – without them we would not be able to continue.

Please pray for the future as Kay comes up to retirement age in three years' time. We now need to be putting plans in place for the future and look to God for guidance.

Hailsham Foodbank

When this report is submitted it is too early to give our yearly figures but our latest six monthly figures show an increase of 41%. In 2018 between April and September we gave out 856 emergency food parcels whereas in the same period in 2019 we gave out 1209.

December was our busiest month ever. In the run up to Christmas we gave out 383 emergency food parcels compared to 196 in December 2018 – a massive 95% increase. Maybe most concerning is that this was 167 adults and 216 children. For the first time ever, our overall figures for the year are showing that we have fed more children than adults.



As a result of the continuing need we are doing some research in conjunction with The Trussell Trust with a number of foodbank users. We are looking to see what could potentially be done locally to try and resolve some of the issues that are pushing foodbank use. This is alongside the national issues that The Trussell Trust are already speaking about with government. We are hoping at some stage to invite our MP down to talk her through some of the local problems we are seeing.

You may have seen our 'Friends of Hailsham foodbank' leaflets around. This is to encourage regular monthly contributions to help towards unavoidable costs such as rent, electricity, insurance etc. to keep us open to provide a vital service to the community.

We would value prayer for the increasing number of people locally needing our services. Praying that this will start to decrease or that we would have the capacity to deal with so many people.

Julie Coates

Caring and Sharing

Caring and Sharing's motto: "Live life more simply than others may simply live" is appropriate for Lent. Instead of giving up something like chocolate for 40 days, we could be positive, like giving a small, regular donation to the 3 projects that Hailsham folk support e.g. Pinsk hospice, Belarus. A recent film; "Chernobyl" revealed the continued suffering children born with cancer caused by radiation from this man-made disaster.

We also support street educators in Medellin, Columbia who rescue children from drug gangs, and now also help refugees from Venezuela's collapsed economy (see photo). Also in S. America we support 2 church based nurseries in the shanty towns of Lima, Peru. Toddlers receive food, activities, safety, shelter and Christian teaching.

Our 4th project: "Little Flower Leprosy Village" has been closed by the Caring and Sharing committee but is well supported internationally.

Newsletters & Information is available from Roger Booth & Michael Partridge. Guest speakers also visit East Sussex Churches.

Thank you for your continued support



Michael Partridge

Reports from our Mission Partners

Chris & Ros Howles

Uganda Martyrs Seminary Namugongo (UMSN), Kampala, Uganda



Last week, like every week, I (Chris) met with 10 senior students who serve as college Bible study leaders. We studied Psalm 2 together at our house, thinking about its importance to ministry in Uganda today and praying that we would, as Psalm 2 calls us to do, 'serve the Lord with fear' rather than living in rebellion against him. We also discussed how to write and lead Bible studies. Yesterday, those 10 leaders met for an hour with their groups of 9-10 students, and led them in a study in Psalm 2 (Bible studies like this are very rarely done in churches here: we are training our students for something very new, unique, and valuable here). Much of their discussions revolved around the implications of Psalm 2 for God's mission in the world that he calls us to. We adopted v12c ('Blessed are those who take refuge in the Lord') as our key sentence.

As I write this, our 90 students (all ordinands training for church leadership in the Anglican Church of Uganda) are now scattered across Namugongo for mission work! They are travelling out on foot, going from house-to-house, shop-to-shop, door-to-door, and asking anyone they find if they would spare them a few minutes to hear from Psalm 2 about who the Lord Jesus is and how we might respond to Him. We pray, of course, that all people, whether nominally Christian, Muslim, followers of African Traditional Religion (witchdoctors etc.) or anything else would accept to hear the Word preached, and turn in joyful faith to our wonderful Lord and Saviour Jesus.

I tell this as a small example of what we as a seminary are trying to do. We receive students from across Uganda and East Africa, and our work is to prepare them as effectively as possible for a lifetime ahead of faithful and diligent church leadership. We long for them to know and love Jesus through God's word the Bible. We want them to learn how to study the Bible for themselves, and how to teach others to understand and enjoy it too. As they do this, we want them to be equipped for mission work so that the millions across Uganda, and the tens of millions of unreached people across Eastern Africa, would have the opportunity to respond to the wonderful good news of Jesus!

And so as Ros and I, the principal Henry and all other staff members teach, lead, lecture, preach to and disciple our students, will you please pray that our humble efforts would be used by the Lord for the

effective preparation of our students for ministry ahead and that, through their efforts, many would hear the great news of Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Please also continue to pray for Ros as she home schools our children Josh (10), Danny (8) and Chloe (6), as well as leading Bible studies for female students, helping with students' health issues, hosting plenty of visitors, and many other tasks. Please pray for the seminary as we plan to start a new course training students specifically for Christian mission work across Africa. Finally, please pray for a successful trip back to the UK April – September this year 2020. We're very much looking forward to seeing you all again then.

Blessings, Chris and Ros

Sangster and Asha

Stars Cafe

At Stars Cafe Bible studies we have finished the Book of Ecclesiastes. The focus was on finding meaning in Christ, in our meaningless world, it gave all of us time to think of our own world and finding purpose through Jesus. During Christmas we had a one day retreat, we had canoeing and team challenge activities, baking, a BBQ and heard the testimony of our church pastor. Later in the evening we had a Christian psychologist come and share about the biblical view of 'Sex, Love and Marriage', with lots of questions from young people about how to overcome temptations over porn and about LGBTQ orientations. We plan to repeat events like these for the young people who come to the cafe. During this season at the cafe we have had international students volunteering in the cafe. Elizabeth, (who we met through **Friends Beyond Boundary** camp last year) is from Nigeria, through her we began to meet many others from the Ivory Coast, Afghanistan and Sudan. The nations of the world are coming to cities like Bangalore, as it is cheaper to study in India. A great opportunity to minister to students from many closed countries.

In terms of the business of the cafe, we are struggling to make ends meet, however, regular Thursday bible studies always encourage us to persevere. We are grateful for our partners who continue to pray and financially support the mission.

The Local Church

We have been going to Bangalore Bible church. It is encouraging to see the church partnering and helping in the ministry at the café, one of the outreach programs the church started was to play basketball on weekends. In the last six months the pastor Benjamin and his wife Miriam have met us for regular dinners. Our kids love to hang out and play with their kids. After supper we discuss the book we have been reading "The meaning of Marriage" by Timothy Keller. It's been good because we can openly ask difficult questions and encourage one another in our marriages.

This really supported us in our difficult season in life. This meeting has been a great blessing to us.

Neerekshe Trust

Over the last 3 years I have been visiting the village and helping with the running of the school. My parents are getting really old and struggling to maintain the school and the mission in the village. Last year my mother had a heart attack and Angioplasty, my father is struggling to manage by himself. This academic year (June 2020-May 2021) onwards we (Asha and I) will be taking charge of the school, the medical and the missionary work. We have a team of people working alongside us. I was travelling to the village twice a month, but with the team in place we can monitor the work from Bangalore.

The Goat farm

This has suffered a loss because of regular thefts, we lost about 25 goats amounting to £2000. We grieve for the loss, but I remember Asha had painted a verse from the Bible on our water tank at the goat farm that said, "He owns the cattle on a thousand hills...". Hopefully we will have a new phase with the goat farm.

We are earnestly praying that the School and the goat farm will pick up. And so, through the ministry, this mission will be a light house for many people who are in darkness.

Family

Asha continues to home school the kids. Timothy and Ruth are growing up by the day. Their energy doesn't run dry. Timothy will be moving to 4th grade and Ruth will officially start her schooling this June.



Compassion Kids continues to meet every Saturday in our home. The playschool and library meet on the first floor of our house, it is a great space for local kids. We get 40 kids regularly and monthly the mothers of these kids meet. Timothy and Asha take reading lessons for local kids from the neighbourhood, kids love coming and using our library with toys and games. Timothy and Ruth are a great help to Asha and they are so innovative in reaching out to the local community.

Prayer Points

Thank God for a great church team who help us in our cafe mission,
Thank God for good health and protection on the road and in our travels
Thank God for the cafe and the ministry to students
Pray for new staff for the cafe and to have a vision to reach young people.
Pray for the work with International students
Pray for the work in the village School and mission
Pray for us as a family to grow in love and serve one another.
Pray for Asha and me for our health

With Love, Sangster, Asha, Timothy and Ruth.

Julian and Nicky Milson

We are approaching our second anniversary of living here in Valencia, Spain.

Julian was inducted as Rector of Valencia on 20th October 2019 by the Bishop of Madrid. It was a great celebration together with our church family and in addition, four people at the church were confirmed and officially welcomed as members too. It also was Jemima's 14th birthday so there was quite some party to be had at church that day!

We feel very supported by the other two missionary families and one single person at the church, all with CMS Australia. They all are part of the ministry team at the church even though they are all here in various capacities, ranging from teaching on the Moore College Latin America (MOCLAM) course, working with students and young people in the city and at the university, or simply language learning for the time being.

Jemima continues to be Home Educated throughout the week. She has made very good progress this year and she is understanding a small amount of Spanish. Theo has continued at the British School of Valencia and enjoys it very much. His Spanish tutor visits twice a week after school also which is helping him to become more fluent and confident. Nicky is continuing to have classes twice a week too, at home, with one other missionary student and she fits that around teaching Jemima. Julian has the privilege of working through his sermon each week with our teacher, Alex who, as yet, is not a Christian but he hears the Word of God each week!



'Grupo de Vida' (Bible study group) continues to meet at our house each Tuesday evening and it has seen some changes this year but with a committed core. Julian leads this group and Nicky helps to lead an English-speakers Bible study group every Wednesday at the church, mainly for students and young people from the UK. The English service also continues once a month. Because the church is a Spanish church, our primary ministry is at the Spanish service and we have seen considerable growth and strengthened commitment at this service. It is fairly formal and liturgical in structure and Julian wears robes for most services. The more formal type service is attractive people as it is more in line with the culture within Spain however try to foster the idea of the church as a family. The Bible is opened and taught faithfully each week.

During the first week of the children's summer holiday in 2019, we held a holiday club which was well attended with around 50 children each day. This will be moved to Easter this year due to our commitments visiting UK in June and July.

Please pray;

- For the faithful ministry at the church of all the believers who attend and their relationships with each other, and that current non-believers turn to Jesus as their Saviour.
- For our specific ministry at the church, that we may be good examples of being Jesus-centred.
- For our upcoming Easter Holiday Club that the change of date won't adversely affect attendance and that children will come and hear about Jesus.
- For our on-going language learning.
- For continued enthusiasm for school for the children.
- For relationships at church; that they would continue to grow and strengthen in our shared love and service for the Lord.

We thank God for your faithfulness in supporting us in this ministry here in Valencia.

Julian and Nicky

Other Mission Links

Adam Tomalin

'Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all'
Colossians 3v11

#100! Christ is all. He is enough – 100 percent. Christ is also in all that trust in him – 100 percent. The reality of living this monumental truth out is part of living out the 'cross shaped' Gospel. We are called to love God and our neighbour and what a reason we have to do this because Christ is all and he is in all.

It's a wonderful privilege over the past few months to have been placed in the position to oversee the youth work at Hope Church. In many ways I've felt out of my depth but it's also been the best role I've ever felt placed in, whilst based out in Johannesburg.

I've come into this year, in the youth ministry, with a large sense of excitement amongst quite a lot of uncertainty. There will be quite a lot of changes going into this year and although I'm not a fan of too much change when it comes to youth ministry the feeling was that change was necessary with our current programmes. We felt we needed to change things up to help facilitate the best possible environment for the young people to unite in the diversity of our youth ministry. We are called to love God and neighbour and longing for this unity in diversity is a way of living out our identity as Christians, as people celebrating that Christ is all and in all. We are keen to do what we can, by God's enabling, to create an atmosphere which encourages relationships to be forged and built in the midst of a diverse context and my hope and prayer is that changes taking place for this year will be used by God to bring this about.

At the heart of the ministry, we're keen to make small group Bible studies the beating heart of the youth ministry. We've been inviting the teens into the property which I stay on, amongst other homes in the area, and are hosting them for midweek Bible studies. We're seeking to strengthen relationships with them, as leaders, and longing for relationships to grow amongst the teens themselves.

To wrap things up, going forward, I'd really appreciate your prayer that God would sustain and grow the youth work, at Hope Church. Please pray, in particular, that I would grow in greater dependence on God, as the one who grows the Kingdom, not me. Please also pray for me as I seek to train up other leaders and encourage many of them to keep going and that God would use all of us to serve the youth better. Also, please pray for the youth as part of the youth ministry: pray that those who are committed would continue to grow and bear fruit and that those not coming would be drawn back in and see the value of meeting together. Pray too for the parents of the youth as they encourage their young ones to come to youth and as they themselves get stuck in and serve the ministry.



Thank you so much for your love and partnership. Do keep in touch and if you want to follow more of what I'm doing please do check out my blog, online. Type in 'atomalinontour' on Google and it will be the first page that comes up.

Much love in Christ, Adam

We continue to support in prayer and giving.....

Meg and Dave Northcote working as area reps for Kent and Sussex for **WEC International** (Reaching the Unreached) encouraging supporters in prayer for world mission.

Release International works with persecuted Christians across the world.

The Children's Society works with vulnerable young people in the UK.

New to HPC

Julie Harden

My name is Julie Harden and I moved to Hailsham a year ago from Surrey. I very quickly found HPC, thanks to recommendation from a previous pastor, who knew Kim. Looking back I can see God's hand in this. From the outset I was made very welcome and quickly settled in a lovely home group, which I have found to be such a blessing.

I always thought of myself as being a Christian from about the age of thirteen, but in recent years have realised that I probably actually became a Christian in my thirties. It's the familiar story of being brought up in a Christian home, along with my three brothers, by parents who loved the Lord Jesus and took every opportunity to talk about Him with us.



About the age of thirteen I was baptised and at that time very much enjoyed all the activities that the youth work could offer, in a church that was lively and fast growing. Looking back, I had a lot of head knowledge but love for the Lord Jesus and what he had done for me had not reached my heart.

At eighteen I went off to do my nurse training. I could have lived at home as the hospital was not far away. Of course, nursing involved shift work and this meant working some Sundays. I soon found that the less I went to church the less I wanted to go. Friendships at church suffered and eventually new friendships outside the church occupied my time.

In the following years I married a non-Christian, got divorced eleven years later and subsequently met and married another non-Christian. My husband had relations in Anglesey at the time and as we had no children at the time we upped and moved to Anglesey, where we had a small holding, growing on and selling pigs mainly. We were there ten years and in all that time I didn't attend a church and pretty much lived as if there was no God.

Everything was good at first but soon we began to struggle financially, as pork prices suddenly dropped and Dave struggled to find work in a very welsh speaking region. It was at this time that we made the decision to move back to Surrey. This we knew would be very difficult as we had nowhere to live and neither had jobs to go to. In desperation I prayed to God and asked that if He could get us back to Surrey I would start going to church again. This, I now know, is absolutely not the way to approach God.

Soon after this prayer of desperation, Dad offered the flat he and Mum had to us which was in Chessington. I was invited for an interview at Epsom Hospital, got the job and Dave had an offer of work. Jobs at Epsom were hard to come by as staff there rarely moved on. Again, looking back I can see God's hand in all this. We put our house on the market and moved back to Dad's flat.

I immediately started going back to the church I had left eighteen years before. It was a very painful time, as my husband could not understand my sudden urge to go to church. Sundays for us at that time were spent wandering around car boot sales. It is very easy to find things to fill Sundays that don't involve meeting with the church family and being fed the Word. I felt extremely embarrassed seeing all of the people I had known years before and who had, unknown to me, been praying for me. Gradually, under the ministry of the two pastors at Chessington Evangelical Church I became a Christian.

My husband and I went on to have two children, now in their twenties. Life has not been easy since becoming a Christian as Dave and I don't see eye to eye on many things, because of my faith, but I now have a strong faith in such a patient, loving God.

I am very thankful to God for bringing me to HPC. In recent months I have become part of the music team, a helper in Quest and the DBS recruiter. It is a privilege to serve God and his people in this church and to worship Him here with you all.

I currently work in Eastbourne General as a Theatre Practitioner. Normally this would involve scrubbing for operations, checking instruments and swabs etc but at this time of the Corona virus everything has changed, not just for us but for most health care workers. Our shift patterns have changed to 12 hour shifts, and as there is no operating except for the odd Urological/ ENT emergency we are being 'retrained' to work in ITU. This is very different to theatre work, our role will be to help the ITU nurses in any way we can. There is a state of anxiety within the department as no one really knows how bad it could get and what is possibly going to be expected of us or what we will see. Please pray that I might be able to be a light at this dark time and that conversations whilst we wait might be meaningful and Gospel centered.

Julie Harden

Specially loved, Specially welcomed

Welcoming Children with Additional Needs.

Jesus wants all to know him and at HPC we very much strive to be an all-inclusive church where we welcome children and adults of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. We are very thankful that in our church family we have lots of families, but for two families who join us regularly on a Sunday morning, it's not always easy for them.

Read on to hear their particular challenges and how we at HPC can welcome, love, support and pray for them.....

Lyn : Who lives in your household?

Elaine: Rupert, Elaine, Flynn and Lara.

Michelle: In our household there are four of us. John and I have been married for nearly 17 years. We have Samuel, 14 and Elijah, 10.



Lyn: Tell us, what are Flynn and Elijah's additional needs?

Elaine: Flynn was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder with speech and language difficulties. This affects Flynn's ability to communicate clearly and process information effectively. He also has a sensory processing disorder.

Michelle: Autism in Elijah's life makes it very difficult for him in the social areas of life. He struggles with communicating with people. Although he speaks and has an extensive vocabulary, he doesn't always understand the social cues and the nuances that come with a conversation. He takes expressions literally and doesn't always get jokes or sarcasm. He also struggles with anxiety so is often on "high alert", expecting things to go wrong or for something to frighten him, like sudden noises. This then makes it difficult to be relaxed and open in social situations like school or church.

Lyn: How can this impact on you and your family getting to HPC on a Sunday morning?

Elaine: Flynn thankfully is settled and used to the routine of going to HPC now so there is a willingness to co-operate. This is a new experience for us with regards to church and getting ready on a Sunday morning. Seeing Flynn relaxed and happy takes considerable strain off trying to get them both ready for church (Flynn's behaviour directly affects Lara). As long as we remember Flynn's cushion, water bottle and ear defenders or headset and his Kindle, he copes.

Michelle: Well that depends... if the weather is unpleasant, we might not make it at all. Rainy and stormy weather really frightens him and if we can't get a ride, we are likely to stay home. Most Sundays we are able to make it with our "church bag" full of familiar, calming things and his ear defenders. We also reassure him that we can always step out to take a break from anything overwhelming.

Lyn: What things do Flynn and Elijah find a challenge on a Sunday morning at HPC?

Elaine: Crowds are always difficult for Flynn. It is intimidating for him plus he is sensitive to noise, not just the volume but the layers of noise he can hear. Most people can tune out background noise and chatter coming from all directions, but because of Flynn's sensory processing difficulties, crowd noise, music and singing in particular can all be too much. Hence the ear defenders/Kindle plus headset are vital! When there isn't any children's group during the All Age service, Flynn finds this too long to sit in church. Our solution is for Rupert and I to take it in turns going to a family service.

Michelle: Sadly, most things. Church is a beautifully social place and that is what he struggles with most. The noise, the number of people, recognising faces and the expectations of others are all things that are difficult for him to navigate. Some Sundays we get through this by staying in the hallway outside of Sunday School where he feels more comfortable. We would prefer for him to take part but sometimes it just isn't possible in the way that we would like.

Lyn: What has been an encouragement to you being part of the church family?

Elaine: Where do we start?! Firstly, the acceptance of Flynn being different and being equally valued rather than a problem to keep to the side lines. We have been blown away by the care, help and support shown by some of the children's leaders and church family to help accommodate Flynn and us. From taking photos of the church and lounge to prepare Flynn before his first visit to allowing Flynn to stay in a younger group with his sister Lara who he looks to for security to even making a cuddly toy for him! Having children's workers who understand Flynn's needs is not only amazing for us but allows us to all go to church as a family. We cannot express how much of a blessing this is for us. We have had many years being unable to attend church which has been a difficult and lonely road. Hospitality! Again, this has blessed us so much – to be welcomed in this way. So wonderful experiencing a church practising this gift listed in scripture. The other big magnet and security for Flynn (and Lara) is having their grandparents (Robin & Celia) in the church. Also, Flynn loves Bridge Racing. It's the first sociable activity Flynn has done outside of church and school.

Michelle: People who smile and greet us without judgement. Friends who I know are praying for us, I have seen the difference that makes in our week. Sunday School volunteers who still try to include Elijah and still ask him to take part. It's people who hug me and tell me, "God is with you." (This means so much to me!) Being to still be able to take part in serving at HPC because I know there are people keeping an extra eye out for Elijah.

Lyn: How can we at HPC support you and your family?

Elaine: Chat to Flynn – this boosts his confidence. Ask about his guinea pigs, railway set and Minecraft. He also has an interest in environmental matters and space. Chat to us! We like getting to know people.

Michelle: Please keep asking Elijah to take part in things. At this point he is quite likely to say no, but it's respectful to give him the chance to take part rather than decide for him. Please still ask us as a family to take part in things. We are pretty good at problem solving and finding different ways of doing things. And if we have to say no, please know it's because we really can't.

If we are having a difficult moment and ask you to step back or do something specific, please do. It might seem harsh, but it is only to get through something as best we can.

Lyn: How can we pray for you and your family?

Elaine: For wisdom! We often make adjustments for Flynn which are not appropriate for Lara. This can impact on Lara's confidence and how loved she feels when Flynn's needs have to come first at times. Please pray that they would both come to know Jesus and continue to enjoy coming along to church.

Michelle: John and I need wisdom, like all parents, but there are so many things we need to do differently than most. For example, food issues, sleep difficulties and educational challenges.

Please pray that we parent both of our boys to bring them to a deeper knowledge of the Lord. This can be difficult for a literal thinker, for example, explaining that the Holy Spirit lives in you...

Please pray for continuing to access church and our church family despite Elijah's challenges.

Please pray for Elijah's social skills to improve (especially with his brother) and his anxieties to decrease.

Pray that I don't fall into "pity party mode" and learn how I can be helpful and share the hope of Jesus to other families like ours.

Overview – Looking Back - Looking Forward

It really is a strange time to be completing this annual profile and with a review that is now very different from what it might have been only a few weeks ago! Who would have thought then that our Sunday services would be being held via our own YouTube channel? Who would have imagined Zoom prayer meetings, virtual coffee or Rory's Ramblings? The staff certainly never imagined they'd be discussing



lighting, camera angles, wardrobe and makeup? That's a joke by the way! Of course, the great thing to remember is that none of this comes as a surprise to our King. From beginning to end He knows, He ordains, and His plans are good.

In a recent Zoom Bible study, we looked at Psalm 2. As it begins it describes our broken, rebellious world. A world that for all its pain and suffering is a world in denial. Rather than crying out to the only One who can actually help us, instead our world resolutely stands against him. Observing at a safe distance some recent Hailsham chatter on social media, there was just one lone voice suggesting that, in the face of our present crisis, the right

response might be to seek the Lord. Many other voices drowned them out with harsh words of blame for the God they explicitly don't believe and pretend does not exist! How strange an irony is that!

Yes, there are many things we will really miss over these weeks of lockdown, not least Bible by the Beach, the church weekend away and visits from our mission partners and perhaps most of all simply meeting together week by week. However, it is good to remember that whatever God's purpose in the events of this crisis, it is always that his people should learn to trust him more, to know him better and that others, seeing how helpless we really are, might also turn to him. As Psalm 2 puts it that they might, 'kiss the Son', that is, give to him the honour due as the true and only King. Let's pray that will be true for us and true for many.

Having said that, there is so much more to write about than Covid 19. The past year has been filled with much to encourage us. God has been very kind! We look back to the regular pattern of opening the Scriptures on Sundays and throughout the week in our small groups, a church living week by week by the word God speaks. The regular routine of welcome, care and mission to our community through our weekly activities, Pulse, ABC's, Bite-In and many more. Add to that the significant gospel engagement in the care homes of our town and in all but one of our primary schools and the annual highlights of holiday clubs for young and old, our weekend away and Bible by the Beach. Most of that happens every year, even every week, and it can seem routine, but there is nothing routine about God's people listening to God's word. It is a real, vital, miraculous encounter as God speaks to his people through his word and as his people hear that word of life and mercy and in turn make it known to others. That is the miraculous, grace driven life we have been called to in Christ. Never underestimate the significance of the regular and routine, they are the vital food and exercise of God's people.

Within that routine there have been many encouragements. Give thanks to the Lord for our teenagers and a good number of them wanting to 'go public' on their faith in the Lord Jesus and to express that through Baptism or Confirmation. Give thanks for the long-term friendships built up through Pulse and ABC's and those now wanting to discover more. Give thanks for our recent Christianity Explored groups and for those who have come to a real faith for the first time and for others whose faith has been re-awakened with a new assurance and confidence in Jesus. As ever and to be expected from 'Captain Christmas', Christmas was great and once again we were able to rejoice that so many heard the good news. Give thanks too that the west end works are very nearly completed albeit the finishing touches and our first use being delayed. Well done to builders, architects and all from HPC who've worked so hard to make it happen. Give thanks that we've been able to recruit a new curate. We are so delighted that David, Esther and Daniel Griffin will be joining us in June. Give thanks for the testimonies of God's amazing grace written up for this profile, grace abounding to all ages and every condition, rescuing, sustaining, beautiful grace! And give thanks for the many who have recently joined the HPC family and one of the most cited reasons for that, the clear, consistent, faithful teaching of the Scriptures. Never take that for granted. Pray for it, guard it, expect it!



Now it is obvious to say that it does feel to us as though the momentum the Lord gave us over this past year has been interrupted by Covid 19 and our lockdown. In reality, of course, nothing could be further from the truth, nothing interrupts his good and wise plans. So maybe this crisis is here for us as a testing? Is all we've spoken of a sign of real and genuine spiritual growth? If so, this 'interruption' will prove for our blessing, teaching us to lean on Christ, equipping us better for all the challenges that lie ahead. That's surely the thrust of the song we've chosen to lead this year's profile, Jesus said, *'if I thirst, if I'm weak, if I fear ... I should come to Him'* and indeed *'if I'm lost, He will come to me'*.

And, certainly, there are challenges. Many people will have suffered adversely, our health, our finances, our relationships in lockdown, our holidays postponed, the enforced isolation. We will all have been affected and it will take time to be up and running again. But what has never changed is that we are the forgiven people of Jesus, the people of the King, with a word of life and hope for our nation. So, let's be that people. Let's give ourselves to that task and whether for a while we're doing it virtually on YouTube or Zoom or, pray sooner rather than later, doing it face to face, we do it gladly helping one another to know him more and make him known more and more! Indeed, let's be a people passionate for Jesus, to grow up in him and see others come to him, sins forgiven, lives changed, hope restored, grace abounding! Let's be disciples and face the financial challenge and increase our giving especially as we welcome a new curate. Let's be expectant and use the opportunities of our new entrance (and the new footpath to the High Street coming soon) to welcome people not only into our great and historic building but into a community of faith and love. Let's pray for teenagers and others new to the faith to become with us lifelong disciples and let's make our aim that our lives, our church family of HPC, all we have and all we are, might be to the praise and glory of our God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A people for his praise and glory!

*'Not to us, O LORD, not to us
but to your name be the glory
because of your love and faithfulness' (Psalm 115:1)*

Amen to that, let that be our song! Praise the LORD!

With much joy and thanksgiving



David Bourne

7 April 2020



PS - A special thank you to all who have contributed to this profile and our accompanying Vision Sunday documents especially to Sara Dadswell and Denise Sinden.