



Billericay Methodist Church

**Annual Reports**

**2008**

## **Forward**

*The reports published in this booklet show the depth and variety of the activities that take place at Billericay Methodist Church.*

*We are indebted to all who organise and help with these activities. Without their voluntary input the Church would be a much poorer place. The ministry team and the stewards are extremely grateful for all this hard work which enriches not just the Church itself but reaches out into the local community as well.*

*If you wish to know more about any of the activities please speak to one of the organisers. Alternatively you may like to browse one of our websites, [www.bmchurch.org](http://www.bmchurch.org) [queensparkchristiancentre.faithweb.com](http://queensparkchristiancentre.faithweb.com) [www.bmyouth.bmchurch.org](http://www.bmyouth.bmchurch.org)*

*We give thanks to God for his goodness and guidance that makes Billericay Methodist Church what it is. We serve him through these many activities and pray for continued vision and inspiration to continue to serve in established and new, exciting ways.*

*A big thank you must go to Mike Tuggey for all his hard work in preparing and collating this Annual report.*

*Di Small*

*Senior Steward*

## **Ministry Team**

Pastoral care is something that as Christians we offer to one another, and is a key expression of Christ's care for us. As a church we seek to care for one another and to "bear one another's burdens" (Galatians 6.2). It is a key witness to the God's love which causes people are to say "see how these Christians love one another".

The Ministry Team is essential to the pastoral care of people of Billericay Methodist Church, as it meets weekly to pray together, to share (in confidence) concerns in pastoral care and other matters such as hospital visits, Alpha and membership classes, baptisms and weddings.

Philip Gibson contributes as Pastoral Secretary, Heather Ashworth and Elizabeth Hardy as Lay Pastoral Assistants. Dave Chuck brings his concerns for young people in the church and wider community. Di Small is part of the Team as Senior Steward, and brings her sound advice. Mark Conlon and myself value what the Team give us in supporting our pastoral work.

Judith Maizel-Long

## **Stewards' Report**

Our two teams of stewards have worked well during the last year both for the church and for each other. The team at Queens Park consists of Jean Brown, George Chapman, Alan Jubb and Liz Read. There is a more detailed account of their work later in the booklet. At Western Road our team has been Lyn Bowditch, Keith Overall, Sue Quinney, Gill Rogers, Di Small and David Westcott. Keith joined us at the beginning of the year but we have still been one short in number. Although no one steps down this year we are still looking for another steward to boost our team.

During the year our minister Les and his wife Di moved on to pastures new. At the end of July a farewell party was held where we had a hot meal thanks to Mark, stewards and others. The entertainment was based around Les and his hobbies which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. A presentation was made to Les and Di and also to Colin and Bernie Watkins as they left to begin their new ministry.

In September we welcomed Judith as our new minister and with her husband Graham she joined in 'The Generation Game' which was the hilarious entertainment for our harvest supper. Another game show 'Mr & Mrs' will, we hope, delight all the guests at the Church Anniversary supper. On the Sunday Rev Russell Herbert will be our preacher, someone many people will remember as a youth worker a few years ago.

As Senior Steward for this year I would like to thank all the stewards who have helped and supported me. Also thanks to the Ministry Team at whose meetings I have found great support but also great fellowship and fun.

The stewards' team are pleased to serve the Church in this role and we thank everyone for their help and prayers.

Di Small Senior Steward

### **Finance**

The key elements of income and expenditure relating to the running of our Churches at Western Road and Queens Park for the years 2007/08 and 2008/09 are as follows:

	<b>Cash Flow</b>	
	<b>2007/08 Actual</b>	<b>2008/09 Budget</b>
	£'000	£'000
<b>Income</b>		
Offertories	118	118
Gift Day	16	0
Tax Recoveries	23	25
Property Grant	0	15
Use of Premises	20	18
Interest	6	4
	<u>183</u>	<u>180</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Circuit Contribution	99	101
Youth Work/SMB	32	33
Property/ Maintenance	40	46
WR Hall Roof	0	36
QP Quinquennial Work	0	6
Miscellaneous	7	7
	<u>178</u>	<u>229</u>
<b>Net Cash Flow</b>	5	-49
<b>Year End Bank Balance</b>	114	65

During the year ended 31 August 2008, the decline in our offertories stopped and we raised £16,000 from our Gift Day towards the long overdue replacement of the Western Road Hall Roof.

During the current year we have budgeted to carry out the work on the Western Road Hall Roof, funded largely by the 2008 Gift Day and a grant from the Cleanaway Trust of £15,000. We have also provided £6,000 for works associated with the Queens Park Quinquennial Report. We are grateful as always to our Property Stewards for the hundreds of hours they give to the church each year in maintaining our premises. Without their service our costs would be so much higher.

Excluding the major property works, in both 2007/08 and 2008/09 we will have continued to draw on our reserves to fund the on-going work of our church. The underlying budget deficit for 2008/09 is £22,000 which, as was noted in last year's Report, needs to be addressed.

Church Council has agreed a Reserves Policy of a minimum of three months expenditure (£48,000).

Therefore, without a substantial increase in regular income, the church will have to reduce its costs to ensure that our income covers our expenditure.

Martin Ball/Hazel Westcott

### **Property Committee**

The major planned project completed at the Western Road site in 2008 was the replacement of the Main Hall roof. The surveyor in both the 2002 and 2007 quinquennial inspections had expressed concerns regarding the deteriorating condition of the roof and the decision was taken in early 2008 to proceed with replacement, following a recommendation to Church Council from the Property Committee. The replacement was originally planned to take place during the school summer holidays. Due to delays in receiving Planning and Building Regulations approvals from Basildon District Council, the work was carried out during the October half-term holiday. The total cost of the work was £38,293, of which £15,000 has been covered by a grant from Veolia Cleanaway Pitsea Marshes Trust.

A lighting consultant was appointed in early 2008 to review and recommend lighting improvements for the Church, to provide appropriate levels of lighting and improve maintainability of the lights in the Church. The provisional cost estimate for the lighting replacement project is £15,000 to £20,000. If sufficient funds are raised at the 2009 Gift Day, the Property Committee will proceed to the next stage of the project, to go out for bids for the supply and installation from suitable contractors.

The first quinquennial inspection for the Queens Park building was carried out in August 2008. The inspector's report was generally complimentary about the condition and maintenance of the building. The only major concern raised in the report is the safety issue of the combined 'boiler room' and storage area. The report recommends separating the boiler area and the storage area by building a partition wall. The Property Committee and Queens Park stewards will be considering how this can be done.

The property stewards continue to carry out necessary decorating and repair to the Church properties. Our thanks go to all those who help with maintenance tasks, whether regularly or occasionally.

Ken Cowell (Property Committee Secretary)

### **Pastoral**

Are you special? The calling to be a pastoral visitor is very special and of key importance to the health of the church family. We continue to be blessed by a dedicated team of visitors augmented by lay pastoral assistants. Where members do not have a dedicated visitor, they either attend a small group or are associated with a group for prayer support. As you take the time and trouble to read this report may you be challenged to consider prayerfully the role of pastoral visitor. Do you think you know someone who has the gifting to be a visitor? Could it be you? If so please contact the ministry team. Meanwhile grateful thanks and God's blessings to all those Involved in christian pastoral care.

Philip Gibson

## **Communion Stewards**

In May 2008 Dorothy Vaufrourard completed six years as Communion Steward, the last three of them as Senior Communion Steward. At the same time Keith Overall relinquished his duties as Communion Steward to become a Church Steward at Western Road. We are very grateful to Dorothy and to Keith for all their hard work during their periods of office. Also in May 2008 we were delighted to welcome Catherine Garner into our existing group of Communion Stewards. The team currently consists of Shirley White, Mike Cottrell, Barbara Card, Elizabeth Forward, Val Powling, Catherine Garner, Janet Everitt and Pam Sterry. We are very grateful to all of them for their dedication and hard work.

The average number of communicants for the various services over the past year is as follows: -

8.00 am	11
10.00 am	79
6.30 pm	21
Ash Wednesday	27
Maundy Thursday	82
December 24 <sup>th</sup> Open House	36
December 24 <sup>th</sup> Midnight Mass	42
Lyn Bowditch	

## **Thursday Morning Communion**

A small group of us meet at Western Road Church at 10am each Thursday morning to celebrate communion. Each week in the month a different minister takes the service bringing their own unique way of leading worship. It is a quiet half hour during a busy week to spend with God,

We have a nucleus of members who are always missed if for any reason they cannot come. We also have one or two others who we are always pleased to see who come when they are able.

If you are free any Thursday morning you would be very welcome to join us and we would love to see you.

Barbara Card, Elizabeth Forward and myself take it turns to be the communion steward on duty. I would like to thank them for their commitment in serving Christ in this way.

Brenda Brothers

## **Churches Together in Billericay (CTB)**

Our first event of the year was the United Service in January, which was well attended and this time was hosted by Emmanuel Church. The Walk of Witness on Good Friday was also well supported and the time of worship in Holy Redeemer was excellent.

One of the highlights this year was the 'Billericay Festival', a flower festival depicting the history of Billericay. This took place in June and approximately 2,000 people visited over the weekend. Local schools and organisations were also represented. The event raised a total of £2712, which was split between St Mary's refurbishment and St Luke's Hospice.

The weather was fine for Praise in the Park and we had a good attendance. The service saw the first official outing of the new vicar of Emmanuel, Rev Paul Carr and he challenged us to join together in witness to our faith. Our own band AD 33 provided the music, which was much appreciated.

Unfortunately the weather was not so kind to us on Fun Day at Sun Corner, when our gazebo was almost swept away by the high wind. However, the CTB stall was fairly busy most of the time - the attraction being that everything was free!

Our marquee at Barleylands was also popular and our thanks go to the team of volunteers for organising this for us.

A rota was organised between the churches for Carols and mince pies in St Mary's on Christmas Family Fayre evening, and this seemed to work well.

Alpha courses have been running for most of the year, each time hosted by a different church.

Youth Work in the town goes from strength to strength, with Youth Leaders from the churches working together to put on outreach events for the youth in the town, including an Alpha course which was held in the autumn. They also work alongside Jane Andrews and her team in the schools. Our thanks to them all for their hard work and commitment over the year.

There have been several issues of the CTB News this year – the hope is that information about CTB events and aspirations is available to all congregations in Billericay.

Janet Lee

### **Thursday Study Group**

The year began with five sessions looking for an answer to Richard Dawkins' book 'The God Delusion'. The massive sales of this seemingly well-argued tract was reflected in a concern to come up with an adequate response and there was a good attendance. The exercise prompted useful discussion and, if nothing else, challenged us to ask why we believe.

That took us into Lent when we followed the Methodist Recorder's lead in following the York Course on the Lord's Prayer. It's surprising how we can still find new slants on a prayer we thought we knew so well.

Then through to the summer we benefitted immensely from a ten-week course put together by Philip Yancey and based on his book 'What's So Amazing About Grace'. We don't have to earn God's love, indeed we cannot, it is a free gift.

Our annual 'away-day' at Chignall St James in August was a great time of fellowship made all the more special by having Rev Kathleen Allen talk to us about what we might expect of our ministers.

The autumn was largely a DIY session, for the leader anyhow, when we looked at such scientific topics as genetic engineering and Darwinian evolution. I think it was useful. A bonus, however, was that our still very new minister, Judith, offered three sessions in which she got us to tease out the 'hidden messages' presented by Graham Sutherland's religious artwork.

Our final meeting saw leadership of the group handed over to Mark Smith, who offers the prospect of a new approach. We are grateful to him for his willingness to engage with a body that seeks to provide a forum for open consideration of matters at the heart of what it means to be Christians. Our prayers go with him and we wish him well.

Attendance over the year ranged from the mid-teens to the mid-twenties.

Alec Garner

### **Monday Evening Cell**

Our Cell meets every week at 8.00 pm and we have continued to follow the general Cell principles of the four Ws-Welcome, Worship, Word and Witness- throughout the year.

Although we have never grown big enough to split, we remain a strong and happy unit, giving one another support, guidance and help when needed. We have tried different formats and approaches to our meetings but have always tried to retain a practical edge to our Christianity, whilst ensuring that

everyone's voice is heard.

It is very informal and we also experimented during the year by having a joint Cell with the Tuesday night Cell-and it proved a big success. We will probably try to make this a more regular event during 2009.

Most weeks our Cell group has between 6 and 10 people attending but any newcomers are welcome. Please let me know if you, or someone else you know, is interested. Even if it is not possible for you to attend every week, you will be most welcome.

Rod Moxley

### **Child Contact Centre**

We have had another busy year, with a waiting list for most of the time. There have been plenty difficulties: hostile mums, shows of bad temper and problems caused by mental health issues. However, we have also had some good outcomes, with families moving onto make their own contact arrangements. It was great to meet a mum in the High Street recently who had come 7 years ago with her baby. The parents were not speaking to each other and relations were very strained but she told me her daughter now has a really good relationship with her dad and they see him regularly.

Most of our loyal and hardworking volunteers have been with us since we began, over 11 years ago, and we are beginning to feel that we could do with an injection of new blood, so if anyone out there would like to join our friendly team, we would be pleased to hear from you. Most volunteer for two Sunday afternoons on a four-month rota, but we also need a new team leader to volunteer for four Sunday afternoons every four months. This is a great opportunity to support people from all walks of life where they have a real need.

Thank you to everyone in the church who supports us with prayer and in practical ways.

Sue Ball

### **Prayer Chain**

The Prayer Chain plays an important part in the Prayer Life of our Church. It continues to offer tremendous support to many in times of difficulty, and praise in times of thanksgiving and joy. We have 85 people involved in either phone chains or the e-mail chain at present, what a prayer presence! If you would like to put a message in the chains, please contact Elsie Vollmer, 652276, and she will pass the message to all the chains. If you would like to know more, please contact me.

Geraldine Hanton, 625831.

### **Mission and Social Justice**

Fairtrade continues to be a developing idea with activities across the town to maintain and develop the Fairtrade Town status.

We have begun to consider how we might respond to the ecological challenge as a local Church. There are several initiatives at national level in this area and we have started to consider which, if any, might be pursued here.

The stories of the work of the Chernobyl Children's Lifeline and the Churches in Kenya with which we are twinned continue to encourage and to challenge us.

For Christians as individuals and as a Church, our faith underpins our response to the people, events and situations in the World. And we have a Gospel to proclaim. If you want to get involved in Mission and issues of social justice and to bring them to the wider attention of the Church then we invite you to join us.

David Ashworth

## **Youth Report**

### **Sunday Nights**

Youth Services – now being run by a peer group (mainly from Uni Cell) with Cell1 & 2 participating. This is facilitated and co-ordinated by Dave Chuck. Future plans include Youth Services for Queens Park: The Christian Link.

Hot Potato – is currently postponed.

Big Breakfast's - Parade Sunday's. These have attracted a number of young people to breakfast, sharing with the preacher on a number of occasions and swelling the attendance to parade.

### **Monday's**

The Big Ask! - 4-5pm @ Costa Coffee Staffed by Dave Chuck & the Gathering – a chance for young people 11-18 to ask Bible Questions.

Cell 1 @ WR - Youth Room 6-7 staffed by Dave Chuck & a rota of Gill Rogers, Janet Everett, Anna Martin, Amanda Howell. The new group includes many new faces to the Church; however we are seeking more young people 11-14 especially in the absence of females. The group has 22 registered and we see an average of 8 gradually growing in numbers. This is the place for Christian study and relationship building. We are still seeking staff for the rota.

X-Jesus (Bible Exegesis Group) - Meets @ WR 7-8pm Staffed by Dave Chuck & Anna Martin.

Youth Band Practise 7-8pm – postponed awaiting Music Teacher to join Dave Chuck. 3-5 youth awaiting re-start.

Cell 2 14-18yrs – 8-10pm @ Host House. Staffed by Hosts – Dave Chuck & Led by Megan Blunt (Held at host houses as still not enough volunteer staff). Registered around 20 average attendances around 10. This is place for Christian study and relationship building. We are desperately seeking more staff to move this to WR Youth Room and commence the Cell UK suggested organisation. We also need more host house for each half term. (Currently seeking May to July, '09)

### **Tuesday's**

9-10am @ Costa - Drop in Zone for Parents and Youth - regular drop in and discussions.

Billericay School Emerge A84 12:45 -2:15 – around 22 young people attend. Staffed by Dave Chuck & SMB.

BYTC – 5-6pm – many combined events.

Starting shortly 4-5 After School Chess & Board Game Club, - staffed by Dave Chuck & ECC.

Starting shortly 7:30- 9:30 @ QP combined Girls/Boys Brigade - staffed by agreed internal staff and BB.

### **Wednesday's**

Youth Prayer Group 9-12 – meets to pray for youth

12-1 St Johns Emerge.

MEnU 3:30-4:30 @ QP – group for ME/CFS fatigue sufferers aged 11-25. This meets term time and is staffed by Dave Chuck, ECC & parents. Dave also chairs the steering committee for this run in partnership with Billericay Healthcare & Trinity. Seeking more members.

Wednesday nite events @ St Mary's services - staffed by Dave Chuck & some support from the Gathering

### **Thursday's**

Chaplaincy Walks @ Billericay School 12:45 – 2:15. Staffed by Dave Chuck + Katie Hall - widening group of young people

Mentoring –one to one @ Costa

### **Friday's**

Mayflower Emerge 11:45 -2pm. Emerge: staffed by Dave Chuck & others, an average of around 20 students & growing.

Parents, Young People Drop in @ WR 4-5pm.

Inters Youth Club 6:15 -7:30pm - staffed by Dave Chuck, Lorraine Harris, Elaine Norgate, Bethany Carpenter & ECC. Average attendance 75 young people aged 8-13. Desperately seeking 4 more staff or more. Closed on waiting list at present.

YC2 Youth Club 8:15 -9:30pm staffed by Dave Chuck and a rota of Gill Rogers, Anna Martin, Stu Laughland, Lynn Brown & ECC. Attendance = start-up – aged 14-16yrs. Seeking more staff and members.

### **Saturday's**

Youth Training, Camps, Events most weekends.

Saturday nites for young people at QP – on hold awaiting legal issues.

In addition Dave has worked along side the Cubs & Scouts on a variety of Hope 08 community events, training, and liaison and spoken at various other groups.

There are several new Youth initiatives in discussion mainly tied up in internal red tape, thus not ready for public release at this point.

### **Additional Miscellaneous Information.**

#### **Publicity**

For Youth in addition to Youth Notices weekly, we run a youth web site, (recently upgraded to 3 times the capacity), 4 facebook groups, myspace group, twitter, a youth birthday ministry, and a youth prayer ministry update. The Church notice boards have an established youth area with latest information.

All programmes taught and created similar resources are stored electronically publicly for free future use. A certificated youth training leader programme including Safeguarding is up and running with a database of such coming soon. Each group has a qualified First Aider, a certified Food Hygiene 1& 2, and a risk & HSE assessment completed. These are hoped to be added to the database. We have agreed across groups that we will comply with CRB and ensure male/female checked staff are available at approximately 1-10 children ratio. Our Youth procedures and practises continue to improve towards the minimum level of legal and professional practises and during the next year we hope that some of these will be adopted in writing by the Church.

All Youth have been given and most have completed Consent Forms providing contact details, medical support in case of emergencies, agreement for trips and events and to use photographs on the web site these are usually stored in the safe as they contain much confidential information.

External Publicity includes Hope Revolution, Methodist Recorder, Town Notice Boards, School Notice Boards, public TV, Billericay Healthcare, Rotary, Lions, BYTC, Town Crier and many others,

#### **Additional areas of Youth Work**

Working with CTB on projects such as Walk of Joy, Barleylands, Youth Alpha and others,

Working with ECC, Lions, BPF on Charity Day (8<sup>th</sup> Aug)

Working with BYTC on Fun Day, Dragon Boat Race & Lake Meadows.

### **Summary Overview**

Overall an exciting year with youth coming to faith, choosing baptism and being touched by the Holy Spirit.

In many areas this has been a difficult year for youth work with many major issues causing a deleterious impact. These areas can be broadly separated into lack of finances, lack of general active support and lack of staff, equipment and resources. This has gone along side a quagmire of internal additional red tape detracting from ministry and youth needs. (Interestingly these issues have not been faced with external young peoples groups such as Youth Alpha, clubnites, Hope08 and Emerge and working alongside CTB SMB and The Gathering). The red tape has led to loss of staff, potential internal Gap Year workers and an average 90+ hour working week for myself.

Further difficulties have been experienced internally due to individual transitions between age groupings and this has resulted in most youth groups starting afresh. Many youth groups are now in the 'forming' stage.

The external youth work has led to a number of new faces joining us (and more who have expressed a desire to join groups), however I remain concerned about the lack of 'evangelism' within those attending unchurched groups within our Church to cross over and be drawn into the Christian Groups and am working hard to achieve improvements.

In all youth areas we have held 'camps' activity weekends/ weeks and offered a variety of types of events which has provided an opportunity for sharing faith and building relationships.

We have seen an influx of youth in various areas most particularly Inters Youth Club which has grown from an average of 45 to 75 people per week and is now closed on waiting list. This could be re-opened if we could find additional staff (perhaps just once a month or term on rota).

The staffing issues remain critical although slightly improved from last year, thanks mainly to the Uni Cell and MSG and this had led to notable huge steps of faith by them for which I and the youth are thankful.

### **Critical areas needing more staff – are Cell 1 & 2 & Inters.**

We (the youth) have achieved a number of notable successes including completion of Youth Alpha. Internally we have managed to create a youth room with minimal internal patronage and maximising external support. and a number of firsts have been achieved including the first Inters Weekend Away, the first Youth Charity Day, the first Youth led Walk of Joy, the first thank you party for all Youth Leaders, the first series of youth and leader training days and so many others.

We have been blessed by a large number of young people with wonderful hearts for the Lord and if we are not to lose these to our Church, let alone to Christ our culture must change.

On joining the Church a number of basic resources were discussed as part of the package to enable me to function as a Youth worker and after a long battle most of these are starting to be in place with several outstanding items including an office space to work. This again hampers youth ministry and is deleterious hampering Youth work generally.

Thanks to my involvement in various external areas we were able to acquire a large amount of free new kit desperately needed for Youth Clubs & Church use. This has helped hugely and saved the Church from 4 figure expenditure. We are also so thankful that finally the youth have Bibles to use given by a kind individual donation of several hundred pounds. Our thanks go to the small number of /supporters and in main financial donors as well

The completion of many Hope08 community events including stewarding of The Children's Memorial Park for the year have provided good community links, servant hearts and an example in the community to the town of what Christian youth are capable of.

Various recent results of youth work provide an exciting potential future. However this sometimes feels as mitigated apparently by a culture of obstacles of politics, funding, apathy, and lack of resources which have been met and overcome by huge blessings from the Lord and individual support from a small number consistently. With the active support of the 'twenty something's' and a handful of the same people from the congregation in conjunction with the emerging results of schools bringing people in and external youth work provide the potential to create a future congregation and major youth opportunity which has started to become apparent and indeed a reality.

The next year in Youth Ministry is the most vital in any Youth workers ministry as the fruit of hard work begins and relationship building begins to show. The ministry this year is based around consolidating faith and moving towards 'Christians in heart' along with outreach. This will entail in many cases a culture change not just from Youth but those around them. Part of this years plan includes the gradual formation of youth prayer triplets which bring about personal accountability. (We had hoped to add 'spiritual grandparents' to these to provide mentoring and prayer support and bridge to the older congregation. However after advertising for a year for older volunteers with very little interest it appears we may have to resolve this externally).

We will continue praying for God to change hearts and seeking both friends and enemies to fill the 'empty chair' at meetings and we will continue seeking new staff internally and externally and ways to support these. We are actively seeking ways to reduce the excess of Church meetings, and reduce the overload on additional time beyond the committed roles.

I personally thank the handful who has kindly provided personal ministry support and ask for continued prayers, encouragement at all times for the youth, staff and myself, let's work actively together for the future of our children, youth and Church.

Dave Chuck

### **Billericay Link of Chernobyl Children Lifeline**

Last year's summer visit of 12 children from the Bragin and Gomel was very successful. Many of the children came from quite severely deprived backgrounds including that of alcoholic parents, parent bereavement, poverty, absconded parents just to name a few of their problems! The children had a lovely time and the good reports coming back from Belarus after the children had returned home were very encouraging. The area of Bragin is just a few kilometres away from the Chernobyl site.

This year we have been experiencing problems with obtaining exit permissions for children to travel from Belarus to the UK and the charity is having to turn to the Ukraine as the source for children. Chernobyl is actually located in the Ukraine and this year's children will be coming from the surrounding area. I don't expect the Ukrainian children to be very different from those that have been from Belarus in the past and the hosting and programme arrangements will be very similar. One difference this year is that Nadya will not be the leader breaking a tradition that has prevailed since the start up of the Link in Billericay. We look forward to meeting the new Ukrainian leader and I am sure that that she will have a successful visit. The children are due to arrive on the 21<sup>st</sup> June and will be with us for the usual 4 week period. I trust that the support that we have become accustomed to, not only from the Western Road and Queens Park churches but also from the other churches and many organisations in the local area will continue as it has in the past. Without that support, our work would be very difficult if not impossible.

David Gladstone

### **ALF-About Life & Faith- Groups**

We are very blessed in the number of children attending ALF and the help we receive to run it. Between six to eight 3-7 year olds attend Mini-ALF regularly. We usually have between five to 10 children in the 7-13 group. The adult leader of Mini-ALF changes every six weeks, each person bringing fresh talent and ideas to the group. Rosalind continues to be an able assistant in Mini-ALF who ensures continuity throughout the year. The older group have raised money for Send-a-cow and Children in Need this year. They have also taken part in the SOLID festival at Stubbers; gone ice skating; swum in the Raduchas

pool and contributed to the Chernobyl Service and Christingle Service. They have continued in their outreach into the community through their "Pray and Treat" walk on October 31st.

Thanks to all my helpers during the year including: Sue Ball; Sue Quinny; Sue Hawkins; Alison Davidson; Janet Hibberd and Carrie Lamb. Thanks also to Lynn and Gregg Raducha for letting us use their pool and to all the congregation who so enthusiastically support all ALF's ventures.

Heather Blunt

### **Junior Mission for All (JMA)**

Our 6-11 year olds have continued to be as enthusiastic as ever and collect funds for the missionary work of the Church.

In 2008, our main event "It's not fair" was in February and promoted Fairtrade through games, dramas and activities. This was organised as a Circuit event and gave our children a good opportunity to meet with others of similar age in South East Essex. A big thank you to Christine Gibson for taking a leading role in its organisation and again attendance was good-over 30 youngsters in total, between the two weekends when this event was run.

The JMA badges and certificates presentation ceremony during the All Age Worship in February was also a success and an appropriate way of thanking all the collectors for their hard work.

Thanks once again for all those who have helped in 2008-Adrian and Elizabeth Shafford, the sponsors and the collectors, in particular.

Rod Moxley

### **First Steps**

There has been two baptisms during 2008, Kabe & Kaden Lynham, who were friends of Mark Conlon and live in Southminster. This was a lovely occasion with Mark taking the ceremony and many of our people present to support Chris and Tania.

The second was Henry Guppy, who's father and Grand parents were involved at Western Rd church in the Scouts movement. David and Clair, who now live overseas brought Henry to be baptised here in Billericay and were supported by many family and friends. It was lovely to see so many supporting them, and with the service being in Advent, the church was decorated beautifully.

Currently there are 4 visitors who visit all those baptised 3 times a year up until their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, I should very much like to thank them, for there dedication and love to the children and their families .

If you feel called to help in this very pleasurable service please do not hesitate to contact me, we should be delighted welcome you as a visitor.

Pam Sterry

### **Toddler Groups**

We meet on Monday and Tuesday afternoons and we welcome children from birth to school age. Both groups have been well attended over the last year with about sixty families travelling from a wide area.

Each week we have a variety of toys for the children to play with, including painting, climbing frame, kitchen corner, play dough, trains, cars, a quiet corner for story telling. We have some more challenging puzzles and games for older children. We have a time for singing along with bells which the helpers enjoy as much as the children. Drinks and biscuits are available through the afternoon for adults and children.

At Easter and Christmas we have a short service in church for the children, adults and friends. The children are very enthusiastic singers and everyone has a good time. We are very pleased to have Judith and Mark Conlon to lead the services. Members and friends of the church are always welcome to attend. Each year we send a donation to NCH.

We have been very blessed over the years with such a dedicated team of helpers. Sue Hawkins has recently joined the Monday group while Gill Turnbull moved at Christmas from Toddlers to Pre-School. Our grateful thanks to Geoff Pullen – auditor, Margaret Park – treasurer, Judith and Mark and especially our team of loyal volunteers who make it all possible.

Sheila Leask	Monday	1.30pm-3.30pm
Sue Quinney	Tuesday	1.00pm-3.00pm

### **Pre-School**

Looking back over the year the dominating concern has been the resignation of the Leader and Deputy in August, which came as a surprise.

The future of the Pre-School was thrown into question as advertising externally did not produce any suitable candidates. Two of the current staff volunteered to take it over, but did not have the relevant qualification. Gill Rogers and Sue Hawkins (previous Leader and Deputy) stepped forward to stand in as Leader and Deputy while Gill Turnbull and Samina Saud study for their Level Three qualification, along with Loraine Copsey. There have been a few staff changes, but most of the original staff have stayed, thus allowing a smooth changeover.

The Pre-School is full, with a healthy waiting list for September 2009 and we are looking forward to meeting the challenges of the coming year.

Gill Turnbull

### **Inters**

Inters continues to meet on a Friday evening, during school term time only, between 6.15 and 7.30pm. Our age range is 8 – 13 years, quite a difference in size and development! The numbers have gradually increased throughout the year, up to 65 before Christmas and between 70 and 75 since we came back in January 09.

The range of activities includes TV, games machines, table-tennis, table football, pool and 5-A-side football. There is always a queue for the games and several teams entering the football.

Special thanks to Jack who comes to referee the football most weeks, to Bethany who either helps with the football or sells the sweets and to our small band of people who fill in as and when we need extra helpers so that one of us can have a night off. We were sad to say goodbye to Sarah Lane over the summer as she has moved and cannot help anymore due to college and work commitments – thank you Sarah for all of your help. We now also have help from Essex County Council, Ben is coming along every other week for some of the session to help – we are grateful for this free support.

We had a summer BBQ on our last evening of the summer term and our Christmas party included hot food, was very chaotic, but enjoyed by all.

We have had 2 swimming parties this year, where we took over the pool at Lake Meadows on a Saturday afternoon for an hour – great fun was had by all with floats, balls and of course swimming.

For the first time we had a weekend away in June 2008 – Friday evening till Sunday afternoon. The fields were waterlogged, the rain didn't stop all day Saturday, but on Sunday the sun came out. Canoeing, archery, kite making and flying of huge super kites, swimming in the indoor pool, lots of good food (cooked by Neville who came along as our cook for the weekend) and mostly laughter, fun and time to build relationships.

Although hard work, as leaders we feel privileged to be offering our time to these young people, and hope that it may open their eyes to the love of God. If anyone would like to drop in on a Friday evening, just to observe, or to help in any way, then you will be most welcome. If you could offer to join our occasional cover list that would be brilliant! Or better still join our rota of 'extra' helpers to cope with our increased numbers.

Lorraine Harris, Elaine Norgate and Dave Chuck

### **6<sup>th</sup> Billericay Scout Group – Group Scout Leaders report**

As reported separately by the Cub and Scout sections the year to 31 December 2008 was another successful year for the Scout Group as a whole with a number of firsts and also repeated successes for the Group in various events. I congratulate the young people and leaders of both sections on their achievements. I would like on behalf of the Group to thank the parents who have helped out with any event during year, as always we would welcome more Leaders in the Group and I would be delighted to discuss the role with any volunteers. As a Leadership team we were challenged this year by the passing of two stalwart supporters of Scouting and the 6<sup>th</sup> Billericay Group in particular.

Derek Green was GSL for two periods totalling 15 years, (in total he was a Scout Leader for 26 years). Derek was the type of Scout Leader who worked quietly away ensuring the young people in his care received a good Scouting experience. He remained loyal to the Group throughout his leadership career and helped to instil in many of us the desire to follow his lead and hopefully inspire young people in the way that he did us.

John Stevens the husband of another former GSL Sue Stevens passed away suddenly in September. In recent years Sue has started a group at the Emmanuel Church, the leadership teams of both groups work closely together and his passing was a shock to us all. Whilst never involved in Scouting directly he was a rock to Sue and we all benefited (if that is the right word) from his sarcasm and wit.

On a much happier note we were delighted by the safe arrival of Aidan Nicholas Sterry. Nikki and Nigel are doing their best to provide members of the Beaver Colony now if we could only find some leaders for it....

As a leadership team we remain committed to delivering good Scouting to the Young people in our care. Each time one of our Cubs or Scouts achieves an award or as has happened this year chooses to return to help with a section it serves to reinvigorate our enthusiasm.

Finally I would like to thank the Church as a whole for its support of the Group during the past year.

Stephen Clarke – Group Scout Leader

### **Tornado Scout Troop**

It was an extremely busy year from start to finish, the highlight was being able to present 4 Chief Scout Gold Awards. We are very proud to award this accolade and the Scouts worked very hard to gain them.

We took part in the District Swimming Gala in January, were the Scouts really did try their best. Although it was January we did go camping at Thriftwood and took part in the National Pedal Car Olympics. The Scouts had a wonderful time and thoroughly enjoyed the activities even if it was cold and wet.

We took the older Scouts on an Expedition in May where they had to carry most of their kit, and hike to a campsite, cook their own meal, camp and then hike back the next day. They really enjoyed the challenge even if it was harder than they first thought!

We also held a very successful Troop camp at Prances campsite in Wickham Bishops, where they learnt a lot of the basic Scouting skills. We also went to Marlow on a water activities weekend, where the Scouts tried many water based activities including sailing, dragon boating and canoeing. We all had a fantastic time and can't wait to go back.

The end of the year finished with a programme including climate change and aviation. We also had an excellent trip to Duxford.

The Troop now has two Young Leaders, Jack Copsey and Adam Still who are helping out with the programme and are a real asset.

Many thanks to everybody that has helped and supported us over the past year, we are looking forward to a very active 2009.

Anne, Daniel, Stephen, Jack and Adam

### **6<sup>th</sup> Billericay Mercury Cub Scout Pack**

We spent our summer term learning all the traditional scouting skills, compass, knots, fire lighting and more, in preparation for camp at the end of July. A thoroughly Olympic time was had by all! We gained our Athletes and Camper badges.

In September we tested our memories remembering all the skills we learned for camp. We remembered it well as we returned home victorious, winning the Laindon Trophy scouting skills competition again.

During our autumn term we had our annual conker championship. November took us to Thriftwood for a low key bonfire and sausages evening. Due to heavy rain we ended up in the church hall – the sausages not the bonfire! Finishing off our challenge badges kept us busy for the rest of the term.

February saw us step aside at the District Cub Scout Swimming Gala and allow another pack a turn at looking after the trophies. We still achieved top results coming third overall and second in the relay competition. Pancakes were once again on the menu for Shrove Tuesday.

Spring and Easter Handicrafts are keeping us busy at the moment as we have yet another trophy to try and retain in March at our District Handicrafts Competition. We have improved our paper mache skills considerably as this year we are making a 3 foot tall mad march hare.

We are taking part in St George's Day Parade, the Ellis Cup 6-a-side football tournament and 'Go For It' in May. 'Go For It' is a fun District event where the Cubs will enjoy activities such as canoeing, greasy pole and a cave simulator. Planned for the end of July we have a camp at Thriftwood.

Thank you to everyone who has helped over the past year and to those who will be helping in the future.

Nigel Sterry

### **6<sup>th</sup> Chantry (Methodist) Guides – Wednesday 7:30pm to 9pm**

Guiding seems to be ever popular with our unit buzzing and the girls' enthusiasm never failing. Another year spent working towards Annual Challenge badges with all girls gaining their next badge. We have completed several 'Go-For-Its', themed activities which lead to an award card, as a unit during the year and patrols have also worked on their own ones, such as Chocolate, Show Time, Parties and Team Work.

The girls worked on both their Cook and Craft badges during the year, which everyone completed successfully. We also continue to enjoy evenings of cooking, craft activities, acting, dancing and of course, playing games and making a lot of noise!

Out and about, we spent a fun day at London Zoo in the Summer and enjoyed bowling and Christmas shopping in Southend.

Over the Summer holidays we enjoyed a warm and sunny camp, taking part in the Essex International Jamboree. 10,000 Guides and Scout from around the world descending on North Essex – fun was had by all. The older girls completed their Baden Powell Challenge Award, the highest award that the girls can achieve as a Guide, in the Summer finishing with a day out in London and a night camping.

We also took part in a competition being run by the Chocolate Show for Guides in Anglia designing a 20<sup>th</sup> Century chocolate bar wrapper. One of our Guides won one of the three prizes up for grabs and another two Guides were awarded highly commended for their designs.

Guides is for girls aged 10+years and we are always looking for new members.

Many thanks to those that have provided their continuing support during the year.

Hazel Powling (tel: 651043; email: [hazelandpete@red-mini.co.uk](mailto:hazelandpete@red-mini.co.uk))

### **3rd Chantry Brownies (Tuesday)**

Our numbers have increased over the year. We now have nineteen Brownies with three more due to start after half-term. We have three adult leaders, one young leader and one pack leader.

We have had a busy year with the girls gaining many badges including Artist, Healthy Heart, Out and About, Aim Hi, Entertainer, Brownie Holiday, Collector and Brownie Skills.

Our pack took part in the District Swimming Gala, which they all enjoyed.

During the summer months we went on a walk to the High Street for the Out and About badge and a walk in Norsey Woods. We had good weather on both evenings. We finished off the summer term with a beach party and one of the mums came in and taught us some Spanish.

In October we went on a Bat walk in South Weald Country Park with the 6<sup>th</sup> Chantry Brownies that meet at Queens Park and saw many bats flying over the lake.

We went on our first Pack Holiday in October to Guidewoods in Hockley, with the Brownies from Queens Park. This was a very successful event and a good time was had by all.

As well the Brownies have enjoyed cooking, playing games and taking part in craft activities during the year.

Gill Turnbull - Brown Owl

### **Rainbows - 2nd Chantry**

We have had another busy year. Our young leader Emma has become a fully warranted leader but left us for Uni in September. We will miss her very much as she has been with us for long time although she did pop in to our planning meeting in January,

We had several girls join us from Stock Rainbows when the unit closed last year which meant our own list stagnated for a while. Sophie Nye joined us as a warranted leader from Stock at the same time.

Angela and Julia Lambert are still unit helpers and Connie (one of our Rainbow Nans) can be relied on if we need an extra pair of hands.

Currently we have 15 girls with 30 on the waiting list although as some on the list are nearly seven this is likely to reduce when places are offered.

Some of our girls enjoyed the Rainbow birthday party which was a large Division get-together to celebrate 21 years of Rainbows.

Several girls attended the district swimming gala.

Some of us also attended the division thinking day 'Island Café' celebrations the money raised will go

towards helping setup homework areas with internet facilities for girls in poor island communities. This particular charity forms one section of our special challenge badge ('making a difference') this year.

This year is Guiding centenary year so there will be plenty planned for 2009.

Maxine Bloom - Rainbow Guider

### **The Men's Fellowship**

We have continued to meet on Friday afternoons, although our numbers still remain low. Happily we have not lost any by death this year but, unfortunately, we have not gained any new members. We would be delighted to welcome some more men into the fellowship. If you are seeking an afternoon of fun and friendly banter then come along at 2pm. We close with a short epilogue at 4.30pm.

Once again, though small numerically, we were able to make donations to the Church, St. Luke's Hospice, The Samaritans and Alzheimers Society.

I am grateful for the continued efforts and contributions of those who make ours a happy fellowship.

Reg Greenlees

### **Moggies**

Moggies continued to meet on alternate Tuesdays. Our first meeting each month is held at The Coach and Horses, and for the second we have a meal in a local pub or restaurant. During the year we have sampled Chinese, Indian, Mediterranean and Thai food as well as pub meals. In November Sue and Martin Ball hosted a Ladies Night where the accent was on Italian wines.

7 or 8 men normally attend and one or two others join us whenever possible. The atmosphere is very relaxed and the accent is on fellowship. If you feel that this could be for you, we would be very pleased to see you.

Ed Harrison

### **Tuesday Afternoon Mums**

Where has the year gone? It seems like only yesterday I wrote the 2007 report. Whilst much has changed, little has changed with regards to our group. As the name suggests, we are a (small) group of Mums who meet on (alternate) Tuesday afternoons. If you would like to join us for tea and a chat, helpful advice (hopefully), or a shoulder to cry on, please contact me for details of our next meeting.

Liz Perry 656411

### **Church Bookstall**

When did you last look at the card stall in the crush hall? If you didn't see what you wanted please let me know. Through the sale of cards and also the purchasing of devotional guides, Bibles, CD's and other Christian resources for individuals and groups £104 has been raised for church funds. The Christian bookshop in Chelmsford gives a discount of 15% which is passed on to the church rather than individuals. Get well and sympathy cards are the most frequently bought cards but I am always happy to get in cards for a special birthday or anniversary providing I am given sufficient notice.

Elizabeth Shafford

## **Library**

The library has been reduced in size over the last year and is now only in the crush hall. There are a number of books on Personal Christian Life, Prayer, Outreach, Counselling, Families and Theology as well as Bibles, Bible Guides, Humour and Fiction books.

Members are welcome to browse and borrow, to sign for and to return books when finished with.

If there is a book you would like to read which we don't have in the library please let me know and I will be happy to order a copy.

Church Service tapes have remained popular and are regularly borrowed. They are now kept in the vestibule.

Sue Quinney

## **Sound Recording**

Once again we are indebted to our small but reliable band of men;

Martyn Hanton, David Ashworth, Dave Rogers, Mike Cottrell, Brian Carter, Steve Small, and until claimed by University, Tom Rogers.

All services are recorded and also funerals if requested.

We also greatly appreciate the additional work carried out in installing new speakers and microphones by Martin and David we trust that you the congregation are receiving us loud and clear. If not then please advise us and every effort will be made to improve the service.

As usual we could use extra help so if you interested please notify any of the mentioned people. No experience is necessary as training will be given. The only requirements are to have the ability to climb the stairs and that you possess a warm coat!

Vic Hare

## **Publicity**

At the end of our report last year we indicated that we would really like to retire from Publicity. As you see, it didn't happen but we still feel strongly that someone else should take over - someone with fresh ideas as to how the job should be done. So, if you are reading this and think this might be you - please, please have a word with us!

We continue to put times and types of services on the notice boards and trust that this helps in making sure that you are there at the right time for Sunday services. The crush hall notice boards are there for all to use and we always encourage you to put up posters for events and activities. From time to time we have to remove long term or large posters to keep things fresh and relevant.

We have to thank all those who deliver the leaflets to houses in our area. The Church policy is to keep this going for the major Christian festivals and to link it in with the theme for the season.

Please remember the leaflets available in the racks in the front vestibule and the crush hall at the Information Points. They are particularly useful for newcomers to take away and study. We do update the leaflets regularly and welcome your input for this at any time.

Our church eNews is now firmly established and we thank our co-editor John Greenway for his computer expertise and publishing this when we have major news to share. If you are not receiving the eNews, please email John on [contact@churchenews.waitrose.com](mailto:contact@churchenews.waitrose.com). He has also revised the Church website and this is an additional means of publicity and a tremendous asset. The address is [www.bmchurch.org](http://www.bmchurch.org) and you will find all sorts of information about our church. John and Janet Lee.

## **Printing**

Doesn't time fly? Here we are another year past and Di wanting another few words from the Printing Department.

We have had another busy year under the watchful eye of Ken. Our department runs very smoothly and regularly produces the printing on time. The printing deadline is 4pm on Friday for copy to be printed, but if an attractive young lady arrives late I am sure we would always squeeze her in!

Touch wood our machine is running very nicely but when it runs out of guarantee it may be prudent to part exchange it for a new one because the call out charges are very expensive. If and when, I am sure Ken will use his negotiating skills to get us a really good bargain!

This year we are again struggling to fit in our Christmas dinner, pressure of work and all that, but this year we are asking our wives to accompany us, so it will be quite an occasion, probably around April!

Ken orders the paper and ink and if we have any problems with the machine he contacts the manufacturers and gets it fixed as it is under guarantee, Mike Cottrell now does the billing. I run the rota and we all take our turn printing once a month. Some people relax by being out in the country listening to the birds, but instead we are relaxing with a cup of tea, supplied by Fred, listening to the churning of the printing machine and Gordon Reynolds playing the organ, bliss!

Ken White, Mike Cottrell, Bob Cristin, Tony Brothers.

## **Traidcraft Stall**

As a Church we support the Fairtrade cause (which means that producers have been paid a fair price for their goods) by having the Traidcraft Stall and using as many fairtrade products as we can. Traidcraft are a Christian business, who ensure that all their products adhere to fairtrade standards and their profits are used to set up more fairtrade projects.

We continue to have a Traidcraft Stall at the Charity Lunches and I held a stall at Monday and Tuesday Toddlers before Christmas. Supplies of Traidcraft tea, coffee and sugar are available in the Church kitchen. If you use these regularly the Church treasurer would be grateful for any donations to keep the cupboards stocked. Inters have been selling Traidcraft chocolate and cookies. If there is anything other groups would like ordered please let me know.

The Billericay Fairtrade Town committee are currently putting together a re-bid to maintain our Fairtrade Town status. There has been a competition to design a Fairtrade tote bag. The winners are to be announced at a Fairtrade coffee morning at St. Mary's on Sat. 7<sup>th</sup> March 2009. All the entries will be on display. Fairtrade Fortnight is 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb to 8<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Thank you to everyone who buys from our Traidcraft Stall. Do come and have a look. There are some interesting new products available.

Sue Hawkins

## **Sunday Morning Coffee**

First of all, many thanks to all the people who do coffee/tea after the 10.00 am services on Sunday mornings.

Many people stay behind to talk to one another after the Service finishes and quite a few of these come and have a drink. The donations are in aid of JMA. Every effort is being made to ensure that everything is ready before the Service starts and that at the end of the Service we do not begin to serve coffee/tea until the music starts and everyone is moving.

So, we shall continue with the refreshments in Church and do hope that you will support us if you don't have to rush home on a Sunday.

If there is anyone who would like to join the Rota please let me know.

Brenda Moore (656344)

### **Wednesday Luncheon Club**

The club meets most Wednesdays at 1.00pm at Western Road to provide fellowship and conversation over an inexpensive meal. We can cater for about 36 diners although recently we have had an average of 24 regulars. Although some of our former diners are no longer attending, it has been good that new diners are now coming which has helped to keep the club viable. If you know of anyone who would like to come to share a good meal with good company, please encourage them to do so. We would especially welcome those who do not normally come to church.

As usual, the highlight of the year was the Christmas lunch when diners, helpers and drivers enjoyed a meal together, after which we all sang carols.

Many thanks to all the helpers in the five teams who give their time so willingly each month. Thanks also to the drivers and especially their co-ordinator Geoff Pullen.

Janet Everitt

### **Charity Lunches**

The Charity Lunches continue to be popular, not only with our own Church members but also with other Christians in the town and people who come along just because they have seen it advertised and know a good bargain when they see one!

In 2008 a total of £2,724 was raised for a variety of charities, including Chernobyl Children, Mildmay Mission, Samaritans, SMB, St Luke's Hospice, Essex Air Ambulance, CLIC Sargent and the British Heart Foundation.

If you haven't yet tried one of these lunches I do encourage you to come along - there is a definite 'buzz' on the second Saturday of the month - with people meeting up with old friends and even making new ones along the way.

I do hope that we will be able to continue – I rely on volunteers coming forward to arrange these lunches. There is always practical help and advice on hand. There is a list in the Crush Hall with forthcoming dates - do have a look if you are interested, or give me a ring sometime!

Janet Lee (01277 622297).

### **Music Team (Western Road)**

The Music Team at Western Road have endeavoured to support worship for every service throughout the year. This has been a challenge at times due to the reducing number of musicians, and since the summer it has been exacerbated by the departure of Les and Di Wallace.

Our greatest and saddest loss during the year was our dear friend Keith Forrest. Keith has been a faithful servant and a much-loved stalwart of the music team for many years as choirmaster, pianist, organiser, and general factotum. His contribution and encouragement to the rest of the team, and his enthusiasm for music in the Church will be deeply missed.

Grateful thanks are due to everyone who has led or assisted with our music ministry. In particular, thanks

to Gordon Reynolds, Pam Cottrell and Liz Perry for leading morning worship throughout the year. And thanks to Audrey Taylor and Ann Bray for their willingness to cover any gaps in the plan.

AD33 have continued to provide music support at the Fusion and All Age Worship services. They also led the worship for the CTB Praise in the Park during the summer and will be doing so again in June 2009.

Departures to University have limited the occasions when Testament have been able to play, but David Hawkins has kept the flag flying by worship leading at Youth Services .

Thanks as ever go to the unsung maestros on the sound desk and the laptop.

Finally, we are extremely grateful for the generous donation which enabled us to buy our splendid new Roland piano which will enhance our worship for many years to come.

Whatever their style, please support our musicians with your prayers and encouragement as they continue to serve Christ and His Church.

Mike Hawkins

### **Flowers**

Thank you to all those people who made contributions towards flowers for church and for the arrangers who consistently give their support.

During the last year we had two Weddings and one Memorial Service for which floral arrangements were requested.

Janet Hibberd - Flower Secretary

### **CAMEO - (Come and Meet Each Other)**

We are a small group of ladies who meet every other Thursday at the Church in the Upper Room - our numbers are few and we always appreciate new members.

We still support the DEBRA charity via Len Hale who comes every term to do some craft work with us and we thank you for your support, Len.

Our subs have remained the same as last year - £1.00, which includes a cup of tea or coffee as we begin the afternoon. The programme includes for social afternoons when we just sit and chat, which is no problem! We find time to go out and have lunch to celebrate special occasions and some of our past members come along to catch up on all the news.

We invite you to come along on a Thursday afternoon once a fortnight about 1.45pm and meet us. Although we have all known each other for a while, we do welcome new people. The time is flexible as we all come and go as we please. We look forward to seeing you there.

If this is of interest to you, please give me a call.

Brenda Moore - 01277 656344

### **Ladies Leisure Group**

We continue to meet on Thursday afternoons from 2-4 p.m. to play badminton, table-tennis, Scrabble and Rummikub.

We gained one new member this year which brings our membership up to 16.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Judith, Mark and other members of the church who come to us with words of wisdom in our "quiet time" - they give us food for thought and sometimes make us laugh.

If any ladies - of whatever age - would like to turn up on a Thursday afternoon to try us out they would be very welcome.

Maureen Davies.

### **The Wesley Guild**

This has been another interesting, sometimes challenging, and hopefully, enjoyable year for the Wesley Guild. We started in September with a visit from our MP, John Baron. We were pleased to welcome several visitors to this, and hope to repeat it in the coming year. We also had two very good musical afternoons, one with the Gospel Duo and the other a Christmas Medley from our friend Doris at her keyboard. We had great fun filling shoe boxes for the Samaritans Purse Christmas Appeal, and were happy to welcome back several old friends who talked to us on a wide variety of subjects, and to meet some new ones. We also shared some hilarious 'social' afternoons.

We have been so happy to welcome several new members, also occasional visitors, and look forward to welcoming more in the future. Remember, 2.30pm on Wednesdays, from Sept to May.

Yvonne Pasola

### **Supper Club**

Supper Club has enjoyed another year with a steady membership. We have had the time, and expertise, of a wealth of talented speakers, who have greatly added to the warmth and fellowship of our monthly meetings. As usual, our ever diminishing teams of "volunteer" caterers have provided us with excellent meals, all at the high standard which have come to Supper Club. We have, also, during the year, added several new members to our ranks, who have become regular attendees.

Our, illustrated and otherwise, have ranged from "Churches, Statues and Monuments" through "Operation Varsity WW2" to "The history of Marconi" and "Jersey, and my early life under the German Occupation, (an excellent talk given by our own Bob Cristin). are just a sample of our interesting and varied programme, and we are greatly indebted to all of our speakers, together with the support of all the members, and caterers, who provide us with such enjoyable meetings, and enable us to continue as one of the longest serving groups within the church.

As usual, all men are welcome to join with us, and will be assured of a very friendly welcome to our fellowship.

Brian Phillips (Hon. Secretary).

### **Record Group**

The group continues to meet regularly on the last Friday of the month except December at 8pm in the homes of our members. We spend a very enjoyable evening in each others company listening to our host's selection of music. We invariably find it a relaxing time, especially after a busy week, in the comfort of the home and in fellowship. As everyone's tastes differ, we have a wonderful variety of records, tapes and CDs

It has greatly saddened the group to lose Barbara Wilks, our treasurer, in July. She will be greatly missed.

Do join us for an entertaining evening, refreshments are served.

Cliff Woodhead

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## QUEENS PARK COMMUNITY CHURCH

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### **Worship at Queens Park Community Church**

We continue to enjoy a variety of styles of worship at The Link on a Sunday morning, with a mixed age congregation ranging in number from 35 to 70 depending on the weather, the time of year and other good reasons! Visitors are always made most welcome and we enjoy sharing worship from time to time with members of the Western Road congregation.

We hope that Judith is beginning to feel at home with us. We are sure that she will contribute new ideas to assist in our continuing development. We also enjoy the contributions made by our own local preachers and others from the circuit who, with Mark, enrich our worship week by week. Visiting preachers have included Mark Williamson from 'Share Jesus mission' and Rev. Frances Drake.

As always we are grateful to those who assist the stewards in preparation for worship. We now have a number of people trained to operate the sound and data projection systems. Derek Green is, of course very much missed for his many contributions, particularly his work as property steward. We now realise just how much he did over many years!

As a congregation we often take the opportunity to meet together. Congregational meetings are held several times a year and we regularly enjoy a 'bring and share' lunch after worship. Two quiet days have taken place and a summer Garden Party (sadly this year indoors) at the home of Linda and David.

We continue to serve the local community; we work in partnership with several local groups and Christmas cards were delivered to every house on Queen's Park during December.

Jean Brown on behalf of the Queen's Park stewards.

### **Queens Park Children**

Young people are an important part of our congregation and we accommodate them accordingly.

The children have met during our Sunday services throughout the year. One of our families has left the church and our group is now smaller than it was.

Shirley, Anna and myself have continued to provide interesting and fun activities for the children to enjoy, loosely based on the Light programmes for 5 to 11 year olds. When the service includes Communion the children join the congregation.

The morning activities always end with refreshments.

Suzan Prior

### **Queens Park Baby and Toddler Group**

Over the year we have grown in numbers of attendees so much so that by the end of the year we had to begin a waiting list. Our group is indebted to Val (one of the children's Grandmas) who travels from Romford every week to help out.

Many thanks to the refreshment team who keep us all well supplied with sustenance and to Jane and Siggie who so willingly help pack away our equipment.

Please pray for our children and their carers as they come into our building that they may feel the loving touch of our gracious God.

Christine Gibson

### **6th Chantry Brownies**

We have had such a fun year, with a very full Pack. As well as joining in with District events, we have planted trees at Weald Country Park, earned lots of badges and had several meetings out and about. We have had 2 holidays in 2008, camping at South Woodham Ferrers, and Pack Holiday with Tuesday Brownies in Hawkwell.

The waiting list continues to grow, as older Brownies leave us to join Guides. One Young Leader left us for university in September, but we have 2 more youngsters who help every week, one of them received the Jack Petchey Award for her selfless service to Brownies last Spring. 2009 looks to be just as exciting!

Helen Harpole

### **Daniels's Den**

Daniel's Den ceased to meet at Christmas. Over the two years that it was open, we had nineteen families attending, eight of whom attended regularly each week, and we supported these families in different ways.

I felt the Group had fulfilled a need when and where,

And was to stop meeting each week, but leave an open contact those who wanted it.

I'm pleased to say that when we closed the group at Christmas, we knew another one would be starting in the New Year.

This group now meets on a Tuesday as before, with new Leaders and a different format, but still involving a Church presence, each week.

Elizabeth Hardy.

### **Art for Pleasure at Queens Park**

We are now in the 6<sup>th</sup> year and continue to attract a regular group of about twenty or more people each week. New members every so often replace anyone who has moved on so we keep our numbers. There is a very friendly atmosphere which encourages friendship and the sharing of skills.

In June we were able to contribute our paintings to the Billericay Flower Festival in St Mary's Church.

A rather pleasant addition to those who attend our painting group is the number of people both church members and passers by who pop in. They all receive a welcome and a cup of coffee or tea.

We are indebted to Jane and Ziggy who set up our table and chairs etc every Wednesday morning.

Pat Crabb

### **Queens Park Court Activity Group**

Once again, around twelve residents and six helpers have met on Monday mornings for tea and a chat, preceded by a discussion, music and activity based on the morning's topic. As well as the usual festivals and bi-monthly flower-arranging we "visited" Wimbledon, Ascot, The Last Night of the Proms and Paris in the Spring. We remembered the Pilgrim Fathers and their Billericay connections and made some superb scarecrows from wooden pegs. We enjoyed melodies from Brigadoon, High Society and My Fair Lady and sang along with "Hits from the Blitz" and "Music Hall Memories". Once a month, as always, we meet for "Time to Share", a short service at 10.30am in the main lounge. You are very welcome to join us - the next two dates are February 23rd and April 6th.

Ann Bray

### **Link Up**

Ladies group meeting monthly on the second Wednesday of each month at 8pm. We have various venues and subjects ranging from our own minister to making greeting cards. We begin at 8pm and try to finish by 10pm. We have a meal out in summer and meet together for a Christmas chat. We care for each other and when problems present we always try to help out. We always welcome new faces.

Shirley Green

### **Whitechapel Mission**

Our work at Whitechapel Mission does not change much. Nowadays we begin by sorting out what has been incorrectly hung up (ladies blouses and sweaters in the men's clothing section!). A lot of young offenders are sent by the court to do community work. Sorting keeps us busy until about 2.30pm when we pack up to come home.

Tony Harris has stepped in as our new driver (and a bigger car) ably backed up by Wendy when necessary.

The main requirement is still for underclothes for men and smaller size trousers (30 – 36 in waist).

Shirley Green

### **Queens Park Discussion groups**

During the last year, an ad hoc group has met to share ideas, support and encourage one another. Discussion is based on a study guide. Each series runs for 6 weeks.

Linda Patient

### **Esther's Spa**

We held 4 Spa sessions during the year and in September introduced Esther's Soiree - a relaxed social evening offering refreshments accompanied by Jan Bunker's harp music and a Traidcraft stall.

Thanks go to all the helpers who have felt the call to follow Jesus' example of offering peace and healing through the ministry of touch and prayer.

Christine Gibson

### **Prayer Chain**

The Prayer Chain for the Queens Park Community Church (the Christian Link) has continued over the past year and has been utilized more than in previous years. It runs on a much smaller scale than the Western Road Prayer chains and is transmitted solely by using email. Generally, the prayers are for those individuals who are specifically associated with Queens Park Church but we also forward prayers to and for the Western Road contact point where appropriate and we occasionally get messages from Western Road for the Queens Park Chain. It is good that we can all share our Prayers with others. Prayer is an important aspect of Christian life no matter where we are or who deals with it since we are all one Church.

Don Ward

### **Employment Group**

The Employment Group, although set up in 1992, has continued to offer advice to Church members and others whenever asked although there was only one enquiry during the past year (2008) relating to employment. Numbers have fallen over the years because of full employment but advice is still available, if required. However, the Church may feel there is a need to offer the opportunity of employment in 2009. If it does, then I am sure that a team of helpers can be set up to help anyone who seeks help and advice. The Church could therefore provide a service to those in need.

Don Ward

### **Coffee Pot / Pause for Thought**

We are open for Coffee every Thursday & Friday morning during the year, a facility which we feel is part of our commitment and outreach to the community, in Queens Park.

Numbers have dropped over the past year, but our regulars continue to pop in each week, plus the occasional visitor.

However numbers are boosted each week, with the Craft ladies, and Parenting groups, coming on Thursday, and the people who come especially to 'Pause for Thought' on Friday.

There are at least ten ladies attending on Thursday mornings to do their Craft, and between fifteen & twenty plus, people 'Pause for Thought' on Friday.

Nine and one gentleman, usually in twos or threes, plus Mark, serve and chat to the people who attend each day.

Elizabeth Hardy

### **Big Breakfast**

During 2008 Big Breakfast went from strength to strength. It is a social event for many local people who take the opportunity to come in and enjoy the company and relaxed atmosphere once a month on a Saturday morning.

Both helpers and customers enjoy the experience. A very big thank you goes to Joyce Scott and her band of willing helpers, and to the people who come each time.

Mark Conlon

### **QUOGS**

The Senior members of the Queens Park Community have really enjoyed a year's programme of outings, lively speakers and much food. We wish to express our grateful thanks to Joyce Scott who works so tirelessly to arrange all we do.

Mark Conlon