

*Bethel Baptist Church*

*Swavesey*



# Fellowship Report

# 2010

[www.bethelbaptistchurch.org.uk](http://www.bethelbaptistchurch.org.uk)

## Secretary's Report

**Becky Dear**

*For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. (Ephesians 1:15-16)*

Once again we have had another exciting and eventful year as we have been obedient to God and followed his will as a church family. I would like to thank everyone who has helped to make church life run smoothly. The work of the church would not continue to grow without the efforts and willingness of people to take on various responsibilities and roles; I am overwhelmed with how God is working in our lives and the lives of others, and at how dedicated we as a church family are!

I would especially like to thank David Oakes, Dave Chambers and John Porter as they finished their term of office as deacons in April 2010. They have all used their gifts to serve our church (and continue to do so) and we thank God for them. Three new

deacons have joined the leadership this year: Yvonne Turner, Dawn Mills and Stephen Tabram, and we are grateful at their willingness to use their gifts to continue God's work.

Our work with young people remains a real strength, especially the Monday night clubs which go on growing in numbers. Survivors started up this year for children in secondary school, thus allowing us to maintain the work begun in the primary school groups. We have also seen the start of Youth Compass Cafe and we pray that God will bless this work as well.

Becky Snead continues to live and work in Togo, and this year - for the first time - she has written an article for this booklet! John Hibberd continues his work with "Through Faith Missions" and he has been heavily involved in the organisation of a number of their missions.

The Chewit group went to Romania to lead a holiday camp for young people. It has been inspiring to see their commitment to raise money for the trip and for some of the needs out in Romania, and also to see

how they have grown in Christ while they were out in Romania (and continue to do so!).

We celebrated four baptisms this year: Rachel Tabram, Steph Chambers Alice King, and Peter Chambers. It was great to celebrate their love for God along with all their friends and family. Nick Blackburn and Rachel Tabram have left home this year to start life at university and George Gaskin has moved to Norfolk to start a new job. Our membership numbers have increased: Joy Childs, George Gaskin, Lynsey Newbury, Rachel Tabram, Steph Chambers, Alice King and Peter Chambers have all come into membership.

I hope that, as you read this booklet, you will be encouraged, inspired and thankful to God for all that he has done within our church and local community throughout 2010, and you will use the report throughout 2011 to pray for each group. If you fancy joining one of the groups, or helping out, please see either the group leader, myself or David Mann for more information!

# Muses from the Manse

David Mann

## Christianity - An Inconvenient Faith!

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. (Hebrews 12:1-3)*

Another year has come and gone and as we look back on it what will be our lasting memories? We celebrated with Peter and Sue at their marriage in April, and with Rachel, Steph, Alice and Peter at their baptism in June. There were sad farewells to Anne and to Ruth as they both set off to lives eternal. And at a personal level 2010 was a long year of first anniversaries for the family!

Mission has been at the centre of most of what we have talked about and engaged in as a church in 2010; we commissioned Becky Snead back to the mission field in Togo, we welcomed visitors and speakers to hear about their own encouraging experiences of mission, and we sent out a group of our young people to experience mission first hand in Romania. Closer to home our children's work has developed and expanded and Compass Café has provided a great opportunity for deepening our relationship with the local community, and this continues to go from strength to strength. Mission on our doorstep as well as in foreign fields!

These are all examples of the kind of things that are at the heart of a Christian community; celebration, remembering, discipling and engaging. They are good signs of a church family that is alive because its members are alive - alive in their faith and alive in the expectation that God is at work in their lives right now and for the future!

For me 2010 is best remembered as a year in which

we made new gains in our desire to seek God and know His will. A year in which we took big steps forward in putting into action the gospel truth on which we stand. A year in which our eyes have been better focused on the future God has already set before us.

So coming into 2011 I want to encourage the fellowship to keep focused and to set your sights on 2020 vision! Seek a clear view and understanding of what God is calling you into and of how that is worked out through, and with, this church family.

2011 is to be a year all about discipleship; as we seek to develop our-selves, to nurture each other and to make ourselves available for God's service.

Commitment, Obedience, Relationship and Equipped will be words and themes you hear repeatedly through the year. Christian discipleship is meant to be life-transforming and thus world-transforming. It's not meant to be a self-help project. Jesus was a radical teacher who exemplified complete sacrifice. While we might not expect to be tortured and killed for our faith, it's true that if our faith is not

changing the way we live, and changing the lives of those around us, then we probably aren't investing in it enough.

When we read the Bible we encounter individuals whose lives were transformed through an encounter with Jesus. People who went on to transform the lives of the people around them and to transform the world in which they lived so dramatically that it has shaped the world that we live in today!

Meeting Jesus is not always convenient. To follow Jesus, to be his disciple, requires us to change our lives, our habits, our words, our behaviours, our expectations, our priorities... To be a disciple of Christ is to be somebody ready to be inconvenienced!

Not everything God challenges us to do as a fellowship in the years ahead will be comfortable or convenient! My desire is to be a disciple, and to see disciples who are prepared to suffer a little discomfort in order to bring comfort to a hurting world, who are ready to be inconvenienced

themselves rather than inconvenience others!

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## Worship Group

**Wendy Snead**

Leader: Wendy Snead

Keyboard: Helen Porter  
Steph Chambers

Saxophone:

Rachel Hibberd

Steph Chambers

Singers:

Wendy Snead

Guitars: Philip Blackburn

Sue Hope

Dave Chambers

Jane

Blackburn

Drums: Nick Blackburn

Ed

King

Flute: Lucy Mann

John Snead

..." the purpose of the Praise and Worship Team is to lead God's people in praise and worship through welcoming and ushering in His Holy Spirit. We want to magnify and exalt the Lord in our hearts. When worshipers are drawn into God's presence, they speak to Him, and listen to Him. We rejoice when our mission has been accomplished."

This last year we have continued to try to maintain our purpose. As individuals, we have seen some married, some move away and some continue to be faithful to the group, despite illnesses or the pressure of school work! As leader of the group, I thank God for the steadfast commitment of each member and for their amazing support of me. I know that we are truly blessed as a fellowship to have so many gifted musicians and singers in the group. Together we work on songs old and new and try to balance a mix of different musical styles.

We are still trying different types of worship and encouraging others to use their gifts in services. The use of puppets, drama and dance are some of the types being used. These different facets of worship,

together with the monthly alternative/cafe-style service, are proving to be helpful in enhancing the worship of God's people at Bethel and those from the wider church community who have yet to know our Lord and Saviour! Cafe church over the Christmas period this year saw many people from the village community come in to join in the celebrations.

I am aware (and I hope others are too) of a greater feeling of people's desire to want to proclaim God's goodness, love and faithfulness in their praise and worship. I feel encouraged when I look out on the fellowship and hear voices singing, see hands raised and people wanting to meet with God. May God by the power of His Spirit continue to stir our hearts and lead us on into new heights and depths of worship!

Our prayer for the year ahead is that there is an even greater sense of God's Spirit directing and enabling freedom in worship whether it be singing, playing, praying or merely in the silence! Please pray that we as a group may know the heart of God and what He requires of us.

If you feel God has directed you to a hymn/song

you'd like to be sung on a Sunday, please let one of us know; we will do our best to include it.

## THEATRICKS

**David Mann**

We have been enjoying the dramatic efforts of a few members of the fellowship for some time now through drama and puppet sketches, and these have worked well alongside the other more traditional elements of worship on a Sunday morning.

We have now established a regular meeting for those who feel inclined to take to the stage, or behind it! We meet at the church fortnightly on a Friday evening at 8pm to practise and to develop new ideas. The fruits of the group's hard work were in evidence over the Christmas holidays when we were challenged by some stage sketches developed by the OneTimeBlind group and introduced to a couple of new faces; Josh and Geraldine. We are always happy to welcome new members to our group, so why not come along and give it a try?

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## Pawprints

**Becky Dear**

Pawprints is the Sunday School group for 0-11 year olds. Within crèche we have two children who attend regularly and normally hear a Bible story and then have time to play with toys and each other. This year we will be introducing a craft activity to go with the story.

The school aged children are split in two groups and enjoy Bible stories, craft and other activities to help them learn and remember particular Bible passages. Once a month the two groups join together for quizzes and a time of worship and focused prayer. We will be exploring Jesus' "I am" sayings. After some of the Pawprints leaders attended a training day, we introduced lots of action songs based on Bible verses - it's great to know that the children are learning parts of the Bible without realising it! The crèche children also join our worship sessions.

It has been good to see the children grow closer as a group, even though there is a large age range. A HUGE thank you to all the teachers who have been committed to our children and to teaching them God's word. We especially thank Lynsey Newbury and George Gaskin who finished working in Pawprints this year.

We are in REAL need of more teachers as two people take Pawprints twice a month which means they only get into church for two services. If you would like to join our team, please see Becky Dear or Dawn Mills - it's hard work but a real privilege to see God at work in our young people. Thank God also for our children and pray that His Spirit will work within them as they grow older.

## **Footsteps**

### **Heather Chambers**

Footsteps have continued to flourish this year. Simon, Alice and Evie have moved on to the main

church and Tim and Abigail have moved up from Pawprints. At full capacity we now number seven young people aged between 11 and 16. The leaders have worked well together, meeting at least termly to plan the programme. David Oakes decided to stand down as a leader, whilst Jerry Turner and Heather Chambers continue, with Dawn Mills joining the team at Easter.

We have followed the materials provided by Urban Saints, studying a variety of themes, including living as a Christian, exploring the Psalms and looking at New Testament letters. We continue to develop our prayer life, praying with and for each other on a regular basis. During the year we have also got involved in other events such as GenR8's residential experience, hearing a talk by the man who was pronounced dead after being stung by a jelly fish, who met God, and then lived to share his story with others, and joining other young people for a time of worship at St Andrew the Great in Cambridge.

The group have fun together, enjoy one another's company, are very open and keen to learn about God and develop their relationship with Him.

## Tuesday Homegroup

### Heather Chambers

The group meets every Tuesday from 8-10pm. Although we usually meet at the Chambers' house in Hilton we do move around a little and also meet at the Kings' home in Boxworth and the Days' in Swavesey.

We have a lot of people who have a great number of other commitments in terms of both church and work and so the group can vary from just 3 people meeting together to 14 when we are all able to attend. Most recently we met to enjoy a pre-Christmas social event at Ruth & Austin's house, where as usual food featured highly on the agenda.

We usually follow the materials linked to the sermon series, but digress occasionally to follow other thoughts and ideas. These have included talking about our favourite biblical characters, where we were also challenged to find a song to go with every biblical character mentioned. Zaccheus, Noah and David were fairly easy, but Methuselah stumped us! It was a revelation that Jan, Joyce and Ruth were able to burst into song almost

immediately!

We always share with each other the highs and lows of our week, pray for each other and other members of our fellowship. This has included keeping Ed King (who left for the Antarctic in November) constantly in our prayers. We have enjoyed spending time with each other and supporting one another through various challenging situations each week.

## **Chewit Homegroup**

**Jason Dear**

Bourbon, Custard Cream, Garibaldi, Malted Milk, and Nice are among Chewit's favourite types of biscuits. I was thinking of changing the group's name to Chompit!

We have done a variety of Bible studies from teenage issues to Christian foundations, with different ways of looking at God's word through Bible reading, debates, links to TV programmes & the internet. We have developed our prayer times, so that we bring items from the news to pray about

each week as well as our own needs.

This year has had some changes; we have had some new members join and some of the older ones have left for university or have moved away. In June, three members of Chewit were baptised; it has been very encouraging to see how the group has developed and bonded and how they are taking active roles within the church.

A big thank you to Janet King for helping to keep the Chewits in supply of biscuits. Any donations of biscuits, especially chocolate coated, will be welcomed. (I promise I won't eat them before Tuesday evening!)

## **Wednesday Homegroup**

**David Mann**

2010 was another good year for our group. Numbers grew a little, were more consistent, and we finally broke the mould of a 'men only' group!

We have enjoyed the opportunity to look at the study material that has supported some of the preaching series, and we have also spent a considerable amount of our time sharing, discussing and praying about many issues around the practicalities of discipleship in the work place.

It has also been good to be able to share the responsibility of leading, and preparing for the meetings, which I am sure will continue as the group moves location in 2011. The group will continue to meet on a Wednesday evening at 8pm but will be led and hosted by John Porter.

## **Thursday Homegroup**

**Tony Miles**

2010 has seen some changes in the group in that two have left us to be with their Lord and one has moved away. Thanks to new people joining, the number has

remained much the same, as has the attendance which is generally around eight to nine of the eleven people in the group.

As usual we have followed up on the theme of some of David's sermons, inter-spaced with "one off" subjects. From time to time various members have taken the responsibility for enabling the group. I use the term enabling deliberately because those responsible soon find that the group has a life of its own and the greatest test is not leading but keeping up! I will not name names but I'm sure we could just about squeeze in anyone curious enough to find out.

At times, when we have been away, the group has met in the home of someone else in the group and it is very heartening to witness the keenness of those who attend. If, as you read this, you do not attend a home group, I would encourage you to give it a go. If the times of groups are not convenient you could always start a new one.

## **Friday Homegroup**

## **Jo Hitchin**

About 8 of us meet together on Friday mornings from 9.30 - 11.30, in Swavesey or Fen Drayton. The group is led by Becky Dear & Jo Hitchins, although some of the other group members also lead studies. We have a time of Bible study (currently Acts) and of prayer (sometimes even singing!), with of course the obligatory cuppa and biscuits (sometimes even cake!). More recently we have been trying to be more creative in ways in which we can pray together, both to support each other and also to hopefully impact on our prayer lives at home. Our aim is to support each other, encourage each other, and walk closer to God through studying the Bible. We have a really good range of ages, married and single, with and without children, and would be delighted to welcome anyone who would like to join us. For more information, do contact Becky or Jo.

## **Pastoral Care**

### **Tony Miles**

As usual, the past year has been an eventful one,

during which the members of the group have undertaken hospital visits, met and talked with others in their homes and on the telephone. Support has been given to some in their last hours before they left to be with their Saviour. Some help has also been given to members of their families. During the year we said good bye and celebrated the life of Ann Morris and a few months later, Ruth Hill. Liz Milne also moved away to live in a care home.

I am pleased to report that our care group has grown and totals ten at time of writing. The group is blessed by the natural tendency of many others in the church family who are so diligent in their kindness and care for each other. We have good reason to give thanks to God for those He has raised up to undertake this important task, within our church family and for others in the wider community.

## **Monday Night Clubs**

### **Dawn Mills**

Our Monday Clubs have continued to be well attended

and have been a successful way of 'outreaching' to children and families within our communities. The three groups operate independently but we also have joint ventures for special occasions and family events.

We had a joint Monday Night Club at Easter time with all the children involved with craft and games activities and the smell of chocolate all around the church!

As part of the Swavesey Festival, we were invited to join in the parade and we had to dress according to the 'Green theme'. We had a magnificent cardboard robot to help lead the way and two of our members were awarded a prize for best costume.

The Fish and Chip Supper in the summer proved to be as successful as the year before and Ruth and Austin's garden was bursting with families who came along to enjoy the evening.

We had an afternoon Christmas Family Event where

all the children were invited to come and join in crafts and games. Afterwards their families joined them for a meal and watched a short presentation about some of the things they had been learning during the term. It was great to work with the parents who helped and encouraging to see whole families come along and feel welcomed into the church.

In October, some of the youth workers/helpers went on a training day at Milton Primary School. This proved to be really helpful and gave us some inspiration and motivation to try out new things on a Monday night.

As successful as they are, these clubs can only happen because of the commitment from the individuals who help to lead, organise and support in some way. Thank you so much for your time and effort. I believe a lot of children are hearing about the Lord because of your support.

## **Explorers**

## **Sue and Sarah Hibberd**

**What do we do?:** We meet 6-7 pm every Monday in term time, and have 25-30 children, aged 4-7. Each week we do games and a craft activity linked (roughly!) to a Bible story; we have largely been looking at Old Testament characters. This school year we have started a praise/prayer time; we either sing along to a praise DVD or have a prayer time in small groups.

**What's working well?:** The praise time has worked really well; the children have picked up the actions and words quickly and enjoy the videos as well. At Christmas they performed one of the songs to their parents, which went down really well! In September we also introduced having 4 groups, each with a leader to look after them; these will be changed each term. Every week we now give out smileys eg. for doing the song well, listening well, tidying up etc, and at the end of last term we gave a prize to the winning team. They can also lose smileys!

**What hasn't worked so well?:** The prayer time has not really worked as we don't feel the children have

grasped the concept of it yet, so we are going to try a different way to pray to see if it can help them understand about talking to God.

### **Things to give praise about:**

- Maintaining the number of children over the year
- The praise time is working well
- Children listening better and understanding about teamwork to gain points

### **Things to pray about:**

- The children who come; most do not go to church
- The prayer time would work better
- More people to help, especially from next September

## **Adventurers**

**Dawn Mills**

Adventurers (KS2: ages 7-10) continue to meet on Monday evenings from 6-7pm in the main church hall. We currently have 21 children who come along regularly and are given the opportunity to learn biblical values and stories in a fun way. Since September we have worked with the children in 3 teams and we have a competitive element to encourage good team work. We give out points for winning games, for good thinking skills, good listening skills and good behaviour and the team with the most points at the end of the half term gets a prize.

We have been using the 'Detonate' series by Mark Griffiths as a basis for our teaching and learning. So far this year we have communicated values such as trust, perseverance, taking responsibility, making right choices and asking for help. These values are reinforced through biblical teaching, acting or improvisation, games and story times. This term we are looking at doing something good (faith with works) and looking at the examples set by William Booth and Hudson Taylor.

Our team (Dawn Mills, Lucy Mann, Simon Tabram and

Alice King) work really well together and enjoy bringing *Good News* to children in our community. If you know of any child that might be interested in joining our group then please ask for more details.

## **Survivors**

**Lucy Mann**

Survivors began in January 2010 as the missing link between *Adventurers* and *Chewit*. The aim was to explore 'survival' on different levels: physical, emotional, educational and spiritual. I wanted to give Survivors a space in which to discover personal survival skills for the transition to college and teenage life, to understand the importance of faith in surviving the pressures of the modern world and to learn some basic survival skills in the outdoors.

We started the year with eight members and watched a video about Saul's persecution of the first Christians, his conversion and the survival of the early church in the face of opposition. We learned, through games, songs, quizzes and discussion, about Paul's 100% commitment to Jesus. There was a hunger in the group to know more about Jesus, so we watched two thought provoking films: 'Who is Jesus?' followed by 'The Godman'. The first explored the life and times of Jesus and the second presented the gospel in a storytelling style through a feature length animation. Both films encouraged or answered many of the youngsters' questions about Jesus, the Bible, faith and the Christian life. This was a great focus around Easter when the Easter bunny and chocolate were invading the world around us! Everyone left at Easter with a Book of Hope containing pictures from 'The Godman'.

In the summer term, our theme was desert islands. We learned some survival skills such as building a shelter, collecting water and protecting ourselves from sun, heat and animal attacks! This involved games and tasks linked to Paul's shipwreck and survival on the island of Malta; a story found in Acts

28. Many of these sessions took place on Swavesey Green.

The success of the Bible link in the outdoor activities led to a deeper study in September. By now there were only four surviving Survivors all with a good grasp of the well-known Bible stories and some distance along their own Christian journeys and so the new theme was journeys. We used games and food to introduce the characters and callings of Abraham, Jacob, Joseph and Moses. Through maps and timelines, I encouraged the Survivors to see the movement of God's chosen people through the terrain and times of Old Testament stories. Then we jumped in time to the journey of Mary and Joseph in the weeks before Christmas.

It has been a great privilege for me to share part of the life journey of the young people in Survivors 2010. I am sure they will go from strength to strength in their Christian adventure, leading others with them along The Way. Please pray for the personal and collective journeys of all Survivors. I believe there will be great personal and spiritual

growth in the year ahead, as well as growth in numbers. God bless Survivors!

## Youth Compass

**David Mann**

This year we took a big step forward with our ambitions for further developing our outreach programme for children and young people in Swavesey and surrounding communities. Building on the foundations of Compass Café we launched the Youth Café on Friday nights and Homework Club on Tuesday nights.

We have a small team of volunteers who facilitate the Youth Café. Opening at 6pm and running through until 10pm our aim is to provide a safe space where youngsters from 11 to 18 can relax, enjoy some simple refreshments and take advantage of the games consoles and internet access available.

Although the cold, wet winter nights seem to have

kept many away we do have a regular small group attending for the first couple of hours and we have some plans (working with SAY) for some events in 2011 which we believe will attract some of the older teenagers!

Tuesday's Homework Club has been successful in a slightly different way to that which we anticipated! There certainly seems to be very little homework being done, however we are developing some good relationships with parents of younger children who come along to the Kids Karate group.

There is still an opportunity for you to help out if you feel that you can. We really do need some more volunteers for Tuesdays (3:15pm until 5:15pm) and would welcome extras for Friday nights.

## **Outreach, Mission and Events**

**Yvonne Turner**

Our mission is to share the love of God with each other, the local community and beyond. We have been active as ever and many of the existing groups (see

specific details in this report) continue to provide an important service to the community, building links and valued friendships. Yet we are still restless in our duty and continue to strive to appeal to a wider audience through the staging of additional events to support our aims of being an open, friendly group of people, and using these events to continue to build relationships with new people from outside the current church fellowship.

2010 was a busy year. In addition to the various summer fellowship BBQs and the summer walks, we've held a Men's Curry Night with a Christian guest speaker, who also doubled as a mind illusionist for added entertainment. We hosted a supper evening targeting women, where the guest speaker shared her personal tragic circumstances yet gave an uplifting testimony with the forty or so attendees. We also held a very successful and fun Murder Mystery Night, where nearly everyone dressed for the occasion in 1920's costume and enjoyed an evening of intrigue whilst enjoying a 3-course meal. Of the 75 who attended, over half were people who did not attend Bethel, whereas at least a third of the total number were people who never attended

church at all. All these events were wonderful God-given opportunities for us to reach people and just sow a seed or two.

For the fourth consecutive year, the Alternative Christmas Market attracted over 300 people into our church during the 4-hour trading period. It has become an established calendar date for many folk in and around the village. Once again we were able to give nearly £800 to two local charities from the funds raised.

As a church we have also begun the journey of defining what we mean by mission and what more we wish to achieve in the next five years and beyond. Our teenagers have already challenged us all with their recent mission to Romania, and as we gather information and seek the Lord's will, we will formulate a strategy during 2011 of just how best to prioritise our efforts. Already a number of members feel inspired and led to step-out and sign-up for various practical overseas mission projects. We continue to pray for His blessing, guidance and clear leading.

## Art Club

### Joy Childs & friends!

The Art Club is now in its 3<sup>rd</sup> term; to my delight 10 people responded to the flyer I produced to advertise a new group and we meet on Wednesday afternoon during term times to learn to paint with watercolours. The group was set up for absolute beginners and that has proved to be really good, tapping into something that people were looking for. Having been asked to produce this report (the first one I've done) I asked the group members to give me their thoughts and these are some of them:

"I have been looking for years for the right kind of hand on guidance for watercolours and it is with great joy that I can honestly say my wish has come true. Our gathering is a wonderful cross section of mixed ages and experiences. The location is good as we have a lot of room with good light. The atmosphere is of exuberance and enthusiasm and we have made good friends in a very short time. We are a happy group and have quickly flourished under Joy's care."

"My friend and I joined the group together with 8 ladies, some of whom I believe are members of the church. We have been together for nearly 7 months and I find it is one of the friendliest group of people that I have had the pleasure to meet."

"Art class for me is doing something scary in a safe environment. It's enabling me to do something I've wanted to do for years. If I produce rubbish, no-one will laugh at it. If I produce a masterpiece (ha, vain hope!) everyone will share my delight. It's not quite an oasis because it is hard work - but it is definitely "me time".

"Everyone blends well with each other which creates a pleasant atmosphere. I have found it a good decision to join, as it gives one a new skill and a positive way of meeting people."

"The Art Group is lovely, and has about half Bethel and non Bethel participants. As we are in our third term, we are getting to know each other better. We are progressing and learning a lot. I sit beside a lady

whose son has muscular dystrophy and she understand what it is like not to be mobile. I can see God everywhere and know He has provided."

"I think Joy's favourite colour is blue - she always uses it - just to finish it off as she puts it. We all have a good laugh together, and it is good fun. Two and a half hours of fun every time."

"Joy will paint a picture for us to copy - we gather round her table and watch and then have to go back to our table and copy it! Joy hovers around offering suggestions, encouragement and correction. The sense of achievement is euphoric when we manage to get the colours to run together without creating 'cauliflowers' and the joy of making a 'carrot' person look lifelike knows no bounds!!"

I think the above comments sum up our group - I love meeting with these lovely people on Wednesday afternoons, I come home quite tired but feeling very blessed. God gave me the opportunity to learn to paint and it is joy to pass on what I have learnt to others.

## Compass Cafe

**Becky Dear**

Compass Café is open every Thursday from 10.30 am till 12.00 noon. Entering through the side door you will find a warm meeting place spread out over two rooms, for those who fancy a chat, a fair trade drink and a piece (or two!) of homemade cake. There is even a toy corner for those with young children, and on the fourth Thursday of each month it is the venue for the health visitor baby clinic.

It is run by the community for the community. There are still four main

groups involved in running it each week including ourselves, Swavesey WI, St Andrew's Church and Swavesey Festival Committee. When there is a fifth Thursday in the month other village groups are invited to take part.

It was great to celebrate Compass Cafe's first

birthday on the morning of 4th November, so many wanted to join in celebrating the success of Swavesey's community café. The party atmosphere was helped along with a birthday cake with our logo on (in addition to the usual delicious home made cakes) and lots of helium filled balloons and banners. The cake was cut and a short speech. As with all good parties, everyone left with a piece of birthday cake!!

## **Willows Luncheon Club**

### **Jan Marland**

Last year we had some very sad times as we have lost quite a few of our friends; some have gone into nursing homes while others have died. All have been greatly missed. On a positive note we have now made new friends. We are presently full and have one person on the waiting list. Last week one of our clients celebrated his 96th birthday (one of our oldest teenagers at heart).

I am very grateful and thankful to God for providing

such a loyal and

wonderful team of helpers that come each week; not only in helping with the cooking, driving or just having a great time laughing and singing, but for the ministering we give to each other and to our clients by listening, caring and sharing. This happens not only on Fridays but during the week also with phone calls, visiting clients in hospital, nursing homes, or their own homes. What a wonderful privilege it is to be able to do these things.

We still continue to sponsor Winifred from Uganda and have an updated Christmas photo. She is now 20 years old and turning into a lovely lady. We have kept her letters, school reports and photos over the years; if any one would like to see them they are kept in a black folder in the top drawer, under the cards.

At the present time we are able to do a rota with the helpers, so they all have one week off a month or are able to stand in when someone is away, all except for me. Is there anyone out there who feels they could come and cook once a month or stand in when I have a holiday? It would be great and it is a lovely job,

you will get lots of help and support or training if required.

Please continue to pray for the Willows that we stay strong and show God's love at work. If anyone would like to come and visit us to see how things run or just to have a cup of tea please pop in any time; you might catch us having a mad moment, but don't run away, join in!!

## **From the Mission Field in Togo,** **Africa**

**Becky Snead**

*Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns. (Philippians 1:3-6, NLT)*

I want to start by thanking Bethel for another year of partnership as we both work to spread the Good News about Christ by making His word available in the languages of all the nations. 2010 has definitely been a year of 'continuing His work' as Personnel Director. Great, but what does that mean? **What DOES Becky do?** I coordinate and execute activities in **10 main areas**: Recruitment, Orientation, Training and Personal Development, Career Guidance and Team Facilitation, CHED (Children's Education), Prayer Communication/Network, Multicultural Training/Awareness, Pastoral Care (conflict resolution, moral and disciplinary issues), Personal Finances and Home Assignment Planning. Aside from this day-to-day running of the department (actually I AM the department, more or less) one of the highlights in my work this year was having the chance to work closely with local literacy and translation organisations, *training them in Human Resource Management principles*. One of the strategic "ends" of our work here in Togo and Benin is *'capacity building' - training and empowering local people to take full ownership of their own development*. A lot of the translation and literacy projects we are

involved with are being handed over to local associations to continue, so it was great to be able to contribute something to their development in the area of expertise (HR) I work in. I also feel like I've *matured in dealing with difficult personnel situations* and I enjoy being a support to my colleagues to help them grow and thrive 'on the frontline'. *Work has also continued on the dictionary* that I started in 2007. Added responsibilities in our Lome Office meant I wasn't able to finish the dictionary as I'd hoped this year, but it's getting there. It's a fairly painstaking process, crossing T's and dotting I's and as it's the first of its kind in this language we want to make it as good as we can! *A brief appearance on national TV in May* helped raise awareness about the dictionary- the community is really motivated and excited to have it.

So, what's in store for the New Year and how can you pray for me?

**NEW JOB:** I am now in charge of **ALL HR** - our employed staff as well as missionaries. It's an exciting new venture, requiring different skills and

new knowledge to be learned but also means double the workload. I'd appreciate prayer for strength and patience as I settle into the job.

**DICTIONARY DEDICATION-** We hope to publish and dedicate the dictionary this year to coincide with Wycliffe Togo's Annual National Languages Fair.

**"HEALTH ABOVE ALL"**- This seems to be the most common New Year's greeting I've heard around town. I thank God for good physical health this year, pray that it'll continue! I ask that you pray for spiritual protection for me and for maturity in my spiritual life and in how I cope with stress, certainly now that I have more responsibilities at work. Pray that I'll continue to trust God to provide for ALL my needs, especially emotionally and relationally. Pray specifically for someone to share my house with once my current housemate leaves.

**Property**

**Austin Day**

How quickly we get used to things! When I first started to think about what changes we had made to Bethel during 2010 I drew a blank. Oh dear! Another year gone and nothing done. But then the other day Rev. David handed me a paper headed "Development Wish-list" dated June 2000 and reviewed 2002 with an update May 2005. Of twelve items on the list, eight have been done, some in the last eighteen months or so. I suppose the biggest advances have been in the public address and power point systems. Who can remember those huge loud speakers swinging about on tripods forever in the way or the projector stand so high that Becky had to stand on a stool to change the OHP sheets? Our thanks to David who is making sure we keep up with technology.

There is one improvement that we have been able to achieve in the last twelve months that is not at all obvious but is really significant. This is to obtain a gas connection to the Manse and install a central heating boiler to replace the oil fired one that had given nearly thirty years service. The heating system did not react well to the new boiler, a build up of sludge preventing proper circulation but it responded to the plumber's equivalent of anti-

cholesterol medicine.

Those of you who have had to do the penance of sitting on the benches in the balcony will be pleased to hear that this form of punishment is no longer available to the minister and deacons. However, having created what appears to be a useful area we are now unsure of how to make the best use of it. Ideas on a postcard please.

One item on the wish-list mentioned above was "theatre lighting". This we now have and it was put to good use over Christmas. We look forward to finding new ways to create different moods with this addition to our equipment.

The Design Group at the Village College asked if there was anything we could suggest for them to adopt as a project for the year. We offered them the opportunity to plan a make-over for what is now called the Compass Room. We look forward to seeing their ideas and hope that with their input we can come up with something with the "WOW" factor.

In the 1950's it was deemed prudent to provide a cycle and storage shed between the church and pond. The demolition of this facility has provided space for parking today's main form of transport. It seems also to be a test of driving skill and only the brave are willing to use it. However it does help a little in our on-going search to find ways to lessen the number of cars parked on the road.

Thank you for your support in trying to keep our church special. When Jacob awoke from sleep, he thought, "Surely the Lord is in this place"... and he called that place Bethel.

## **Treasurer's Report**

**John Snead**

We have had yet another satisfactory year from a finance point of view. With a turnover on the General Fund of over £55,000, we broke close to even compared to our budget for both our income and expenditure. Other income and expenditure brought our total turnover closer to £70,000.

We followed the same strategy for budgeting as had been successful in 2009, that of budgeting only for expenditure for items necessary to keep the church active, and which are fairly predictable; namely

- Ministry - including the pastor, the manse, visiting speakers and related expenses
- Church Property - including utilities, insurance, maintenance and cleaning
- Administration - including printing, photocopier and subscriptions

We then added target sums for Mission and Giving such that each of these was 10% of the overall total. Finally, we pitched our income requirements to cover this total.

As I said earlier, our expenditure on the so-called "Operational" items was almost exactly to budget, and I'm pleased to report that spending on Mission, 12% of the total, was somewhat higher than hoped, with Giving a little lower at 9%. Our overall income was sufficient to meet our expenditure, but I am a little concerned that the Offering part of this was

some 11% below budget; this is over £4000 short and was in fact lower than the previous year. The gap was made up by greater than expected income from lettings and donations.

But we should take heart from the following: well over £3600 was given by people in specific collections to support the appeals for the Haiti Earthquake and Pakistan Floods, in addition to around £1000 from our Giving budget. Our Gift Day raised over £6600, which was spent on a new central heating boiler for the Manse and in supporting Becky Snead, working for Wycliffe Bible Translators in Togo. This all shows that God's people at Bethel have a heart for responding to calls for help in funding His work in Swavesey and further afield.

In amongst our income was a massive £11700 paid to us by the Government under the Gift Aid scheme. This is, quite simply, the refund to the church of basic rate income tax that people who give to the church have already paid. If you are a taxpayer then have you signed up for this? It costs you nothing and the church benefits! See me (John Snead) for details

about this.

If you do not already give your offerings by standing order, then are you able to consider this? It is easy to set up using a simple form, or maybe you can do it through online banking. But perhaps you prefer the flexibility of giving each week with cash or cheque using the offering boxes? Again I can help by giving you dated envelopes to encourage regular giving.

Our budget for 2011 has now been set in the same style as recent years, and this sets a challenging 14% increase in offering income. This may sound daunting, but you may recall that in 2009 our offerings were 14% above budget and a massive 34% above the previous year's total! It has only been in the last year that offerings have been lower than hoped. Due to changes in the tax system, the amount we can reclaim under Gift Aid refunds drops this year from 28% to 25%. Do consider helping to compensate for that drop.

You might think that you've had a lot of messages from me lately encouraging you to give to the church.

Wrong! You've had messages encouraging you to give to fund God's work. Jesus and His disciples needed money in order to live and do His Father's work (and probably even had a treasurer!), and the same is true of His church today.

Below you will see a summary of the 2010 accounts and 2011 budget. By the time you read this I'm hoping the formal inspection of the 2010 Accounts will be underway and once approved, the annual statement is available for all to see - have a word with me if you'd like a copy, or in fact if you have any questions or comments about the church finances.

### **2010 Accounts**

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<b>Bank Account</b>	<b>01-Jan-10</b>	<b>31-Dec-10</b>
General	12458	8830
Development	921	596
Youth	361	324

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## **General Fund Receipts and Payments**

<b>RECEIPTS</b>	
Donations	2264
Lettings	2116
Miscellaneous	3387
Offerings	35010
Tax Refunds	11736
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54513</b>

<b>PAYMENTS</b>	
Administration	2005
Ministry	32137
Property	7498
Mission	6145
Giving	4879
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52664</b>

## **2011 General Fund Budget**

<b>INCOME</b>	
Donations	1000
Lettings	2000
Events	1500
Miscellaneous	1500

<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
Admin	2433
Ministry	31639
Church Property	11275
Mission	5668

Offerings	39894
Tax Refunds	10789
TOTAL	56683

Giving	5668
TOTAL	56683