

The background of the entire page is a photograph of the Griffithstown Baptist Church. It is a large, multi-story stone building with a prominent gabled roof. The facade features several large, arched windows with white frames. A central entrance is visible at the bottom, partially obscured by a metal fence. The overall tone of the image is slightly muted, with a blueish-grey tint.

# GRIFFITHSTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH

Annual Reports &  
Accounts for 2023

COMMERCIAL STREET  
GRIFFITHSTOWN  
NP4 5JF

# Annual Reports and Statement of Accounts

*for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023*

## **Minister:**

Rev Jon Dickerson (until May)

## **Moderator**

Rev Harry Place

## **Officers & Deacons:**

Mrs M Jones (Secretary)

Mr N Snook (Treasurer)

Mrs J Cocks

Mrs B Harris

Mrs B Humphry

Mrs S Jones

Mr K Harris

## **Independent Examiners**

Mr A Loose

Mrs S Pitten

## **Secretary's Report**

It's hard to believe it has been a year since I wrote my first report as secretary. 2023 has been a mixed year for our Church. January saw the announcement of Jon and Naomi leaving us to go to Richmond Road as their new minister. Although this was initially met with much sadness the move has strengthened the friendship between us and Richmond Road. This has led to many more joint ventures between the Churches allowing us to reach out to both the communities of Pontnewydd and Griffithstown. Richmond Road now hosts Messy Church supported by volunteers from Griffithstown, whilst we host Holiday Club supported by Richmond Road volunteers.

During the early part of the year we enjoyed the last few months of Jon's ministry and began to prepare for his departure. May saw celebrations across the country with the Coronation of King Charles III. This weekend was a joyous celebration within the life of our Church. We held our own Coronation celebrations with Afternoon Tea, fun and games. This culminated on the Sunday with Jon and Naomi's last service followed by a farewell lunch. There were many people involved in the organisation of this and I would like to personally thank all of those people for their hard work and a thoroughly enjoyable weekend. July saw the return of our annual holiday club, supported for the first time by Richmond Road. This year's club was called Pyramid Rock set in Egypt and the theme was based around the story of Joseph. Once again we saw very good attendance and everyone had a great time. It's been lovely to see two of the children and members of their families joining us regularly at Sunday services ever since. In October, we celebrated our Harvest service, followed by a Harvest lunch. This was a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon with another big thank you to all those who organised it.

As a time of pastoral vacancy approached the deacons reached out to our Regional Minister Rev Mark Fairweather-Tall for his guidance to start the process of an interregnum. He met with the deacons and chaired our Church Meetings until we found a suitable moderator. His wisdom and guidance were invaluable as we navigated the tricky waters of starting a Pastoral Vacancy. He also guided us towards our moderator Rev Harry Place. The deacons and myself would like to thank him for his help and guidance. Rev Harry Place joined us as moderator in October and we have been grateful for the experience and wisdom he brings to the role. I like to encourage all Church Members to pray for the Deacons and our Moderator as we seek God's guidance for the future of our Church.

Our pastoral vacancy has given us the opportunity to hear different preachers every week. Filling the pulpit each week is not an easy job and I would like to thank Howard Jones and Andrew Loose for their willingness to take on this role. We have been blessed to hear different perspectives and messages throughout our pastoral vacancy. I pray that we will continue to be blessed as we listen each week to what God has prepared for us.

Changes in BU rules and regulations have meant that 2023 saw an increase in paperwork and policies that were necessary to run the Church within the guidance of the law. The trustees and a number of people working with our young people attended Safeguarding Training. This is the beginning of an ongoing process to ensure we are following all current guidelines to protect our children and vulnerable adults. Our November Church meeting agreed to our new Safeguarding Policy. The policy will see a change in the way some of our Church groups, activities and procedures will function. Initially it appears like a lot of change, and we are aware that change can be challenging. However, safeguarding is the responsibility of all Church Members, it is a legal requirement and ensures the safety of everybody who enters our building. It is in place to protect the most vulnerable within our society as well as those working with them. It will be a new way of

working, but once the policies and paperwork are all in place it won't have a huge impact on the day to day running of groups. We ask that you continue to uphold all those involved in the implementing and maintaining of the policies in your prayers.

Despite the pastoral vacancy, the groups of the Church have continued to go from strength to strength. Each of the groups will have written their own reports and I don't want to repeat them. The Renew group that Naomi talked to us about last year has started alongside craft and has been a good outreach to the community. Through the links with Opening Doors Torfaen we have had a new handrail fitted down the side of the Church. This has also made other links with groups in the community. We hope that Craft & Renew will continue to meet the needs of our community and that new people will join them. Quiz nights have continued to test our general knowledge, with Howard Powell providing challenging questions. We look forward to their return during the lighter nights.

Prayer groups continue to uphold the Church in prayer during the uncertain time of pastoral vacancy. They take place on Sunday morning at 10:30am in the backroom of the Church and Wednesday at 10am via zoom. Prayer is a vital part of Church life and Church membership. You are always welcome to join a prayer meeting. There is no pressure to pray out loud, just your presence would be appreciated and valuable. So if you are able please consider supporting our Church in this vital ministry.

The work with our children and young people continues to be led by Rose, who works tirelessly each week to plan and resource both Sunday School and Sparks. The numbers on a Sunday are sporadic which makes it harder to plan for. This vital work plants seeds to maintain the future of the Church.

As we look forward to 2024 and what God has planned for us I pray that as a Church we would seek God's will and leading. We are blessed to have the guidance of a moderator who has much experience within Baptist Churches. We need to work together to be able to financially support a new minister as well as further God's Kingdom within our community.

Blessings

Michelle

## **RENEW@GBC & Craft Group Report**

We are now in our second year as a reconstituted group. Our attendance numbers are constant, often in the low twenties, as we continue to be a place for shared conversation and activity, and the quiet, meditative encounter with God during times of prayer and reflection. In this way, the objectives of the Renew Wellbeing ethos of Being Present, Being Prayerful, Being in Partnership, is being fulfilled.

This year has been a good year. Our crafting skills have produced knitted baby hats for The Grange Hospital Neonatal Unit; bags to hold drip bags for cancer patients at The Royal Gwent Hospital; a knitting project for Growing Spaces, the community group based at Nant Bran in Upper Cwmbran. Other weekly activities have included card making, craft for the Christmas Fayre, 1000-piece jigsaws, while some have been introduced to the techniques for learning the skills of crochet.

Meals form an integral part of our group; in December, we again went to The Star in Ponthir for our Christmas meal and also had two afternoon teas. The first on the final Tuesday before we stopped for the summer, and the second was a surprise celebration for Anne Withey to celebrate her significant birthday. This was complemented by a poem read by Marj Powell, written by her especially for Anne's birthday afternoon tea and to celebrate their many years of friendship.

Being in partnership with Torfaen County Borough Council as providers of a safe place and space within the community, has resulted in a new handrail down the side of the church, and a generous grant for community support use, from which resources have and will be used to aid the group benefiting the community and fulfilling its ethos. Consequently, the temporary screens around the Prayer Space, two halves of a table-tennis table covered with duvets have been replaced with collapsible wicker screens. The Prayer Space itself was re-located to the opposite corner of the room following a decluttering of redundant games equipment.

We look forward to the new year, continuing to not only maintain our numbers and deepen and broaden our own friendship, but also to welcome more from the locality to add to those who have discovered our group as a safe place, perhaps even a refuge where they have found a genuine welcome, friendship and ready conversation.

The same open invitation with which we closed last year's report is repeated, namely to join with us on a Tuesday afternoon between 1.30pm and 3.30pm and to encourage you to make us known amongst your family and friends who may be lonely, in need of some company and a lift.

Sylvia Powell and Howard Jones

# **Children's Work Report**

## **Junior Church**

The numbers on a Sunday morning are sporadic, mainly due to the fact that some of our families are shift workers. We have two groups, the Creche and the Primary sections, which includes a couple of year 7/8 comp children as well. Older teenagers who attend like to stay in the service. Many thanks to Karen Dorling who faithfully helps out each week.

## **Sparks**

The Sparks session takes place on Thursday evenings during term time and has been running since September 2022. Our regular leaders have been Rose Martin, Denise Colcombe, Karen Dorling, Ruth Osman and Marilyn Jones. We have around 10 children on the register, though numbers vary from week to week. We do not charge for the club, but have a donation box.

We play games related to the theme for the week and have Bible based stories or teaching presented using various mediums, including story books, video clips, drama, puppets, practical demonstrations etc. This is followed by a craft activity, prayer time and refreshments.

## **Topics 2023/2024**

We follow the same topics in both Sunday School and Sparks.

We began 2023 by exploring the theme of creation. Over two terms we enjoyed learning about how God made our wonderful world. In Sparks, at the beginning of the summer term, we had a family session where we shared what the children had been learning about, played games based on different aspects of creation and enjoyed party food together.

Before the summer holidays in Sparks, we had another family session where the children performed the story of The Very Selfish Elephant, which was enjoyed by everyone.

In September, we began a topic on The Fruit of the Spirit. We used a sock puppet, Squirmy the Worm, and his various puppet friends, including Clarence the Caterpillar, Milly the Monkey, Aurora the Puppy and Billy Bear, to introduce each of the nine fruit of the Spirit over the autumn term. Each of the spiritual fruit was accompanied with opportunities to enjoy edible fruit, so this went down very well! During the first few weeks, Clarence disappeared into a cocoon which was displayed each week. In October, both Sunday School and Sparks enjoyed a visit from Patch the Pumpkin and his friends, emphasising the fruit of kindness. (Pumpkin heroes is an alternative to Halloween produced by World Vision.)

Our year ended with a family Christmas Party where Sparks and Sunday School joined together. The children performed a wonderful Christmas sketch entitled 'Trimming the Tree', which Denise had put together. There was also great excitement as Clarence the caterpillar emerged from his cocoon having undergone a very dramatic change. We talked about how we too become a new creation when we accept Jesus into our lives.

The first session back in 2024 finished off the Fruit of the Spirit topic with painting butterflies to go on our display boards. Please take the time to enjoy these, one in the Sunday School room and one in the hall downstairs. For the rest of this term, we are going to be exploring The Armour of God.

Rose Martin

## **Prayer Group Report**

Dear Deacons, Members and Friends,

We have been blessed with our prayer time on a Wednesday morning. We are about 10-12 in number. We have had the privilege of praying for many people who have personally asked for prayer. It would be such a blessing if others would like to join us on a Wednesday morning from 10-10:30.

Every Blessing

Babs & Sue

## **Christmas Fayre Report**

The Christmas Fayre went well, with a constant flow of customers. The final total was £1003.03. From this we made donations to Home Mission, B.M.S, World Vision, Link to Hope, also gifts of biscuits to the housebound. Our usual Father Christmas was unable to don the suit this year, due to work commitments. A thank you to Trevor Coulstock for kindly stepping into this important role.

A big thank you for all the hard work of the workshop team, also those who helped on the morning. It takes a lot of work setting up and taking down the stalls, also the moving of large boxes, so a big thank you has to go to the men who took on this task.

Thank you to all who came to support us on the morning, next year the workshop team would appreciate seeing a few more of our church family at the Fayre, showing their support for all the hard work, such a project entails.

Janet Day

## **Bible Connect Report**

Since February 2023, Bible Connect now meets every two weeks on a Monday via Zoom. We continue to meet at 10.30 am and the study lasts about an hour.

Bible study is important for all of us. It instructs, corrects and encourages us. It deepens our understanding of God and develops our relationship with Him.

If you would like to join us, please contact me and I will give you the dates of our meetings. It would be lovely to see you.

Every Blessing

Sue

# EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH, GRIFFITHSTOWN

Financial Statement for year ended 31st December 2023

## Main Account Income & Expenditure

### INCOME:

<i>Offering</i>	£	£
Closed	12,244.70	
Open	5,710.07	
Standing Order / Bank Transfer	<u>25,630.00</u>	43,584.77

### *Donations / Miscellaneous*

Holiday Club	709.10	
Coffee Morning	632.25	
Leaving Present Rev J. Dickerson	320.00	
Weddings and Funerals	570.00	
Donation for Renew WellBeing	200.00	
World Vision	1,194.00	
Manse Rent	3,600.00	
Messy Church	39.00	
Quiz Night - Water Aid	462.20	
Torfaen Borough Council-Holiday Club	200.00	
Torfaen Voluntary for Renew	3,000.00	
Coronation Tea - Donation	30.00	
Donation - Elaine Meredith in memory	300.00	
Food Bank - Harvest	45.00	
Manse Council Tax Refund	463.40	
Manse Insurance Refund	143.01	
Probus Donations	150.00	
On Line / Card Reader Donations	<u>158.79</u>	12,216.75

### *Income Tax Recovered*

Gift Aid Declaration	<u>7,397.68</u>	<u>7,397.68</u>
		<u>63,199.20</u>

**EXPENDITURE:****NOTES:**

		£	£
Ministry	1	16,841.34	
Upkeep of Church	2	10,037.55	
Upkeep of Manse	3	7,951.25	
Home Mission		1,500.00	
BMS		1,500.00	
Donations	4	2,373.00	
Holiday Club		1,014.47	
Nic's Cleaning		763.23	
Flowers		37.75	
Sunday School		0.00	
Coffee Morning		146.69	
Messy Church		82.27	
Renew / Craft		402.80	
Miscellaneous Expenses	5	<u>4,062.75</u>	46,713.10
<i>Administration Costs</i>			
Printing / Stationery / Postage		<u>1,521.01</u>	1,521.01
<i>Other Payments</i>			
Church Kitchen / Meals / Refreshments		<u>178.94</u>	178.94
			<u>48,413.05</u>
Surplus/Deficit for the year			14,786.15
Balance Brought forward from Previous Year			<u>6,757.63</u>
Balance Carried forward at End of Year			<u>21,543.78</u>
December Bank Statement Balance			21,200.01
Uncleared/Uncashed Items			<u>-343.77</u>
			<u>21,543.78</u>

## Notes to the Accounts

1. MINISTRY	£
Pastor's Stipend	8,616.65
NIC.	1,538.70
Pension	4,490.72
Baptist Pension Shortfall	12.00
Tax	1,189.20
Moderator / Minister Expenses	50.00
Pulpit Supply	944.07
	<u>16,841.34</u>
2. UPKEEP OF CHURCH	
Utilities	5,809.67
Insurance	3,614.40
Broadband	395.82
Maintenance	217.66
	<u>10,037.55</u>
3. UPKEEP OF MANSE	
Utilities	1,755.69
Insurance	750.76
Council Tax	2,138.31
Maintenance	3,306.49
	<u>7,951.25</u>
4. DONATIONS	
World Vision	1,265.80
Cariad Kenya	600.00
Quiz Night - Water Aid	462.20
Food Bank - Harvest	45.00
	<u>2,373.00</u>

## Notes to the Accounts (contd.)

5. MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES	£
SWBA Subscriptions	245.00
BU Subscriptions	360.50
CCLI	770.28
Offering Envelopes	0.00
Waveley Fire & Security Ltd - Annual Check	175.00
Bank Charges	198.99
Church Cleaning Materials	14.65
Zoom License 2023	143.88
Proclaim License 2023	248.84
Leaving Present Rev J. Dickerson	545.70
Coronation Party & Jon's Leaving Lunch	446.41
Ubiquity - Church Website	204.00
Safeguarding Courses	180.00
Christmas Selecton Boxes / Decorations / Candles	512.51
90th B'day Card & Gift	16.99
	<hr/>
	4,062.75

# Santander Account Income & Expenditure

Description	Income	Expenditure	Balance
		B/F	45,020.95
Interest Sep 2022 to Sep 2023	258.42		45,279.37
		C/F	<u>45,279.37</u>

## Report of the Independent Examiners to the Members of Ebenezer Baptist Church, Griffithstown

In accordance with the provisions of Section 43 of the Charities Act 1993, we have examined the Receipts, Payments & Accounts of Ebenezer Baptist Church set out on Pages 1-5 relating to the Year ended 31st December 2023. We confirm that the Accounts and Statement accord with the Accounting Records of the Church and that such records satisfy the requirements of the Act. We are not aware of any matter to which attention needs to be drawn in order to obtain a proper understanding of the Accounts.

Signed .....  .....

Name: Mrs Sandra Pitten

Address:  
6 East View  
Pontypool  
NP4 5DW

Date: 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Signed .....  .....

Name: Mr Andrew Loose

Address: The Cedars  
65 Sunnybank Road  
Pontypool  
NP4 5LN

Date: 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024

### Home Mission

Income	£	Expenditure	£
Balance @ 1/1/23	11.64	Home Mission	100.00
Donations	5.89		
Boxes	60.15		100.00
Workshop	100.00	Balance @ 31/12/22	77.68
	<u>177.68</u>		<u>177.68</u>

### Baptist Missionary Society

Income	£	Expenditure	£
Balance @ 1/1/23	9.70	BMS	100.00
Boxes	5.65		
Donations	10.00		100.00
Workshop	100.00		
	<u>125.35</u>	Balance @ 31/12/23	25.35
			<u>125.35</u>

### BMS Birthday Scheme

Income	£	Expenditure	£
Balance @ 1/1/23	123.50	Cheque to BMS	300.00
Donations	335.00		
			300.00
	<u>458.50</u>	Balance @ 31/12/23	158.50
			<u>458.50</u>

### Christmas Fayre/Workshop

Income	£	Expenditure	£
Balance @ 1/1/23	902.33	Home Mission	100.00
Cash in hand @ 1/1/23	54.73	BMS	100.00
Christmas Fayre	1003.03	World Vision	36.00
		Goods	57.42
		Goods	83.22
			<u>376.64</u>
	<u>1960.09</u>	Balance @ 31/12/23	1583.45
			<u>1960.09</u>

**Craft**

<b>Income</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£</b>
Balance @ 1/1/23	88.60	Postage	33.83
Money for meal	718.60	Christmas meal deposit	165.00
		Christmas meal	421.00
			<hr/> 619.83
		Balance @ 31/12/23	187.37
	<hr/> 807.20		<hr/> 807.20

## **Membership Numbers**

<b>Membership 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023</b>	87
<b>Admissions</b>	1
	<hr/> 88
<b>Dismissals:</b>	
To Association List	17
By Transfer	4
Called Home	2
<b>Membership 31st December 2023</b>	<hr/> 65

### **Members called home:**

Joan Horton  
Vi Wallace

## **Dates for your diary**

Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> March	Good Friday	10:30am
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> March	Easter Sunday	11am
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> April	148 <sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary	11am
Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> May	Church Meeting	11am
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> May	Pentecost	11am
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> July	Holiday Club	11am
Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> July	Church Meeting	7pm
Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> September	Church Meeting	7pm
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup> September	Harvest	11am
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup> November	Remembrance Sunday	11am
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> November	Church Meeting	7pm
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> December	Carols by Candlelight	5:30pm
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> December	Carols Around the Tree	5:30pm
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Day Celebration	10:30am