

People's Hall Evangelical Church Bridgnorth

Annual Reports for 2022

Approved by membership

Annual Meeting

Wednesday 26th April 2023

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Hall', written in a cursive style.

Ministers Report, AGM, 2023

It has certainly been a busy year. Of course, we all have busyness of life in the general sense but also many have struggled with illness, bereavement, and other things. These challenges can be quite wearing at times and can be exhausting. Nevertheless, through all these trials can we not say with Samuel: ***Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.*** 1 Samuel 7:12. For, even though we may struggle greatly at times it is to the Lord that we turn and look to for help. He is always with us during our trials, even the most severe of them, even when we don't always feel it – or He ***will never leave or forsake you!***

As a church we have had a busy time, with evangelism very much to the forefront, which is very encouraging. We sow and look to the Lord that we may also reap – but these things are in His timing while we seek to patiently pray and be obedient to our Lord.

As the minister I find it encouraging to see people in the congregation pulling together to help and be there for each other and we can all pray that we continue in that way as a congregation. For each believer has their talents and we are all a part of the church, which is the people of God, none greater or lesser worth than anyone else.

It has been encouraging to see the membership grow and continue to do so – it is the Lord that builds His house, so it is to Him that we give the glory and thank for our being strengthened.

Considering the way our nation and many churches are increasingly walking away from God and promoting sin as good and good as sin we do need to be prepared as a church for difficult times. The Christians in countries like South Sudan and others will testify that God ***will never leave or forsake you*** despite what they are going through. Equally, knowing that the purpose of God is to take all His people heaven to that end they will also testify ***Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.*** That does not make such times easy and I'm sure Christians in these places must get weary and feel worn out. However, as the Lord keeps them so He will also keep us. And we can pray, that the Lord would turn our nation back to God!

May the Lord keep us as a church for the coming year and beyond, ***The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace.*** Numbers 6:22-

Elders Report

If we were to describe the year 2022 on behalf of the Peoples Hall Church, it would have to be the faithfulness of our God to us and the consistency of love for each other within the fellowship. Our Pastor Colin, wife Vicky and children are settled, and we have been blessed with faithful preaching from Colin. The Ladies' group are forming a special bond with each other.

Financially we have never been so blessed, but our Lord is always in charge of planning and the events to no. 6 early in 2023 and massive increases to heating bills in 2022 meant those funds would be needed!!

The Covid epidemic slowed down a little in the past year and we were able to be open morning and evening each Sunday. Many are still feeling the effects of Covid in their health, but the Lord continues to have His loving hand on us.

We have been blessed by new people such as Andy and Nina; Mike Davies; Fran; Matt, Rachel, Beth and Esther Fisher, all settling into regular fellowship with us, and again we thank the Lord for this.

Our missionaries David and Wilma Lyttle visited us in June, and Mark and Carol Lacey together with daughter Pam and granddaughter Esther, were with us in December for the carol concert and it was great to have fellowship with them.

Yes, 2022 was a year of great encouragement to the Elders as you will see from other reports of activities within the church, and we praise Him for all He has done for us.

Colin, Geoff, Steve and Paul

Fabric Report 2022

After all the panic of 2021 to get the manse prepared, 2022 seemed comparatively quiet, but still lots of routine jobs took place behind the scenes, as being responsible for the church & hall buildings as well as two properties is an ongoing commitment.

- The side elevation facing the street of no. 6 was repainted by Alastair and demonstrates to the local residents that we do care. Some further repairs were necessary at the manse requiring a new back door and emergency repairs to the boiler. A leaking roof has been identified and will need considerable further work this year.

Alastair has also taken on the role of fire officer, performing the monthly testing and inspections.

We had our annual Saturday work day and a lot was achieved as well as fun & fellowship. In particular the car-park vegetation was cleared and the fence repaired and strengthened. Some trees were spectacularly lopped, luckily with no health & safety executives present to witness our lack of a risk assessment! Tidying and cleaning up of the kitchen and storage cupboards also took place.

As always, we are grateful to everyone who assists in the day to day jobs, often unnoticed, but in particular we must thank the routine cleaning teams who keep the place looking so nice. It was good to have additional people joining on-board the cleaning roster and an encouragement to Marlyn who has overall responsibility.

That was last year. We could not have imagined the road traffic accident that was to take place in January this year damaging no. 6 and the inconvenience and work that this would bring us. But God directs and controls, more about this next time.

In the meantime, praise God for his provision of our resources and for giving us the wisdom to be good Stewards.

Derek, Steve.

Outreach Report

It's that time again. Report time. Looking back to see what we've done – no, to see what God has done through His people.

It all started with the Queen's Jubilee and Commonwealth Baton Relay, with children's activities, refreshments and tracts given out. We even saw the Commonwealth torch being carried.

Macmillan Coffee Morning is not just about raising money for Macmillan but also inviting people into church.

John Procktor came along with the "Anchored" Youth Event with a full day of games and Gospel sharing with children.

We had a church social evening with food and entertainment. A time we could invite friends to come along.

The Christmas Lights switch on is always a fun time with tracts, hot chocolate and cake given out.

Our visit to Danesford Grange Residential Home when carols were sung and a word was shared to the residents. It is always a blessed time.

Carols at the Co-op was a real blessing with good voices and smiles, plus opportunities to give out tracts and invitations, plus prayer.

Family fun day, a day of fun for all the family to come along, have a cup of tea, play hopscotch, have your face painted and much more. Lots of contacts made. A day God blessed us.

Our Wednesday People is always well supported and we get people coming through the door by inviting them from the bottom of the drive.

Finally, but not least, every house in Bridgnorth has received a Gospel tract. Over 5,000 tracts have been delivered.

We pray God will bless the work.

Paul Wanklin

Ladies Bible Study group- April 2022 to March 2023

The Ladies Bible study has continued to meet the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month when possible, and we have had up to 13 ladies meeting together to learn, share and pray together and for each other.

We are very thankful to all those who volunteered to lead a ladies bible study, and it has been wonderful to have some who have never led previously. We have just completed our series on Old Testament Characters where we covered Jonah, Hannah, Samuel, Abraham, Caleb, Joshua, Elijah, Achan, Saul, Daniel, Esther, David and Moses. The studies were deep, reminding us to love our enemies, justice is with the Lord, saying yes to God, Praying in pain and more.

This year we held social events again, with some game nights and a different event for Christmas where we were welcomed into the Fishers' home, with a bring-and-share buffet, and tea served to the Ladies. Rachel gave a little talk sharing some of what the Lord had been doing in their lives since moving to Telford, and she then read her beautiful poem which touched us all. We are also very pleased to have Beth now join us for our studies.

We attended the EFCC's Women's Conference again this year on 24th & 25th March with 9 of our ladies attending and providing cakes, cupcakes and kindly also by some who were not able to attend this year. We were really blessed by the talks from Helen Thorne (Director of Training and Resources at Biblical Counselling UK) on 1 Peter 4 v 1-19 "A Call to Faithfulness", and so we will be going through these recordings at our April and May meetings, for those who could make it and to be blessed again! Please pray for us to grow as Women in Christ, as we Trust Him, and to be Faithful to our Lord.

Vicky

Carers' Report

The Carers' meeting is held on 2nd Monday in the month, in the Church Hall. We talk about drugs and drink addiction. We sometimes have guest speakers. We go out to share news like having meals or garden centres. There is about eight people who attend.

Lynne Beddow and Eve Lamont

Sunday School Report

During last year we have been looking at Moses and Jesus work on earth. We have been teaching the children the importance of trust in Jesus, living in obedience, and how we can trust God to help us in our lives.

The week before Christmas we had our Christmas Party, we had fun and games and Paul came to round it off for us.

Thank you for all of those who pray for us, please continue, as teachers we need your prayers when we study. The children need your prayers that they may learn to trust in God and live their lives through Him.

Ruth Garbett

Media and communication report

We have made a purchase of a new headset mic for when somebody is leading on Sundays instead of the using just the mic by the lectern. The new mic is a headset mic which is located on the cheek meaning the audio is picked up better than a lapel mic as it is closer to the mouth.

I would like to express thanks to Andrew and Nina who have helped with the audio-visual side, once a month, over the past year.

Over the past year on Sermon Audio we have had 1998 total plays with visits from multiple countries like the United States and Australia but also ranging to countries like the Philippines, India and the United Arab Emirates. The most listened to sermon has had 95 listens.

Andi Garbett

Wednesday People 2022

We are constantly amazed at how God is blessing our regular Wednesday People coffee mornings. We continue to meet twice a month in the church hall and find that whatever the weather we have people coming in to join us.

We try to make the room look as welcoming as possible, tablecloths and flowers on each table to make it look bright and cheerful and we all do our best to make everyone feel at home whether they are visiting for the first time or come regularly.

Once the room is set up, we sit down for a time of prayer before visitors arrive, asking God to bless our gathering and to help us in our interactions with the visitors and with one another. We always acknowledge that this is the Lord's work and not ours.

We have a dedicated team of volunteers and must acknowledge the contribution made by Ruth and Derek who have been stalwarts right from the day we first began this work. Alastair has joined us and regularly stands at the bottom of the church drive, in all weathers, inviting people in.

We have continued the use of wrapped biscuits for reasons of hygiene, and we also try to limit access to the kitchen for safety and hygiene reasons. Margaret regularly brings some of her lovely baked goodies which are always very popular.

The main aim of these meetings is of course the Gospel and friendship, and we do have some good conversations with our visitors and sometimes we have opportunities to pray with them. At our last meeting of 2022, we had a very well attended Christmas themed morning and gave out little gift bags with a card, a tract, and a small gift.

Thank you to all those who come and help in any way.

If you are free on any first or third Wednesday each month, do come along and enjoy fellowship with us. Also, if anyone is available and would like to be part of our little team, please speak to Terri or Mary.

Terri Childs, Mary Tull.

Good News Papers 2022

In these times it is often difficult to have opportunities to share the gospel, as people seem to have little wish to listen. Contact on a one to one basis is therefore important, but so is the use of printed material such as tracts and the Good News papers (GNB), as these can often have access into homes and to people otherwise unreachable.

Currently we purchase and distribute 125 copies each month and this helps to support the wider ministry of the GNB organisation, particularly their taking the gospel and Christian witness into the prison system.

During 2022 Bob Paggett had to step down from distributing the papers but we are grateful for his years of faithful service. Marlyn has kindly taken on his 'round' and others have also recently expressed an interest in joining the team in 2023. But there is room for more! We only reach a small part of low town at present and would like to extend this.

How do we measure the success or otherwise of this ministry? It is difficult, but popping a paper through someone's door often leads to a conversation introducing ourselves, the church and what we are about. On at least one occasion we arrived very shortly after a family bereavement and were able to share comfort. Others have made a point of saying how much they appreciate the read each month.

We believe God would have us continue this work and we must be faithful as his servants.

The Good News Paper Team