



Wymondley Baptist Church Annual Report 2025



Leadership

At the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in March 2024, Judith Jones-Nugent was elected to serve as a Deacon for a term of 3 years. Craig Bacon was also re-elected to serve as a Deacon for a further year. Joanna Bacon continued to serve as Treasurer.

The Trustees met monthly between January and March 2024 and then the Deacons met 6 times between April and November 2024. The meeting held in September was a full Trustees meeting, with Joanna attending as well.

In addition, the Trustees met on 16 November at Tilehouse Street Baptist Church, Hitchin for an away day, which was facilitated by Rev. Andrew Henton Pusey from Walsworth Road Baptist Church, Hitchin. At the away day we considered the Church's purpose, our qualities and the short-term vision for the Church.

The theme for the year for the Sunday services up until Easter was taken from our verse for the year.

Then Jesus asked, "But who do you say I am?" Simon Peter spoke up, "You are the Messiah, the son of the living God.

Matthew 16 verses 15-16

This was supported by Bible passages from throughout Matthew's gospel.

From April 2024 we moved to meeting for worship on the first Sunday of the month, as had been agreed at the Church Members' Meeting in January 2024. We continued to welcome visiting speakers to lead our services and they were asked to bring a message as they were led by the Holy Spirit. We give thanks for the visiting speakers who lead our services throughout the year.

We held the Carol Service on 15 December 2024, to which a number of visitors attended following Christmas cards being delivered in the villages and Christmas chocolates and booklets being given to the children staying at Needham House.

We continued to offer a live feed of the Sunday services on Zoom most months and a small number connect each week. We give thanks to Bryan Field, Jonathan McCarley and Bob Adams who played at the services up until March 2024. Bryan stepped down from regularly playing piano from February, in preparation for him and Jean moving to Biggleswade, after he had faithfully served for about 20 years. We also thank Mike Kershaw and Tom Nichol, who have come to play piano for us later in the year. Craig also led the music on occasion in 2024.

The congregation were encouraged to take part in an Advent prayer challenge during December 2024. A bookmark was produced to promote the challenge.

We also held the following events during the year:

- Shared cake as a congregation after the service on Mothering Sunday
- Placed flowers in the cross outside the Chapel on Easter Sunday morning
- Hosted an Olympics Family Fun Day at Wymondley School in July
- Gave gifts to Hitchin Foodbank and Wymondley Parish Pantry, and had a picnic lunch in the hall for Harvest
- Invited friends to the Carol Service and opened the Chapel for the Nativity Procession during Advent

At the beginning of May 2024 we took part in Thy Kingdom Come and followed a prayer map as we prayed for family and friends in the 10 days between Whitsun and Pentecost. Thanks to Joanna for organising this.

The Church supports 2 members of the Kingdom Fund, both financially and through prayer. The members of the Kingdom Fund are PHASE and Andy Partington. In addition we continue to share prayer requests from Will and Lynne Andrews, Antonia and Adrian Brixey and Hector and Helen Antelo.

In June we started to meet on the third Sunday of the month for a While We Wait prayer meeting. We have explored different ways to pray together as a congregation and spent time thinking about Bible passages related to waiting on God.

We wrote to a number of other churches and contacts at the start of 2024 to explore working with them in the Wymondleys. We met with leaders from Walsworth Road Baptist, St Mary's Little Wymondley, Longmeadow Evangelical Church, and Hannah and Nathan Mellor. These discussions did not move forward, except for receiving prayer support and Walsworth Road Baptist Church helped us organise the Olympics Family Fun Day.

As we look into 2025, we have decided to add a Sunday morning Bible Study meeting. This is being started following the Trustees' away day, when it was identified that Bible Study was one of the things that used to characterise us as a Church. This will mean that we will move to meeting for the first three Sundays of each month.

Finally, many thanks to all those people who have kept in contact with others through phone calls, letters and emails during the year and who serve in many different roles. We especially thank Jan Crittenden and Joanna who have done many of the administrative tasks required, in the absence of a Church Secretary.

Craig Bacon and Judith Nugent-Jones

Safeguarding

There were no DBS checks due in 2024 however two checks were completed for new members. Four people attended training, two at level 2 and two at level 3 for Trustees

There have been no incidents reported this year.

Judith has taken on the role of safeguarding trustee and we plan to hand over some of the safeguarding admin to her when we have the time.

Joanna Bacon

Designated Person for Safeguarding

Secretarial

Jan Crittenden has continued in the role of booking the Sunday speakers in 2024, for which we thank her. Many of the other tasks of the Church Secretary have been covered by Joanna, for which we are very grateful.

Jean Kidd and Sarah Creasey joined the membership during 2024.

Bob Adams resigned from membership at the end of April 2024, in order to start a new work in Hitchin.

The thanksgiving service for Robert (Bob) Bacon was held on 25 September 2024.

The hall was used by the Table Tennis Club on Monday evenings until the end of March 2024 and the chapel and hall were used by the Seventh Day Adventist Church on Saturday mornings until the end of February 2024.

Baptist Union

Mary Moody, CBA Regional Minister, continued to meet with the Trustees on several occasions and is available to support us if needed. Mary and the CBA are continuing to support the Trustees, as we try to decipher the Ultimate Trust for the church, and the church members as we make decisions about the future.

Joanna Bacon

Churches Together in Hitchin

Churches Together continue to support joint initiatives across Hitchin.

I continue to connect with the Youth Forum meetings that occur bi-monthly. This gives me a chance to share about our prayer needs and be encouraged by the work with children, families and young people across the town.

Outreach

It's Monday

It's Monday continued to meet weekly in the hall until March 2024 led by Jonathan McCarley. The group decided to continue to meet as an independent group moving forward, following the ending of all weekday church activities.

First Tuesday Coffee & Chat

Will and Lynne have continued to host this gathering at the Rump and Wade, in Stevenage. In light of the ending of the church's weekday activities from March, Will was contacted to inform him, but he said that he and Lynne were happy to meet informally once a quarter, as it may be an opportunity for people to meet together.

Due to Will's health issues they only met a few times last year, including in June, October, and December.

The Cool Place (With A Warm Welcome)

The Cool Place (formally Warm Space) continued to meet weekly until Thursday 14th March when they closed with a meal at the Green Man. This coincided with Bryan and Jean Field's move to Biggleswade as well as the closing of the church's weekday activities.

Olympics Family Fun Day

On Saturday 13th July 2024, we held a sports day and social tea for the Little Wymondley Villagers and as an outreach to the asylum people at Needham House. It was a joint venture with Walsworth Road Baptist Church in Hitchin. The venue was at the junior school in Little Wymondley. The week before I met with Helen Bainbridge (youth worker at WRBC) and the school headmistress, to do a safety report and to survey the field area that we were allowed to use.

Invitations were given out and catering was arranged with Shirley and Janet from WRBC. The team rose to the occasion with a well provided food table, drinks and equipment for the activities/ sports and manpower for car parking and moving things etc. Unfortunately, not many people turned up to participate, although the weather was good.

It was a good idea and maybe was a 'dry run' for other events.

Jean Kidd

Fabric

The major spend this year was the replacement of the hall gutter on the main door side, following cleaning of all the gutters. The hall has also been treated for woodworm, and the church and hall electrics were also tested and certified for another 5 years. Jean Kidd and Judith completed the buildings risk assessment at the end of the year and remedial work will progress through 2025 to make the buildings safer for people to use.

Due to the reduced use of the church and the hall from April, we have reduced the amount of cleaning, however Justine has been diligently keeping the buildings clean and communicating any issues.

During the year various small items have been fixed by trades-people or members, thank you to those who have helped with this.

We continue to look out for a local 'odd jobs' person who would be able to fix problems and help with maintenance around the church and hall.

Joanna Bacon

Finance

The summary of the accounts is shown in Appendix 1, these are currently with the Independent Examiner for checking.

Gifts to speakers have continued to be by bank transfer and all bills are paid online. The majority of giving is now online and if anyone would like to do this, please contact me so we can get it set up, either for one off or regular giving. I am also grateful that our Independent Examiner agreed to continue this year.

Due to the changes to the church and the reduction in use of the hall and services, the finances have changed, although not significantly.

In April we were sent a gift from Gwen's family and from Christchurch Hitchin in memory of Gwen, this is held in the general fund.

At the end of 2024 the church funds were as follows:

Church General Fund: £19249

Leader Fund: £75017

It was agreed at the AGM to close the Kingdom Fund and instead give 10% from the General Fund. The Kingdom Fund was closed in April when we sent £367.50 to PHASE, W. Andrews and A. Brixey and £300 to A. Partington and H. Antelo. They are all very grateful for the contributions. We will continue to support the Partingtons and Phase along with Home Mission from the General Fund.

Monthly averages (including Gift Aid claims):

		2024	2023	2022
General Fund	Income	£1283 ³	£1397 ¹	£806
	Expenses	£934 ⁴	£798	£789
Leader Fund	Income	£92 ²	£590	£590
	Expenses	£0	£0	£18

¹Giving, Gift Aid claims and donations for use of the hall were all significantly higher than previous years

² Bank Interest only

³ Not including legacies

⁴ Includes giving to mission from General Fund since April

Thank you to everyone who contributes financially to the work of the church.

If you contribute and pay tax, but have not completed a Gift Aid form, please let me know and I can send you a form so we can claim an extra 25% on your gift. If you have previously signed a Gift Aid form and your tax situation changes, please let me know so I can keep the records up to date.

Joanna Bacon
Treasurer