

CORNERSTONE

Hythe United Reformed Church

Annual Reports : March 2025



Families Matter

of Hythe URC



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CORNERSTONE

Hythe United Reformed Church



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CHURCH SECRETARY'S REPORT

I think that after only a year or so I have somehow got used to the idea that we now have a King as head of our country – perhaps because it's become the status norm and doesn't really impact my life much anyway! Which makes me wonder whether we too often take our God and King of Kings for granted as part of our status norm rather than the one who continues to sustain and bless us as individuals and as a fellowship of His church in so many ways - we have so much to thank Him for!



Our worship continues to be prime among the areas of our church life in which we are blessed, challenged and encouraged by the excellent preachers that have shared God's Word with us. There is a strong feeling that we have grown spiritually as a fellowship of God's people and have become more dependent on the working of the Holy Spirit amongst us. We are particularly grateful to George Gibson for compiling our preaching programme, to Jytta James, who books the preachers and to the leaders of our worship week by week. Drama Llamas have also provided a fresh look at some topics, and we now have an all-age service most months giving greater participation for all ages into our worship. Services of prayer and healing have also been much appreciated.

During the year, particularly significant teaching and fellowship events that blessed our fellowship were the Revelation course from May to July and the Church Weekend Away in November, both lead in such an engaging way by Doug Barnett, to whom we are continually grateful.

I'm now pleased to report that our main building repairs project has finally been completed (apart from one toilet roll holder!) and the final account paid. So, we're very grateful to Terry Pearce for seeing all this through. Of course, we still have the loan from Synod to repay but this is currently on course to be made early.

During the year it has been great to welcome four new Church Members. Sadly though, some dear members and friends have died. We give thanks for their lives, service and witness over the years.

Some members have moved away or to other fellowships where we pray they will continue to be blessed, and several others have been removed from the list after a long period of absence. So, at the end of 2024 our membership stood at 94. There are, however, several friends playing an active part within our fellowship who are not Church Members, so if you are one of them and you feel led to make a commitment to Jesus Christ and the life and witness of our church, please speak to me or one of the Elders.

At our AGM on 26th March, we need to elect one new elder. Angela Rawcliffe will be standing down at the AGM as she is moving out of the area. We thank Angela so much for her dedicated service in so many ways. Please pray that the right person will be nominated and elected to serve in this way. Nomination forms (available from the Church Office) need to be returned to me by Sunday 16th March.

We have been without a stipendiary minister for just over four years, but thankfully, it has now been agreed that Cornerstone Hythe will form a 'cluster' with Immanuel Southbourne to share one minister. So, the process to seek a new minister has begun and an Interim Moderator has been appointed – Revd Andy Hall, who some of you may know well! We now need to produce a Pastorate Profile which will then be combined with one from Immanuel Southbourne for subsequent approval by the Synod Ministries & Learning Committee. The vacancy is then declared and submitted to the URC Moderators meeting, where potential candidates are alerted and the vacancy made known across the URC. All of this will take quite a while, so we need to be patient and pray that God will lead the right person to us to be our next minister.

I'm therefore particularly thankful that we have such a faithful and dedicated team of Elders and Leaders together with all who serve the church so well in such a variety of different ways. The support and service given to the church and to me over the year has been wonderful and it's an honour and blessing to be part of His Church and share in His ministry. As leaders we don't always get it right, and are sorry for that, but despite such failures our forgiving God continues to bless and challenge us as individuals and as a church. I continue to feel a sense of excitement and anticipation as to what God has yet in store for us and pray that He will equip us all for the next part of the journey with Him!

With every blessing, *Richard Hall*

WORSHIP MINISTRY

Making provision for Sunday worship and encouraging creativity in worship throughout the life of the church

Leader and contact details:

Nick Tustian: E-mail: worship@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk



To try and sum up a year of worship in just a few words is very difficult, as looking back at 2024 so much has happened. It's also easy to think that worship is simply confined to what happens on Sunday mornings. When we think of worship, our first thoughts may indeed turn to our regular Sunday services but, in reality, everything we do and everything recorded in this AGM booklet is simply the ways we seek to honour God. We should be immensely thrilled at the many,

different and varied ways we worship our wonderful and ever faithful God.

In terms of our Sunday worship, we have again been blessed with an incredible programme of teaching that has been delivered to us in a myriad of different styles and approaches. The themes have ranged from Prayer, Spirit Filled Church, Life of Moses and Philippians as well as special events such as Easter and All Age and Healing services which have become a regular feature. We have had services led and preached by over 30 different people and to see so many come forward from within our Church is a real delight.

Instrumental in putting the programme together and arranging for the leaders/preachers are George Gibson and Jytta James. We are so grateful for their dedication and commitment as without them we would not have such an amazing programme and such a varied number of gifted and talented preachers.

A massive thank you also to Emma and Drama Llamas for the variety they have brought to our morning worship. I think we've really seen the drama move on in the last 12 months. The simpler format with less reliance on microphones has made a huge difference and has enriched our services even more.

If I tried to put together a comprehensive list of everyone involved in making our worship possible, I would inevitably leave out some very important people. So, I won't even try but I do want to mention our amazing technical team. Every week this skilled and dedicated team ensure our services run smoothly with sound and videos and that they are always broadcast online so that those that can't attend Church can be part of our worship. I know from the regular feedback I get how important these streamed services are to so many people.

The result of all this is that we are seeing more and more people come to the Church for Sunday worship. The congregation is growing and, more importantly, not just in numbers. The spiritual growth is just so exciting as we are seeing the real impact that our worship is having on people and their journey of faith. God is doing some amazing things in our worship, and we should be very excited for the future.

So, what of the future. We will I suspect be phasing out most of the video services as we now have sufficient preachers to cover every service in person. I would love to think that at some point we will be able to have more "live music" as a regular part of our weekly services. We are so fortunate to have the skills and talents of Kirsty once a month, but it would be great to also have a Worship Group to provide even more variety to our music and singing.

Just recently we have started to make the monthly service plans available to everyone. Worship is at the heart of what we do, and it is a very genuine invitation to you all to come forward with your thoughts and ideas. Nothing thrills me more than when someone approaches me with an idea for something to be included in a service. Please continue to do so.

Most importantly though we continue to be open to God's plans for our worship. We will put our faith in him and look forward to what he has planned for us.

God Bless, *Nick Justian*



DRAMA LLAMAS



Drama Llamas is our all age drama group which has now been running for three years and the last year has seen a number of fundamental changes. We continue to take an active role in our worship and our outreach ministry in the

local community. As well as performing regular short plays in our services as an introduction to sermons, we contribute regularly to the Cornerstone newsletter and support Light Years with their services behind the scenes.

In 2024, Drama Llama's productions included the following:

- Eight Service performances including the Carol service
- Nativity Tableau, working closely with other local churches
- Murder Mystery fundraising dinner.

This is slightly less than we performed in 2023 and is a more realistic achievement for our group.

As always, our year ended with a really busy time for us. Nick took on the responsibility for the Nativity Tableau which worked really well. A personal highlight for me was our drama for the Carol Service with Naomi and Bobby.. They were both very committed to their performances and were able to bring the sketch to life.

Our Nativity Service is always a wonderful opportunity to work closely with Light Years and this year was no different. Light Years chose to perform a narrative based on a carol which worked very well bearing in mind the lack of rehearsal time.

I continue to write a regular article for our newsletter with an update on our productions. The articles are written to raise the profile of Drama Llamas although their purpose has changed over time as they also offer the opportunity to reflect on God's word. I have started to include a reflection on my bible readings which are not always directly related to Drama Llamas although I do attempt to keep it on track. I have been approached by a number of people who have given me feedback regarding the articles which I find very encouraging.

Last year we reported that some of our members had stepped away from Drama Llamas so 2024 was an opportunity for us to reflect and

regroup. Our group is much smaller now which makes rehearsing considerably easier to organise. As a result, our performances are becoming slicker and more professional. Bobby has been helping me with writing the scripts and is able to bring my initial draft to life with humour and purpose. Naomi has also become a regular member of our group and her contribution has helped us to raise our standards considerably. As a result, we have been able to deliver more polished performances which we hope are well received. We have also adopted a very flexible approach which seems to be working well. We are always looking for new members so if you are interested in being part of Drama Llamas, I'd love to hear from you.

Plans for 2025:

This year we plan to continue performing regular sketches in the All Age services, working with our Light Years team. We are aware that our team have commitments outside of Drama Llamas which will mean that we will need to work flexibly and be realistic about what we can achieve. We have considered using miming as an option as this would mean no lines need to be learnt, however it still requires people to be able to attend rehearsals. Our goal for this year is to expand our group so that we have a larger team working together which in turn will hopefully, take the pressure off everyone.



Thank you all for your on-going support with Drama Llamas.

Emma Borley



PRAYER MINISTRY

Nurturing the church's prayer life. Maintaining a cover of prayer and finding creative opportunities to develop this more effectively.

Leader and contact details:

Jo Pearce E-mail: prayer@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk



Prayer is the backbone to our church's life. God our Father expects us to come to Him with whatever needs we have, our church as a whole, or as individuals. Our Worship has included a variety in our intercessory prayers, giving each of us an opportunity to contribute as we feel led.

Each Sunday, members of the Prayer Team are available after Worship for anyone to receive individual prayer for any needs they may have.

On the 5th Sunday of the month we have introduced Healing Prayer for the whole congregation as part of our worship service. this is usually led by Revd. George Gibson.

The Monday Morning Prayer Meeting is attended by 6-8 people and is a time for us to remember our concerns for the World and individuals. These are often communicated through the Prayer Spider and requests posted on our Prayer Board in the Foyer.

On Wednesday Mornings there is another prayer time organised by Margaret Yapp to specifically pray for our church.

Do think about joining us on Mondays at 10am or Wednesdays at 8.30am, you will be most welcome.

Thanks are due to Wendy Axton and all members of the Prayer Team in the part they play in providing the Prayer Focus for our monthly Cornerstone News and to Joy Funnell for managing the Prayer Spider requests.

Recently on a Saturday morning, Revd. George Gibson led us on the subject of “Great Expectations of the Prayer and Healing Ministries”. 26 attended. Lots of open discussion took place with people sharing experiences – we expect to continue this theme shortly.

The annual World Day of Prayer 2025 for this area took place in our church on Friday March 7th. The service was prepared by the Women of the Cook Islands entitled, “I made you Wonderful”.

The Waterside House of Prayer (WHOP) which meets at St Andrew’s Church, Dibden Purlieu is going from strength to strength. The Chapel where they meet (to the right side of the Church) now opens onto a prayer garden which was completed in the summer. Meetings take place weekday mornings from 8am - 9am and also on Wednesday mornings from 11:45am - 1:00pm. Participants come from most churches on the Waterside and anyone is welcome to come and use the small prayer garden.

“Pray in the Spirit on all occasions, with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep praying for all the Lord’s people”.

Jo Pearce



EVANGELISM & FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY

Presenting the Gospel and bringing people together

Finding creative ways to present the Gospel and for people to meet and find friendship and support with each other, thereby enabling opportunities leading to personal faith in Christ.

Leader and contact details:

Beverley Hall : E-mail: bevhall@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk

Looking back over the last year, there have been many good events to celebrate, and a few things that have not done so well and needed change.

Easter. This was a good occasion with Nick and Bobby doing a drama and Serena (from St Johns) leading the proceedings. It is so good having several churches coming together, Family church, St Johns, St Andrews, Lighthouse, and Cornerstone.

Christmas. It was felt that our outreach event at the Michaelmas Fayre on 30th November was very successful with lots of people happy to receive Christmas greetings. What happened on our outreach day on 14th December with a nativity drama and carol singing was really good, but it was not that well supported and the number of people in Hythe was just so much smaller than at the Michaelmas Fayre. Everyone felt that the better day to do our outreach was as part of the Michaelmas Fayre because there were so many more families about. This will be explored for Christmas 2025.

The Foyer. Days when the foyer was open and serving coffee and tea had dwindled to only two or three a week. By the end of the year we found that people had stopped dropping in as they did not know when it was open. Several people felt very strongly that there was a need to revitalise the foyer and open every day of the week from the New year. So more 'baristas' were recruited and the foyer has been open every morning for several weeks and this has proved to be very worthwhile. Most days people from the church family drop in but we also get people dropping in off the street, for warmth, a chat or a good cup of coffee. A big thank you to all those who have volunteered to help staff the foyer enabling us to open every day of the week.

With a renewed Foyer it was thought that a new name would help to make it a more welcoming space. 'Brew Corner' had been suggested but created some controversy, so after discussion of numerous other names '**Cornerstone Cuppa**' was suggested and agreed by all. The yellow teapot will be rejuvenated and the new name painted on it. The availability of Wi-Fi was thought to be attractive when advertising Cornerstone Cuppa.

Walks. Walks are always well supported with lunch to finish as an added attraction. Sadly the one for this new year had to be cancelled due to bad weather, but the lunch still went ahead and was a good time of fellowship. It is hoped, weather permitting, to do this walk at Easter and find a different venue for our lunch.

Swanage trip. This was greatly enjoyed by the seven who went and definitely something to be repeated. The group parked at Norden, catching the steam train to Swanage, eating lunch together in the band stand, doing our own thing, shopping, walking, swimming or just sitting on the beach; then meeting up for a cuppa before our train journey back to our cars and home. It was a very enjoyable day and we hope to organise a trip again this year on 5th July, possibly hiring a small coach, hopefully encouraging more people to join us.

Our annual Barbecue went well with a good number attending and the weather managed to stay fine - not too hot, but just right for sitting around the garden. This is always a very happy social event and will be repeated again on July 19th.

Church Weekend away. This year we held a weekend away at the Greenhouse Centre in Bournemouth. This was attended by 25 people, and led by Doug Barnett, who provided some renewing and challenging teaching. It was a great time of fellowship in a comfortable location with excellent food. It all went very smoothly and God blessed our time together. Another weekend is to be planned for 2026 or 2027.

Picnic Lunches. They are a really good time of fellowship but just recently the lunches have not been so well supported. The addition of puzzles at one session was very well received, so this will be tried again, eating first then puzzling or playing board games. It would be very helpful to have a few people to help organise these sessions perhaps with fresh ideas, but they will continue to run at present.

Activity mornings. Although these were much enjoyed by the children who attended, they have not continued since September 2024. This is

mainly due to difficulty finding helpers and the amount of time taken up in preparing for the mornings.

The year has been challenging but we have sensed God blessing all we have tried to do. Many thanks to all those who have helped with and supported the various events organised. We pray that in the coming year God will guide us as we plan and look to the future.

TABLE TOP SALES

We have continued through 2024 to hold Table Top sales fortnightly with short breaks in August and December. Sadly we have said goodbye to Trevor Mead (for health reasons) who has faithfully manned the electrical stall for many years. Trevor was particularly good at engaging in conversations with people and many men came straight in to his tables for a chat before considering what they might buy. Our grateful thanks go to him and we continue to pray for his health situation.

At the end of the year two people who helped with setting up and packing away also resigned so we have been asking for help since. A couple of people have volunteered for which we are very thankful but it is still a big task for few people on Monday evenings and Tuesday lunchtimes. So we are still hoping that others may come forward. The need is Monday evenings before the fortnightly Table top sales between 7pm and 8pm to get all the goods out of the cupboard and on to tables and on Tuesday from 12noon to 1pm to pack it all away again. So if you feel you could spare an hour regularly or occasionally we would be glad to hear from you.

Table Top continues to provide much needed funds as you will see elsewhere in this report book, for the building repairs and the outreach of our church. But beyond this are the relationships being built with many folk. Those of you who call in on Table Top days provide the welcome that is needed for so many, so well done.

We are also grateful to those who donate good quality things for us to sell. Those that come regularly love to see new items for sale so please continue to do so and encourage others who may be moving or de-cluttering.

Please contact one of us if you are able to offer any form of help.

Joan Shewry, Richard and Bev Hall

HYTHE ACTIVE EXERCISE GROUP

Hythe Active has continued each week on Thursday at 10.00am in the hall, with an average of about 18 attendees (we have room for 24). The attendees are a mixture of church members and people from outside the church. Our instructor brings a light touch to exercising which participants enjoy, and most stay for coffee afterwards.

You can do as much or as little of the exercises as you choose, and some attendees remain seated. Should you come? Yes, if you want to reduce your chances of a fall, and stay strong and flexible. It's an enjoyable time, come along and try it, and bring a friend. There is no charge, just a small donation.

David Yapp

MEN@CORNERSTONE

Between 15 and 20 of us men and older youth met on a Saturday morning for breakfast seven times during 2024. We enjoyed fresh coffee, tea, fruit juices, cereal, toast and a Full English cooked breakfast.

At our breakfast morning in July, David Yapp gave a very interesting talk on "Could Hydrogen be the key to Net Zero Electricity Generation"? In September, Nick Tustian spoke to us on a subject headed, "It's a Dog's Life", where he shared with us the amazing work of the charity "Pets as Therapy". We even got to meet Nick's dog Kali who is a therapy dog.

In July, some of us went to watch Hampshire play in a T20 cricket match against Somerset, unfortunately we were well beaten but a fun afternoon was had by all.

The Men@Cornerstone team of myself, George Gibson, Jonathan Russell and Andy Turnpenny are looking forward to another year of good food and fellowship at the breakfasts. We also hope to arrange a couple of social events such as a trip to the cricket again and also, hopefully, a skittles evening.

Please pray for us during 2025 as we continue to meet together. Pray that our friendships with each other and our relationship with God will continue to grow.

Dave Symmonds

WOMEN'S GUILD



We meet twice a month on the second and fourth Thursdays, from 2.15pm until 3.30pm. We usually have a speaker at the first meeting each month, and a more casual meeting on the second. We have always had a Bring and Buy table (in aid of our charity) at the second meeting each month, but lately we have been having one at each meeting.

Our membership stands at 22 and we have an average attendance of 18. Financially we had suffered from less people at our meetings and fewer meetings, but with some changes we have made this year our finances are much healthier. Each year we decide on a charity to support and this year it was National Coastwatch at Lepe and Andrew Walking came and gave us an interesting talk about their work.

During the year there are certain occasions that are permanently built into our programme:

Our AGM takes place in February each year, and this year Peter Blasby took the chair for us. All the main post holders and tea convenor were re-elected, and our two committee members were serving their 2nd year. **Easter Afternoon**, which is always special, was led by Revd George Gibson.

We celebrated our **Anniversary** in May with a service and had invited Revd Lee Davies to be our speaker. Sadly he was unwell but we were delighted to welcome Serina Merritt in his place. In the past we have had a full afternoon tea following the service, but as we are all getting older and unable now to cope with this, we decided to just have refreshments in the foyer with tea/coffee and cake. This worked well and was enjoyed by us all. We also cancelled our **August Cream Tea** for the same reason.

This year our **Christmas Lunch** was a bring and share meal with everyone bringing something from a prepared list of required food, and all taking on some little job during the afternoon so that the work didn't fall on the few. It was a most enjoyable occasion and worked well.

During the year we have had some really interesting meetings including a talk on therapy dogs by Nick Tustian when we met his therapy dog; embroidery by Pat Dudley; a talk on some history of Hythe; Hythe Pier

Heritage Association; and some homegrown afternoons, all of which we thoroughly enjoyed.

As we look forward into 2025 we are hoping to increase our membership, and also that some younger people will be interested in joining us. We are not a old ladies club – but a group of women who enjoy an afternoon together and we would welcome anyone of any age who would like to come along and bring a new spark of life to our meetings.

We thank all those who have helped us during the year, as speakers and in many other ways. We are grateful for your support. We thank our committee for their loyalty and hard work, without them the Guild would not be able to continue. And most of all we thank God for being with us and guiding us along the way.

Joy Funnell

WOMEN'S GUILD BALANCE SHEET FOR 2024

INCOME	£	EXPENDITURE	£
Balance b/f	623.73	Teas	32.83
General Fund £194.27		Speakers / Meetings	129.00
Charity Fund £427.46		Cards, Flowers & Gifts	11.20
		Christmas Dinner	33.91
Collection	454.09	Miscellaneous (Admin)	9.80
Christmas Dinner	33.91	Charity	
Miscellaneous	0.00	Piggles Trust 2023	500.00
		Donations:	
Charities		URC Benevolent Fund	<u>50.00</u>
Piggles Trust 2023	72.54	Total Expenses	766.74
National Coastwatch 2024	423.54	Lloyds Bank Current a/c	845.87
Praizin' Hands Puppets closed	(2.00)	Un-cleared Cheque 964	(6.80)
	<u>Total 1605.81</u>		<u>Total 1605.81</u>

BUILDING AND FABRIC MINISTRY

Maintenance of buildings, fixtures and fittings. Arranging planned and other repair work, routine maintenance and decoration of the church.

Leader and contact details:

Richard Hall buildings@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk

This is a report I was hoping not to have to write, but after Terry Pearce stepped down last year after umpteen years of faithful service as the Building & Fabric team leader, we have not yet been able to appoint a new leader. If this is a roll you might be able to do, or you know of someone who might, please have a chat with me. The tasks involved have been split into several areas with people responsible for each area, as follows:

Area	Person Responsible
Regular servicing – external resources	Nick Tustian as contact person
Regular toilet cleaning	Angela Rawcliffe (paid)
Plumbing & Electrical repairs, using external resources as necessary	David Yapp
Descaling/re-salting of kitchen equipment	Mikaela Lee
Ad-hoc repairs using internal or external resources as necessary	Richard Hall as contact person
Regular vacuuming /cleaning of areas	Named person for each area
Baptism preparations	Dave Symmonds & Jonathan Russell
Church Keys	Richard Hall / Terry Pearce
Safety Officer	Richard Hall

Thank you to all these people and all who have adopted a room/area to keep clean. Room 2 and the crèche still need someone, so let me know if this could be you! A very big 'thank you' goes to Angela for her stalwart efforts in cleaning – and as Angela is moving away, we're now seeking another cleaner.

The major Repairs Project contract has at last been completed and the final account paid. However, we're still seeking a contractor to do some fine pointing and brickwork around the central entrance door.

With the change of telephones to digital, it's now necessary to change the phone in the lift to digital and this is being done by a newly appointed lift maintenance company.

The garden at the front of the church is now being kept tidy by our new gardener Simon, as Rachel was no longer able to do the work – thank you Rachel for all your efforts.

There are several members and friends who carry out some of the routine but essential tasks so faithfully and who we thank sincerely. This particularly includes David Yapp for programming and monitoring the heating, Mike Garside for managing the room bookings and Terry Pearce for the numerous different tasks that he thankfully still does.

But thanks to all of you as everyone has a part to play in keeping our building as a welcoming place to come to meet with friends and to meet with our Lord.

Richard Hall



ADMINISTRATION MINISTRY

Keeping the church affairs organised, people informed, rotas operating, papers flowing. Finding creative ways of doing it better.

Leader and contact details

Richard Hall : E-mail secretary@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk

The Administration ministry seeks to support and assist the life and work of the church, helping the other ministries of the church to play their part in serving our Lord as well as possible. It generally works best when in the background, so now and again it's good to note what tasks are involved, who is currently doing them and perhaps areas you might like to help with, as follows:

- ◆ Editing of Cornerstone News, Weekly Notice Sheets, the Annual Report (Diana Sandy),
- ◆ Proof reading and printing newsletter, posters and other documents (Richard Hall),
- ◆ Printing Weekly Notice Sheet (Mary York),
- ◆ Distribution of newsletter (Pamela Bridge, Sue Ruddock, Anne Gale, Joan Shewry and a few others)
- ◆ Ordering stationary, cleaning materials (Agnes MacIntosh, Joy Funnell)
- ◆ Ordering coffee and communion wine (Terry Pearce)
- ◆ Monitoring the printer/copier and ordering toner (Joan Shewry)
- ◆ Maintaining lists, directories and rotas (Joy Funnell)
- ◆ E-mailing information about services, church activities or events and Prayer Spider requests (Joy Funnell)
- ◆ Room bookings (Mike Garside)
- ◆ Maintaining the church calendars (Terry Pearce)
- ◆ Maintaining the church website (under development)
- ◆ Maintaining church computers and printers (Mike Bundock)
- ◆ GDPR maintenance, E-mail forwarding changes (Richard Hall)
- ◆ Copyright and other licences and subscriptions (Richard Hall)
- ◆ URC information returns (Richard Hall)

Unfortunately, the work to build a new website has taken much longer than envisaged, but we are hopeful that it will be back very soon in a fresh new form. Meanwhile, there's a temporary holding page which shows the room bookings calendar.

It's important that everyone is kept informed as much possible about the life of the church, so Cornerstone News and Notice sheets, edited so well each month and week by Diana, play a key role in this. But e-mails to members and friends are also now so important, and Joy Funnell has continued to do a fantastic job in this way. It would also be good to explore other forms of electronic communication, such as Facebook, as a means of reaching a wider group of people, so I'd be pleased to hear from someone who could help in this area.

So a very big "Thank you" goes to Diana and Joy particularly, all those noted above and many others who use their gifts to serve the church in so many ways. I pray that we will all be open to doing what we can, however big or small, to further the life and witness of the church.

Richard Hall

WELCOME STEWARDS

"Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." Romans 15 v 7. Christians welcome one another for the glory of God because Christ welcomed us for the glory of God. We welcome people we know and strangers with a smile. Our aim is to help all our visitors feel they belong and are part of our family at Cornerstone.

For those visiting us for the first time, Pamela provides a special welcome and a copy of Cornerstone News. She takes the time to find out people's names and lets them know more about opportunities for prayer and fellowship.

Thank you to everyone who has served God by welcoming people in His name. I particularly want to thank Angela who will be leaving us soon. Her faithful service and kind words will be missed by everyone. Thanks also to Lawrence and Gill, Liz, Peter and Val, Emma, Bobby and Jamie, Jytta and Pamela, for your faithful service. Also to others who have stepped in to assist when needed. Emma, your enthusiastic welcome on Christmas Day is one I will remember!

If you would like to join our team or be a reserve, please let me know.

Carol Whittaker

FINANCE MINISTRY

Managing financial records and controls. Keeping the members informed and advised as appropriate. Supervising the planning and control of budgets.

Leader and contact details

Nick Tustian E-mail: treasurer@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk

Treasurer's Report

Dave Ramsey is an author and financial expert who has shared many quotes about money, work-life balance, and business. One of the ones I recall is: *"You must gain control over your money or the lack of it will forever control you."*

I must confess that at the start of 2024 I was concerned we could well find ourselves in a position where money was going to control and even limit what we did as a Church. Not necessarily because of lack of control in managing our money but simply because the continuing increase in costs such as gas, electricity and building maintenance was not being matched by increase in our income.

With the support of the Elders, a letter was sent to all members and friends of Cornerstone highlighting the problems and raising the concern that without drastic action, we had a significant deficit of £13,000 in 2024 and may not even be able to set a budget for 2025. The letter was a simple plea for people to consider their own giving and to pray about the situation. Following that letter a number of things have happened:

- ◆ The Church has received one-off donations totalling an incredible £13,000 (exactly the projected deficit in 2024).
- ◆ Regular offerings have risen substantially and with Gift Aid is likely to realise an additional £8,000 more than we received in 2023.
- ◆ There has been a detailed review of costs and we estimate that we can reduce the budget for building repairs from £15,000 to £10,000 in 2025.
- ◆ With a new gas, electric and telephone contracts it is estimated that costs will start to fall and we will save an estimated £2,500 in 2025.

I did explain all of this in a further letter sent out in November and even since then we have seen the hire of rooms increase substantially and for 2025 our income will more than double from £2,000 in 2024 to an estimated £4,500 in 2025.

I particularly want to so thank you all for the incredible increase in personal giving which will see our income from offerings (incl Gift Aid) rise by over 10% to £86,000 in 2025.

In terms of what else happened in 2024 I really must highlight the building project. This involved substantial building works made up of many pieces of work that totalled £120,000. There is always a very real fear that with any project of this type the estimated work will outstrip the money that's available. Although we are still finalising the end position we can now be certain that the final cost of the work will be within the overall budget. Given the uncertainty of the economy and not least the rising costs of building works this is a remarkable achievement and we should record a very big "thank you" to Terry Pearce and Richard Hall for the tight control they exercised over the whole project.

Our position is now much more positive and when we take out the one-off income and expenditure, we are looking at a General Fund balance of over £20,000 in 2024 (our minimum reserve is £10,000) and a small surplus in 2025.

We really have had some amazing answers to prayer and to how people have responded to the need. We can indeed look forward to 2025 with finance being where it should be – as something that can be used positively and sensibly to continue God's work at Cornerstone.

Nick Justian



Worship	0	1,338
Prayer	0	0
Pastoral	185	534
Youth & Children	0	254
Families Matter	0	0
Evangelism	1,321	1,492
World Church	0	0
Benevolent	0	85
	<u>114,070</u>	<u>103,737</u>
	<u>167,150</u>	<u>167,150</u>

Summary - Funds

	Bal 1 Jan	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Bal 31 Dec
	£	£	£	Reserves	£
General	44,617	114,070	(103,652)	(1,000)	54,035
Benevolent	1,113	0	(85)	0	1,028
Building & Fabric Reserve	7,000	0	0	1,000	8,000
Expenses Float	350	0	0	0	350
Total - General	<u>53,080</u>	<u>114,070</u>	<u>(103,737)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>63,413</u>

Financial Report as at 31 December 2024

	Income			Expenditure			OVERALL F (A)		
	Budget 2024	Revised Budget	Actual to Variance F (A)	Budget 2024	Revised Budget	Actual to Variance F (A)			
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£		
Finance	91,050	100,450	102,187	1,737	77,600	76,200	77,103	(903)	834
Building & Fabric	0	1,300	4,408	3,108	16,600	29,500	14,092	15,408	18,516
Administration	3,070	1,770	3,691	1,921	7,170	7,370	7,137	233	2,154
Publicity & Communication	10	0	0	0	300	200	160	40	40
Fellowship & Social	2,800	2,300	2,278	(22)	2,300	1,950	1,542	408	386
Worship	0	0	0	0	1,800	1,550	1,338	212	212
Prayer	0	0	0	0	50	50	0	50	50
Pastoral	200	150	185	35	650	540	534	6	41
Youth & Children	0	0	0	0	440	440	254	186	186
Families Matter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Evangelism	750	1,350	1,321	(29)	700	1,700	1,492	208	179
World Church	0	0	0	0	50	50	0	50	50
TOTAL GENERAL FUND	97,880	107,320	114,070	6,750	107,660	119,550	103,652	15,898	22,648
Other Funds									
Benevolent Fund	0	0	0	0	0	85	85	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	85	85	0	0
TOTAL	97,880	107,320	114,070	6,750	107,660	119,635	103,737	15,898	22,648

OUTREACH FUND

The Outreach Fund has continued to provide financial support and encouragement to mission work and outreach locally and overseas - support that can, and has, helped to change people's lives both in the basic needs of life and especially in coming to know Jesus Christ.

The Statement and Summary of the Outreach Fund financial activities during 2024 are given in the tables. The tables are separated into three parts: General, Building Repairs Loan and Sierra Leone, helping to give greater clarity to the parts within the account. The fund balance at the end of 2024 was £26,741 of which £19,407 was the General Outreach Fund balance, £7,305 the Sierra Leone balance and just £28 for the Building Repairs Loan balance.

The main support to the Fund has been through personal donations of just over £4,000 (largely by standing orders) plus the attaching Gift Aid of over £800. So a very big "Thank you" goes particularly to those regular supporters. Thankfully, all these regular donations have enabled the Fund to continue to support our commitments to the work of Romans 1:11 in Uganda (£2,000) with Pastor Julius Bigirwenkya, his church and schools at Kakumiro; Hope Now working with the people in Ukraine (£1,500) particularly at Cherkasy; and The Crossings (£400), the drop-in for homeless people. In addition, just over £13,000 of aid was provided for the work of Divine Grace Ministries and related charities in Sierra Leone that we continue to support. This included funds mainly for new wells and bore holes, well repairs, medical assistance and support for the pastors' conference.

During the year the fundraising events raised a net total of just over £4,000 through six main events: Quiz raising £328, Murder Mystery Dinner £788, Grad Band concert £246, Cream tea £350, A Haze of Drinking Songs £390 and Christmas Fayre a tremendous £1,688. And there was also a BB sponsored walk contributing £250 (as well as £350 for the Street Pastors) – well done boys! All these events not only raised funds but also provided a good time for fellowship and opportunity for outreach. Special thanks go to the great team who plan these events and several others who help run them.

In addition Table Top sales were run every two weeks (excluding summer holidays) raising nearly £2,500 at an average of £122 per session. Not only are these good fundraisers, but they also provide opportunities for people to meet, chat and share problems and joys. So from the Table Top and fundraising events a total of £6,500 was able

to be transferred to the General Fund for the building repairs loan fund – a great achievement.

The Outreach Fund was started when we had just paid off all our debts for the completion of our new building and as a church we promised to raise funds to support mission and outreach in the wider world equivalent to a tithe on the cost of the building works. The target for this is £201,400 and so far after 13 years we have raised and donated £188,093 of this leaving £13,307 still to go! So, we are now 93% of the way, so I really hope the target can be reached within the next two years.

However, we are mindful that the general outreach balance on the account was over £19,000 at the end of the year, so we are particularly open to ways in which some more of this can be used for mission and outreach during 2025 and following years.

Richard Hall

TITHE EXPENDITURE 2024	
	£
Romans 1-11 Trust - Uganda	2,000
Hope Now - Ukraine	1,500
The Crossings	400
Grace Ministries - Sierra Leone	591
Spark2Action Sierra Leone - wells & bore holes	2,500
Mariatu's Hope - well pipes & pumps S/L	2,019
TOTAL in 2024	9,010
Total for 2012-2023	179,083
Cumulative Total (2012-2024)	188,093
	93% of target
TARGET	201,400
OUTSTANDING at 31.12.2024	13,307

OUTREACH FUND
STATEMENT of FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES for 2024

	<i>Balance 1 Jan 2024</i>		<i>Balance 31 Dec 2024</i>	
	£	£	£	£
Bank Current account	10		10	
Bank Deposit account	37,242		26,533	
Payments outstanding	(2,621)		0	
Late income	132		0	
Gift Aid tax owing	2,411		198	
	37,173		26,741	
	<i>Income 2024</i>		<i>Expenditure 2024</i>	
General	5,732		3,992	
Building Repairs Loan	8,061		8,195	
Sierra Leone	1,172		13,210	
	Total 14,965		Total 25,397	
	52,138		52,138	



OUTREACH FUND : FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2024

INCOME	Actual 2023	Budget 2024	Total 2024	Diff budget	EXPENDITURE	Actual 2023	Budget 2024	Total 2024	Diff budget
General					General				
Donations	4,635	3,500	4,038	538	Romans 1-11	2,310	2,000	2,000	0
Church Organisations	-	-	-	0	Hope Now	1,930	1,500	1,500	0
Legacies	-	-	-	0	Sierra Leone	-	1,500	-	(1,500)
Other Appeals/ donations	-	-	-	0	Other Support (Note 1)	900	1,440	400	(1,040)
Gift Aid tax reclaim Out- reach	853	1,000	906	(95)	Other costs	100	-	32	32
Bank interest	437	200	788	588	Bank charges	81	60	60	0
General Total	5,925	4,700	5,732	5,732	General Total	5,321	6,500	3,992	3,992
Building Repairs Loan					Building Repairs Loan				
Fundraising events	4,931	4,000	5,556	1,556	Fundraising costs	1,204	1,200	1,695	495
Table Top sales	2,509	2,300	2,506	206	Building Repairs Fund	6,000	4,050	6,500	2,450
Building Repairs Loan Total	7,440	6,300	8,061	1,761	Building Repairs Loan Total	7,204	5,250	8,195	2,945

Sierra Leone**Sierra Leone**

Donations Sierra Leone Aid	17,517	4,000	300 (3,700)	Sierra Leone Aid	5,869	6,500	13,126	6,626
Donations Sierra Leone team	6,887	5,500	637 (4,863)	Sierra Leone Costs	6,764	5,500	84	(5,416)
Gift Aid tax reclaim S/L	2,806	2,500	234 (2,266)					
Sierra Leone Total	27,210	12,000	1,172	Sierra Leone Total	12,633	12,000	13,210	1,210
TOTAL	40,575	23,000	14,965	TOTAL	25,158	23,750	25,397	8,147

FUNDS SUMMARY

Fund	Balance	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance
	1 Jan 24				31 Dec 24
General	17,746	5,732	3,992	-79	19,407
Building Repairs Loan	83	8,061	8,195	79	28
Sierra Leone	19,344	1,172	13,210	-	7,305
Total	37,173	14,965	25,397	-	26,741

WORLD CHURCH MINISTRY

Maintaining links with the world church, establishing and maintaining contact with the church overseas and keeping the congregation informed and involved as appropriate.

Leader and contact details:

Richard Hall E-mail: mission@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk

There are three main countries where we have been involved directly in the past and continue to support them through prayer and on-going financial commitments.

Uganda

Our support for mission in Uganda is through the Romans One Eleven Trust both for the general work of the Trust in Uganda, but particularly supporting the work of Pastor Julius Bigirwenkya. He lives at Kakumiro, where he has established a church and two schools and where Chris Copley visited in 2022. Julius is a trained secondary school teacher as well as an ordained pastor within the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Uganda (RPCU). He is also the director of the Romans 1-11 Spiritual Life Centre in Kakumiro, which delivers the pre-ordination training for 10-12 student pastors and is currently the moderator of the Kakumiro Presbytery. Aged 42, he's married to Gloria with four children aged 11 and under. Our funding from the Outreach Fund is being very well used to support the church and schools and from 2025 we are also giving £30/month to support the training of new pastors under the "Boost 100" initiative. For further information about the work of Romans 1-11 Trust go to <https://www.romans111.org.uk/our-work-in-uganda/>

Ukraine

Our support for Ukraine is through Hope Now, based in Southampton. We continue to send regular financial support with some earmarked for the churches at Smila and Cherkasy, and other funding for general operations. As the war in Ukraine continues relentlessly, the provision of some food, clothing and temporary shelter though the church is essential and is often the first step to someone coming to know the Lord. Hope Now was founded 40 years ago as a response to a desperate need to "bring hope by sharing the love of Jesus", so our support through prayer and funding is still vitally needed in helping

these war-torn people. The 40th anniversary will be celebrated on Saturday 7th June at Above Bar Church in Southampton. For the latest information go to <https://hopenow.org.uk/latest-news/newsletters/>

Sierra Leone

We continue to support the work in Sierra Leone through prayer and the use of the funds held in our Outreach Fund account. Steve Baker made two visits during the year to Kafanta to support the work of Pastor John and the pastors conference, as well as overseeing the work of installing wells and bore holes to provide fresh water to remote villages in the Kafanta and Medina region. Much of this work is now being undertaken by a separate Christian organisation called Spark2Action headed by a couple, Jo and Sarah, from the UK. Last September they picked up 20 of our redundant metal frame chairs to take to Sierra Leone for use in the new pastor training centre and local church near Madina. The ministry in the villages is growing quickly with many lifetime Muslims turning to Christ.

Work over several years by different teams of nurses at the Nixon hospital in north west Sierra Leone is also at last bearing fruit with support now being provided by the government, new wards being added and the training school coming under the oversight of the University.

Help has also been provided to support children in need and individuals with health issues. This recently included support for a nurse, Simonette diagnosed with TB and unable to afford the treatment. With some financial help and sustained pressure on the health authorities her treatment was provided without charge, and she is now fully recovered and back home with her children, though still needing monthly check-ups.

In conclusion, our support in terms of interest, prayers and finance in these three areas of the world is greatly valued by the people on the ground and equally important, provides us with an insight to different aspects of God's world that we may not otherwise appreciate. At present there is no one overseeing this Ministry of our church and encouraging us in such works, so if this is something you might like to help with, I'd be pleased to speak with you!

Richard Hall

PASTORAL MINISTRY

Taking care of the congregation. Looking after people, welcoming new ones and caring for the existing congregation. Finding creative ways of helping people reach their full potential in Christ.

Leader and contact details

Richard Hall : E-mail pastoral@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk

Pastoral Ministry now comes fully under the leadership of the Elders, with **Pastoral care** at its essential core - showing God's love to members of the fellowship through keeping in touch, showing they are valued, praying for them and giving spiritual and sometimes practical support when needed.

With the system of pastoral care now in place, the elders have both a practical as well as formal responsibility for pastoral care. Each person within the life of the church should have a named 'Pastoral Care Elder', who will try to keep in contact, offer a listening ear and give encouragement to help each person grow in Christian maturity. The pastoral care lists of each elder are updated from time to time, and particularly following the change of serving elders after the AGM.

The Elder should be the prime contact concerning pastoral matters, though Homegroups and other organisations (e.g. Women's Guild) also provide valuable pastoral care for all those who are part of them. In addition, one or two individual members continue to give pastoral care as a natural expression of their God given gifts.

Nevertheless, whatever system is in place, we all have a Christ-given responsibility to love and care for one another – "My command is this: love each other as I have loved you" (John 13 v12) - and He will help us to do that.

Underlying not only pastoral care but all areas of church life is the need to provide a caring and safe environment for everybody. So **Safeguarding** is an essential function of the Pastoral Ministry and is a whole church responsibility needing every member to play their part. Our Safeguarding Policy (being updated) provides guidance and procedures for promoting safeguarding, preventing abuse and protecting children, adults at risk and staff.

So, following the stepping down of Nikkie Pullen last year, I'm pleased to report that in September, Wendy Tustian was formally appointed by Church Meeting to serve as Safeguarding Coordinator (note new title) and thank her for being willing to serve in this way. She will continue to be supported by Kay Keen, as deputy, and Joan Shewry who processes the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) applications and renewals – thank you both so much! Wendy is now busy working through all the safeguarding material to identify what needs to be done to bring our safeguarding policy, practice and training in line with the URC Good Practice 6.

The Pastoral Ministry also includes a number of other areas of ministry and service; these are briefly reported below, and many thanks go to all those involved in doing these tasks.

Richard Hall

NEWCOMERS SUPPORT

The Pastoral Team held a very good Newcomers Tea in April to which ten newcomers came. Lively discussions were enjoyed after the usual presentations and questions answered. These are very useful meetings at which a few of the elders get to know the newcomers better and the newcomers learn a bit about the URC and our church.

We have continued to see new faces week by week throughout 2024, some visiting and some looking for a new church. Our congregation is very welcoming and though Pamela Bridge and I try to pick them up and welcome them, we happily find others engaging them in conversation. There will be the need of another Newcomers Evening early in 2025.

Thank you to everyone who welcomes new people during the week as well as on Sunday mornings. One thing that is often said on Newcomers evenings is how welcoming the church has been and that is thanks to every one of you. So well done and keep it up, It makes the Pastoral team's job so much easier when we are all involved.

Joan Shewry

HOMEGROUPS

We currently have approximately 60 people joining (or linked to) one of the six homegroups which usually meet twice a month in "term time" at various venues and at varying times, two in member's homes, three at church and one at a local pub.

In April last year we did things slightly differently and instead of the groups meeting at their usual locations, had an eight session study of Revelation at church which was open to all the groups, anyone who comes to church but who doesn't usually attend a group meeting and to friends from other local churches. These sessions were well attended and were led by our friend Doug Barnett who so blessed us not only with his teaching but also with his commitment and faithfulness despite his own sad family circumstances at the time.

After the Revelation series the homegroups followed and discussed the sermon series on Philippians and then similarly followed the sermon series and studied Luke.

Looking ahead to spring 2025 we are hoping to follow the Bible Society's new Bible Course - some of us, separately to home groups, studied the original Bible Course some years ago and found it instructive, helpful and enjoyable and are looking forward to the new course. Details of the format will be made available when known.

If anyone is interested in joining a group please contact me on 07928 819300.

Jan Sherlock

MONDAY COMMUNIONS

We had for many years held communion services at 11.30am on the Monday after the third Sunday of the month but the last of these was held in September 2024

HOME COMMUNIONS

Home communions were offered three times in 2024 and looking ahead to 2025 we hope to be able to offer four home communion visits commencing with visits before Easter in April. It is lovely to meet and catch up with members and friends who are unable to attend church regularly or at all. Two people visit together and if anyone would like to accompany the person ministering or there is anyone who has not been offered a visit but would like one please contact me on 07928 819300.

Jan Sherlock

CONDOLENCE CARDS

Since last March, several members of Cornerstone Fellowship have sadly passed away and their families have received Condolence cards.

2024

January – Betty Smith

May – Sheila Thatcher

October – Angela Lambert

November – Norman Pearce

December – Gill Lever

2025

January – Tim Moth

Pamela, sister of Mike Burman

Derek Axton, brother of Wendy Axton

Also I have delivered three cards to members of Hythe Huddle who have lost either their husband or wife. They have all been grateful to receive them.

All those visited, receive the visit and condolence card with grace and gratitude as I pass on our love and prayers.

Over the years I have delivered many cards, with grateful thanks to my husband Peter for driving me. Each visit still needs a sensitive manner and awareness of each family member's feeling and grief.

Again, on the first anniversary, a card is delivered to remember those no longer with us but have been part of our fellowship.

Pat Dudley

FOODBANK

The Waterside Foodbank continues to be a lifeline to many families and individuals, so thanks go to everyone who contributes to the produce collected and to Mike and Polly Garside, who regularly deliver the goods to the Foodbank in Holbury. The items currently most needed are: *Potatoes (tinned), Rice Pudding, Coffee, Tea bags, Carrots (tinned), Ginger Cake, Sponge Puddings, fruit (tinned), UHT milk, toiletries*. So, keep donating!

Richard Hall

CHURCH FLOWERS



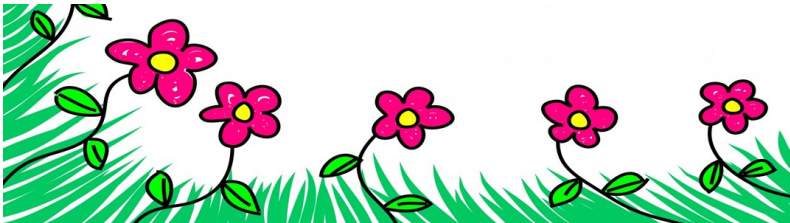
I would like to thank everyone who contributes to the church flowers each week. I always welcome additional people who would like to give the flowers on a Sunday that is special to them, not only for a special event or anniversaries, but to praise and thank God for the love he shares with us.

It is a pleasure to arrange them in the pedestal for Sunday services and other occasions; they are always appreciated by the people who receive them afterwards.

At the beginning of the year I prepare a rota to cover all Sundays, apart from Easter, Harvest and Christmas, when I ask for donations. Just as a guide £25 to £30 covers the cost of a pedestal. If you would like to share a Sunday with someone else please speak to me and I will arrange a date and suitable price for you.

Also, thank you to the people who take the flowers out each week, Bev Hall, Steffe James-Brown, Sylvia and Mike Burman, Sue Ruddock and Marion Brodie. They do a sterling job and are appreciated by all who have received the flowers.

Pamela Bridge



FAMILIES MATTER MINISTRY

Development and oversight of programmes serving the local community. Liaison with other local service providers and development of creative ways to serve the needs of the local community, especially families.

Chairman of Trustees and contact details:

Peter Blasby E-mail: office.fm.hurc@gmail.com

Families Matter

at Hythe URC

Families Matter is the church's community outreach programme. It is an independent charity for fund raising reasons and provides a number of different projects which support the families and people of the Waterside Area.

On the Right Track (OTRT) is one of our biggest projects and supports children in Year 6 of primary school. The aim is to give extra support and boost confidence in the transition to secondary school. This is done through weekly one-to-one twenty minute sessions with a trained School Worker.



Mentoring is a continuation of the support we have given to some of the children from the OTRT programme for the first three months in their new secondary schools.



Parenting courses. We offer free parenting courses entitled 'Managing Your Child's Angry Feelings' and SPOT (Supporting Parents of Teenagers). These are run in conjunction and partnership with YFM in Totton and take place four times a year for six weeks at a time.

One-to-One Family Support. Referrals are made either directly from families, via social services or from local schools and charities. This support varies greatly but can include anything from extra help with food parcels to complex family difficulties and associated behaviour problems with the children.

Women's Wellbeing Group supports local women experiencing mental health problems and promotes positive mental health.

Swans is a weekly drop-in for parents/carers and grandparents with children with additional needs (no diagnosis necessary).



Hythe Huddle is a monthly drop-in support group for carers and people living with Dementia.

Memory group is a weekly support group programme which delivers Cognitive Stimulation Therapy. All members have a diagnosis of cognitive impairments and/or specific Dementia conditions.

Our Time is for people who have somebody in their family who is suffering from an addiction. This group meets bi-monthly.

Domestic Abuse This is a brand new project which started in January. The support group runs for 12 weeks and those attending complete “The Freedom Programme.”

The impact of the work of Families Matter has a great effect on the whole family. We employ nine professional part time staff and the support of over 20 volunteers.

A full report will be given at our AGM on 9th July 2025 at 7.00 pm here at Cornerstone.

Families Matter needs your help with funding or if you can volunteer in any way please talk to Peter Blasby or our manager, Laura Gray.



YOUTH & CHILDREN'S WORK MINISTRY

Oversight, development and encouragement of work with youth and children. To engage children and young people to equip them with a knowledge and love of Jesus Christ leading to a life-long commitment to follow him.

Leader and contact details:

Dave Symmonds E-mail: youthclub@cornerstonehytheurc.org.uk

Again this year Jesus' love has been shared and lots of fun activities have happened across the various children and youth groups at Cornerstone. Please see the following individual reports for more details. I would like to take this opportunity to say a very big thank you to all the leaders and helpers of these groups for their dedication and faithfulness in all they do.

YOUTH CLUB

The Club is for 11 to 18 year olds and during 2024 our Church Youth, some of their friends and other young people from the local area, met every other Friday evening at Cornerstone from 7.30pm to 9.00pm.

Between 10 and 14 young people regularly came along throughout the year to have fun, playing sports such as snooker, pool, table tennis, badminton, archery and indoor cricket. On one evening in July some water games were also organised, as you can imagine the youth really enjoyed getting themselves and their friends very wet.

The very popular making and eating of various foods continued throughout the year which included pizzas, pancakes, extremely decorated biscuits, Easter eggs, ice cream mess and Christmas cake.

Also various crafts were attempted such as the making of candles, Mother's Day gifts and cards, Easter Egg decorating, Chocs in a Box gifts, Pumpkin painting and Christmas Cake decorating.

In October we ventured out to Calshot Activity Centre for an evening of Ringos (if you are wondering what that is, ask one of the young people when you next see them) I think this may well become a regular activity, it was great fun for the young and not so young.

We rounded off the year with a Christmas Party which proved very popular again.

Thank you to the dedicated leaders, Bev, Angela, Richard, Ian, Robert and Naomi who plan, organise and enable all the activities to happen so that a fun time is had by all.

Please pray for God’s blessing on all the young people that come along to Youth Club. Please pray that we, as Leaders will be able to reflect the love of Christ in all we do and say when we meet with them.

Dave Symmonds

YOUTH CLUB				
Summary of Accounts for 2024				
Income	£	Expenditure	£	Change
Subscriptions	409.00	Equipment	0.00	
Tuck sales	33.62	Tuck costs	7.68	
Activities	110.00	Activity costs	531.36	
Donations	<u>0.00</u>	Misc	<u>0.00</u>	
Total	552.62	Total	539.04	13.58
Funds				
Balance at 01.01.24		Balance at 31.12.24		
Bank account	465.26	Bank account	642.26	
Cash	<u>218.10</u>	Cash	<u>54.68</u>	
	683.36		696.94	13.58
	<u>1,235.98</u>		<u>1,235.98</u>	
Accounts prepared by Richard Hall				

YOUTH BIBLE GROUP

This is a Bible Group for 12+ year-olds that meet in the Youth Lounge every other Friday evening from 7.00pm to 9.00pm. It is an opportunity for the young people to learn more about being a Christian through studying God's word together in a relaxed and fun way.

A group of between 4 to 7 young people came along to 14 evenings throughout 2024 to chat, eat chocolate and crisps, drink hot chocolate (you would be amazed how much squirry cream and mini marshmallows you can get into a mug of hot chocolate), play games, study the bible and pray.

We began the year up to June watching and discussing the first season of "The Chosen". This television series depicts the life of Jesus Christ, focusing on his ministry and interactions with the people around him. It is a unique portrayal showing the human side of Jesus and his disciples.

In the Autumn we studied some of the well known characters in the Bible and how they had been transformed by Jesus such as Paul (Saul) , Mary Magdalene and Peter (Simon).

In the winter we started to look at some of the big questions that the young people had raised and wished to discuss. We started with War & Conflict and we will continue in 2025 with Science & Religion - Evolution/Dinosaurs/Adam & Eve, Other Religions and Suffering.

Many questions were raised throughout the evenings which we explored together. After our discussions and prayers, it is now a firm favourite, insisted upon by the young people, that we finish the evening with a game of UNO which is always great fun!

Thank you to the dedicated leaders Bev, Angela and Naomi for helping in the discussions and making the evenings a fun time for all.

Throughout the coming year please pray for the young people, that they will know the "peace beyond all understanding" that only Jesus Christ brings.

Dave Symmonds

LIGHT YEARS



Light Years are a loyal and committed group and we cherish our time together on Sunday mornings. Our friendships have developed and flourished, and we give thanks to God for this blessing.

The group have been deepening their understanding of Christianity by engaging with the Bible readings shared during the Church service. This journey through Scripture has enriched their faith and strengthened their connection to God's Word.

The children and young people have shown wonderful leadership and participation in our Sunday services throughout the past year, with the Christmas Nativity being a particular highlight. Well done to everyone who contributed to making these moments so special.

We also enjoy engaging in a variety of activities, including games weeks, craft sessions, and assisting with the sound desk during the service.

A big thank you to all the leaders and helpers for everything they do for Light Years. Their dedication and commitment make a tremendous difference. Thank you also to those who step in to help whenever needed - your support is greatly appreciated!

I feel deeply thankful for our children, young people, and dedicated team - we are truly blessed to have one another. As we look forward to the year ahead, I pray that everyone at Cornerstone has a blessed and peaceful 2025. May it be a year filled with faith, love and joy.

Best wishes, *Rachel Tabenor*



TODDLER GROUP

Our weekly attendance has varied between 10-15 parents/carers and their children.

Once again we had "bring and share" lunches in July before the summer break and at our last meeting before Christmas when all the children received a story book.

It has been a good year but also a sad one. Everyone was very shocked when Irene, one of our staff, died in September. We remember her husband Vic and his family at this sad time. In March, Pat retired after many years with the group.

My thanks to our staff, Marion, Sandra, Jenny, Jeanette, Sharon and Val for all their hard work each week and to Lawrence and Geoff for their help getting out and putting away our equipment and to Peter our treasurer.

A donation from our group of £600 was given to the Church Building Fund.

Gill Tabenor

TODDLER GROUP ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 31/12/2024			
INCOME	£	EXPENDITURE	£
Subscriptions	527.50	Gifts	108.05
		Equipment	0.00
		Donations	610.00
Total	527.50	Total	718.05
Balance at 01.01.24		Balance at 31.12.24	
Bank account	239.80	Bank account	46.25
Cash	25.00	Cash	28.00
	264.80		74.25
	<u>792.30</u>		<u>792.30</u>
Accounts prepared by Peter Blasby			

BOYS' BRIGADE



We are a small group with boys in three sections, Anchors, Juniors and Company. Our weekly activities have been reported in the monthly newsletter. One of the highlights of the year was when Lance, a former BB member, who is now a police dog handler, visited us with his dog Benji.

Thanks again to Lance for coming along.

We attended the Remembrance Sunday Service and had a Toy and Games Stall at the Christmas Fayre.

I thank Rachel, Steve, Bev and Audrey for their support during the year and to Joan our treasurer and Company contact for headquarters and battalion.

We look forward to 2025 and continuing to advance Christ's Kingdom among our Boys.

Gill Tabenor



**1st HYTHE BOYS' BRIGADE
FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDING 31.12.24**

RECEIPTS	£	EXPENDITURE	£
SUBS	364.50	ANNUAL FEES	
		Battalion	
TUCK	27.55	HQ	210.50
DONATIONS	10.00	TUCK	12.34
UNIFORM	-	BADGES & PRIZES	39.95
		MISC	65.16
		EQUIPMENT	56.45
Total Income	402.05	Total expenditure	384.40
Balances at 01.01.24		Balances at 31.12.24	
Bank	847.43	Bank	830.13
Cash	21.24	Cash	56.19
	<u>1,270.72</u>		<u>1,270.72</u>

Accounts prepared by Mrs Joan Shewry





**Together we
Can!**