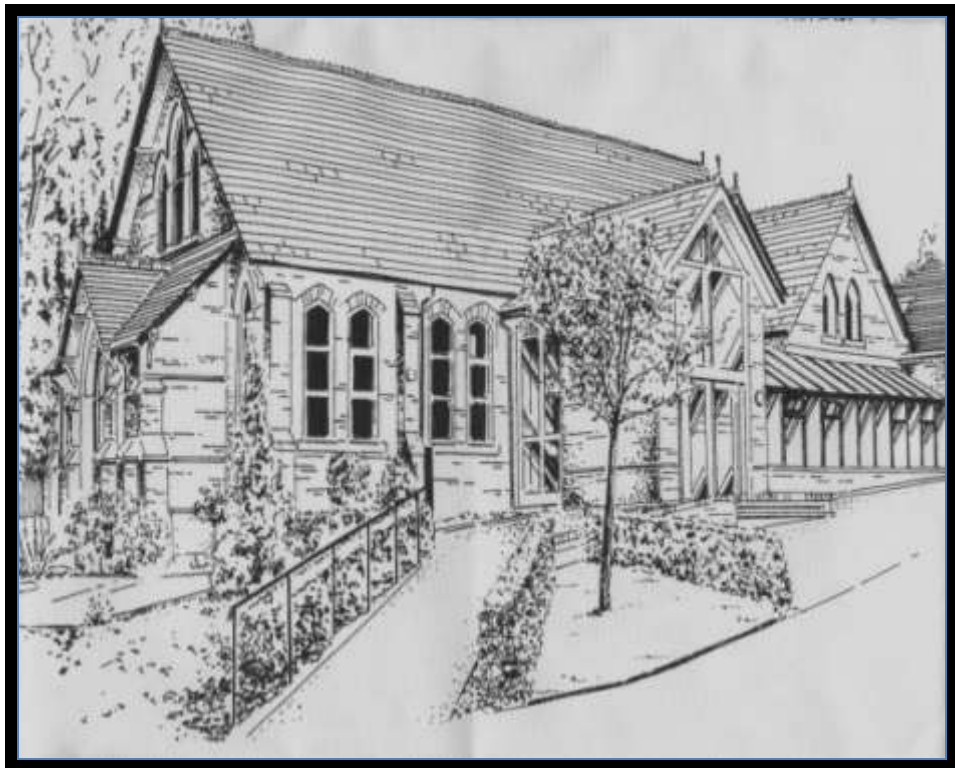


HOLMES CHAPEL METHODIST CHURCH

Church Family



**Annual Report
2010/11**

Holmes Chapel Methodist Church

Annual Report 2010/2011

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The Manse

Dear friends,

When you think of Holmes Chapel Methodist church what comes to mind? Is it our building so well kept and well used by the community? Is it our Sunday worship ably led by our preachers and leaders of worship? Perhaps it is another facet entirely. This booklet reminds us that 'church' is so much more than what happens on a Sunday. 'Church' happens when people meet together in all manner of ways and Jesus is present. That might be over a coffee and a chat; it might be through serious study or the enjoyment of the created world; it might be through song and music or through play or prayer. The groups and activities we read about here are all expressions of Church; some take place on a Sunday but most occur on other days of the week. But they are still 'church', for when we share concerns and hurts we are still praying; when we laugh and play we are still worshipping; when we discuss issues of faith and our world we are still growing as disciples.

Acts 2 verses 42-47 describes the early church as a community who learnt together, ate together, prayed together, worshipped together, gave their possessions to the poor and invited others to be part of their community. As we can see from this booklet, we have many opportunities to share together in worship, fellowship and food. We are generous in our giving and support many charities and organisations in need. All of this is to be commended and celebrated. However, our church exists not just for us but for those who do not belong. How good are we at inviting others to share in our faith community; to meet Jesus who is present in our activity; to explore Christianity that is not 'one size fits all' but a relationship with our living and loving God that is as relevant today as it was 2000 years ago? This is the challenge of the church today.

Every year when I read this booklet I cannot help but give thanks for all the people that are involved in enabling the rich and diverse fellowship that is Holmes Chapel Methodist Church but let us not get complacent; let us prayerfully go forward into another year asking how we might enable others to meet Jesus and what might our 'church' need to look like to engage and nurture faith in the 21st century?

I have no doubt reading these reports that Holmes Chapel Methodist Church has and is good news for the community and I thank you all for the many ways in which you serve. Let us together continue to share that good news in the coming years.

Helen

Stewards' Report.

The current stewards - Steve Best, Jill Booth, Alex Davidson, Elaine Denham, Rodney Smith, Jim Speakman, Helen Watson and Hazel Young continue to be busy enabling the worship in our church.

Each year we try to have two new stewards so that each steward only serves four years. We have had difficulty recruiting new stewards recently so that some have volunteered to do more than their four. Jim took over Arthur Jackson's role when he went away to Africa, and continued it for a further two years. Lorraine Rawlinson continued for some six months extra until Jill Booth took over.

We have taken part in funerals, weddings, services like Harvest, Remembrance Day, Christian Aid, and even organised services where we take the lead role and invite people to talk to us about their faith through bible readings and hymns.

We try to help our preachers get their views over to the congregation by ensuring whatever they require is there. We are there to provide a link between congregation and preachers and other bodies in the church.

Helen and Jim retire this year and two new stewards will be needed. We hope people will search their hearts and volunteer or respond favourably if asked to take on this duty. All you need is the wish to help our preachers do their best to serve our church.

Helen Watson



Church Treasurer

Writing financial reports for our church, whether monthly or annually, is always a pleasure, and this one is no exception. In the year since I last wrote we have cleared all our debts, even the long-standing one with regard to the actual building work. And it was not even a struggle to do so! All the loans from members were cleared by the summer of 2010, paving the way to another rebuilding scheme, that of our funds, so that they can be made secure against the demands, not only of the future, but of the present, too.

The past year has seen an incredible increase in the use of the premises. Our new rooms have been increasingly used by the local community, and the District, too. For the latter it occupies a useful midway position between Chester and Stoke.

The incredible giving by members, and the fund-raising, organised by a very competent, and determined, committee, have produced this financial environment in which the work of our church can proceed. The demands of the future, to which I referred just now, will be those of maintaining the premises in good order, despite their intense use. The demands of the present are more indefinable because, in addition to our increased giving to Connexional funds and Mission funds, there is always a need to respond to appeals arising from natural disasters, of which there seem to have been many over the past year.

In all this it is good to report that our commitment to church giving has been wonderfully augmented by sheer generosity to those beyond our walls. There is, however, no room for complacency. There will always be a need to fund-raise from time to time. There will always be the cry of our neighbour to listen out for.

Lastly, may I offer my gratitude to everyone for making my job as treasurer such a pleasure. I said that last year in my report, and I am happy to repeat myself! Let us continue to thank God for all the blessings we receive as a church, and may we always be open to his guidance and direction.

John Percival

Property

This is another year which has seen our church premises in regular use. We have many varied groups both from within our own church and from the community of Holmes Chapel. For example, Bumps and Babes, Pilates, Prayer meetings, Rainbows, Brownies, U3A, and many others. This of course has put some 'strain' on the premises in that the décor in some areas was beginning to look a little tired. To this end we are currently having three of our main 'halls' decorated. This should be completed by April 2nd.

When the alterations were completed we found that the sound quality in the main hall was poor. We decided to have a company check this for us and were advised to have some sound suppression panels installed. This job is to be started on the 9th April, we hope that this will make the room a little easier to use for speaking guests.

We had a water meter fitted approximately one year ago as churches are no longer exempt from water charges. Our utility supplier is still NPower but we will be doing some investigation in the near future, to see who is the cheapest supplier of gas and electricity. We now have a company who are servicing our heating system and will also carry out any emergency repairs if required.

A window cleaner has been contracted to carry out window cleaning both inside and outside. This will occur four times a year. We are also currently trying to arrange with a company to carry out general cleaning, hopefully this will happen in the near future.

It was decided at a recent property meeting that we would 'name' our three halls for two reasons. One is that there is, sometimes, a little confusion as to which room is being indicated for meetings. Secondly it was thought that as we are having a change to our circuit, it would be appropriate to remember the churches from our 'old' circuit by naming the rooms after them. Therefore the small hall is to be named the Bradshaw Room, the coffee lounge Goostrey Lounge, and the large hall, Middlewich Hall.

The property secretary would like to thank ALL volunteers who have helped to clean, maintain and open the premises over the last year, their time is very much appreciated.

Alex Davidson



Churches Together in Holmes Chapel

We continue to meet twice a year to share and plan activities together which seek to enhance our combined witness in the community. The Christmas Card, with scenes of the three churches in the snow, together with the churches Christmas programme, was well received and thanks must go to so many who deliver the card to each home during what often is inclement weather.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was not as well publicized as it should have been within our church and numbers attending the 3 devotional sessions of prayer and meditation were disappointing from our church. The pulpit exchange on the Sunday morning and the United evening service were enjoyed by those attending.

For Easter, the Walk of Witness on Good Friday is taking on a new format and with an extended route – tho' the village is quiet at that time on Good Friday, the date and time are by their very nature fixed. In order to publicise as widely as possible the Easter Services without having to do a leaflet drop [both time consuming and of not always effective] we arranged for a full page advert in the monthly Holmes Chapel Directory [see April issue] for which we thank Anne Smith from St Luke's.

Our weekly Newsnotes and church based activities continue to be well publicised on the Churches Together Notice Board outside the Fire Station – please make use of it for advertising, via David Carr, and make its presence known throughout the village. We are supporting the Christian Aid Joint Morning Service at the Leisure Centre in May and continually seek other ways of working together with St Luke's and St Margaret Ward churches

David Carr

Pastoral Report

During the past year Bill Roberts decided it was time to retire as Pastoral secretary. Bill had fulfilled this role for many years visiting and caring for so many people- past and present. Thank you Bill for all the love and care you have given and still give to this fellowship. Bill will continue his role as pastoral visitor.

We celebrate and give thanks for the lives of those who have passed away since the last report; Jessica Francis, Raymond Jackson, Gordon Jebson, John Ryder, Bert Shepherd, Tom Stick and Hilda Thomas. We remember them with much love and they are greatly missed.

There are also a number of our fellowship who are no longer able to worship with us on a Sunday, that does not mean that they are forgotten; Bernard and Jessie Eadon, Margaret Jackson, Bill Pearson, Hilda Percival, Sylvia Taylor, Edward Thomas, Patricia Thorne and Harriet Warner. We think of them and surround them with our love.

We have welcomed into our church family, Nicola Powles Glover and Romily Glover and Edna McTravis. We were also pleased to learn of the safe arrivals of Callum Walczak, Lucy Aitken and Kathryn Taylor.

My thanks go to all the pastoral visitors for all the work they do in keeping in touch with everyone assuring you all of the love, friendship and care within our church family and to Pat McMaster for the work behind the scenes- updating the lists.

Bernice McEvoy



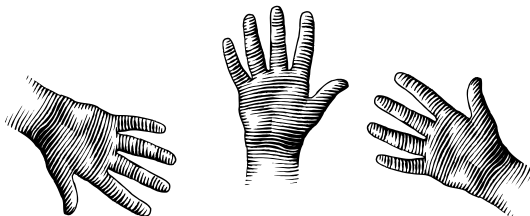
Messy Church

Messy Church is now into its second year and shows no sign of losing its popularity. The format remains the same: tea, coffee, biscuits and squash, simple board games and jigsaw puzzles in the coffee lounge to begin with, then into the large hall where about six tables have been prepared; they are set out with messy crafts related to the theme of the day . This is often a very messy bit with paint, crayons, glue, glitter, (sometimes soil) and one table always has things to eat involving icing and melted chocolate! When the children (and some of the parents) have tried each of the crafts it is time for them all to go into the church with Helen for singing, games, story and prayers.

The cooks have been busy and the helpers clear away the crafts, setting the tables for tea. The meal varies but is always nourishing and second helpings are popular—especially if it includes ice cream or custard!

We have a good team of helpers but extra hands are always welcome. Sincere thanks to Helen for her inspiration and leadership and to all those who come to help.

Pat Percival



Church Choir

I can bring news of another enthusiastic and hopefully tuneful year for the church choir. It has always surprised us that Helen and our other local preachers, along with our greatest fan Bob Parker, continually want us to sing at their services. The feedback so generously given by members of our congregation is a constant source of encouragement. We do like the opportunity to sing to you, whether it be the weekly introits or the anthems and vespers.

We especially like to lead worship at the major festivals and of course a highlight of the year is the Christmas Concert with its sacred and secular music. We love to perform with our friends in the band and other talented members of the church. Incidentally the choir is once again leading the musical worship at the Ascension Day Service at Bradshaw Brook. Please come and join us.

We were slightly distracted lately with a little thing called the pantomime....Oh yes we were!

We welcome back Jill to the choir, and are delighted that Pauline's daughter Bridget is making a good recovery, enough for Pauline to spend time with us. John Howson flits between Nicaragua and the choir back row, Glenys is a long haul expert to N.Z. and Alex is inevitably moving from one grandchild to another.

Once again I thank Barbara for her diligence as treasurer, Jenny our librarian and caterer, and our committed accompanists Sheila and Rene who also does sterling work with the band and panto. Our trio of conductors, Steve, Christine and Sue who lead us seamlessly and harmoniously (well most of the time) deserve a vote of thanks. And thanks finally to Julia who delivers our weekly epilogue, some very prayerful and some humorous but all well thought out.

We love singing God's praise and although our walk to the front is slow and stately (?) we hope that the end product is worthwhile.

Mike Oliver

The Friendship Club

Friendship Club continues to be well attended, although in the last year we have lost some members through illness, moving to a new area or they have passed away but we have also welcomed some new members who are enjoying their Wednesday afternoons with us.

Once a month we have a special event, which has proved to be very popular and well supported. We have had musical afternoons, lunches, speakers, a quiz and our very successful Christmas lunch. Card games, dominoes and of course chatting are still part of our regular afternoons.

The organisers are a team of eight with Lorraine Rawlinson joining us, replacing Mick Ford who has helped with the running of the club for the last two years.

We would also like to thank the drivers for their continued help and support.

Liz Gibbons



Tuesday Fellowship Group

... meet one Tuesday evening a month at 7.45pm alternating between Holmes Chapel and Middlewich Methodist Churches and welcome all who would like to share in fellowship, bible study and prayer.

Last summer we concluded our study on **Fruit of the Spirit** and in September began four studies on **Relationships**, considering the source of our relationships, loving others, appreciating others and affirming others. Although these were challenging topics, it was good to learn from others in the group, to pray together and to laugh together as we shared our experiences.

In March we began a 4-session series on **Forgiveness** and read about the example Jesus set for us and then studied ways to receive forgiveness for ourselves; over the next 3 sessions we will consider the power to choose, discuss how we respond wisely and look at ways of overcoming.

Each session is complete in itself, very informal and concludes with a drink and a chat. A meal at Manor Farm each July and December gives a further opportunity to relax, laugh and share together as a fellowship.

We'd love you to join us – dates, times and venues will be in the Newsnotes – **just turn up or ring David & Christine Carr on 01477 532412 if you would like a lift or more information.**

Bible Study

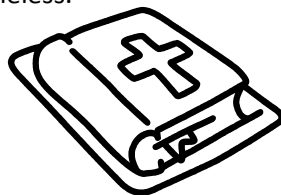
Our year started with continuing to look at Paul's letters to Timothy and to Titus. Then we turned to a fascinating study of the two letters Paul wrote to the church at Corinth which, we discovered, probably include extracts from two others of his letters to that church.

This study has taken us almost a year until now, but in those months we learned more about Paul, how incredibly courageous he was, at times rather humble, but perhaps the over-riding impression was how exasperating he must have been to work with or under!

The summer party last July benefited from a dry evening after rain, and we were able to look at the garden of Rene & John Spencer. As usual we have been blessed by their continuing hospitality.

Our next venture is about to start. We are returning to the Old Testament after a gap of nearly five years to look at *Job*. However, there will be a departure from our usual method, in that we shall not be reading the whole text verse. With 41 chapters that strikes one as a bit too much, but I hope that we shall enjoy the experience nevertheless.

John Percival



Disciple Course

The disciple course started in September with 30 people meeting to read and discuss the Bible together and relate it to our own discipleship today. There are two groups that meet with Helen Kirk on a Wednesday evening and with Pat Percival on a Friday morning. By May we will have finished the Old Testament and will have a summer break before starting the New Testament in September.

Helen Kirk

Focus

Focus has now enjoyed thirty years of fellowship and friendship. We are thankful for God's blessing on the group throughout this time. We would also like to thank our speakers, those who support our meetings or provide refreshments and David Carr for looking after the group's finances.

Our programme started in September when Mary Gresty gave a moving account of her family's life on the lonely island of St. Helena. In October, Rev. Jenny MacGregor used different teas, teapots and cups to illustrate our journey through life as Christians. The evening culminated in our sampling some of the teas she had brought. The following month, Giles Shorrock, spoke on 'Nearer to God', using his career as a pilot of military and civil aircraft and images of some of the planes he had flown to illustrate his own Christian journey.

Martin Raymond of Wycliffe Bible Translators led our December meeting. He highlighted the challenges of translating the Scriptures from one culture into another, of coping with non-Roman scripts, of working discreetly e.g. in China, and of operating in remote areas without electricity. As usual, we began the New Year with an evening of fun, games and a 'Dutch' buffet at our home, finishing the evening with a stirring epilogue led by Christine Carr.

Unusually, we studied 'A Passage Less Read,' the genealogical chapter which commences Matthew's gospel, with Pat Percival in February. From this, she drew out many spiritual truths and gave us a clear insight into the content and purpose of the gospels. In March, we shared Katie Donlon's enthusiasm as we accompanied her on a 'Journey across Indo-China' through Thailand, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. We will be describing our journey across Russia and China on the Trans-Siberian Express in April and then the group will explore the caves beneath Alderley Edge in the company of a representative from the Derbyshire Caving Club in May.

Stalwart Rodger Burgess will conclude the programme for 2010/2011 with an illustrated talk on 'Madeira' in the main church hall on June 24th. All are welcome to join us at any meeting they fancy – there is no 'membership'.

Programmes or further details may be found on the Focus notice-board, in the weekly News-sheets, in the parish magazine, Sunday Link, or from [Barbara Smith \(537301\)](#) or [David Carr \(532412\)](#).

Barbara Smith



Soup Lunches

This year it is no longer necessary to have the Friday Soup Lunches to make money for the Development Fund, but they are so well received by all who come along, we intend to continue with them. We hold the lunches once a month for most months of the year, they are advertised all around the village and everyone is welcome. We offer homemade soup, bread, piece of cake and tea or coffee for a reasonable amount, currently £3.50.

We rely on willing volunteers to make the soups and cakes and their efforts are greatly appreciated. We couldn't do it without you.

Thanks of course also go to the kitchen staff and waitresses!

Carol Barraclough



More to Life.

This new group is for women who ask 'is there more to life than this?' We hope to create a safe space where we can explore some questions and support one another in our many faceted lives.

We have had just two meetings so far, the first a light hearted game devised by Sue Oliver which led to us getting to know a little more about each other and eating not a few Maltesers. At our second meeting Rev Pat Percival helped us to explore the role of women nowadays and how the teaching of the Bible has affected attitudes to women. Discussion continued over our tea and biscuits - we had plenty to say about the issue!

Our next meeting, led by Judith Goodburn will be an aromatherapy evening when we will explore the link between our minds and our senses, and hopefully go home gorgeously scented.

We value your prayers for this fledgling group, that as we continue to develop we might enable exploration of spirituality for women of all faiths and of no faith, that in searching some may encounter the God who alone can meet their needs.

Julia Tomes.

Alpha

We began in September 2009 as a group studying the Alpha course, led by Rev. Helen. When we finished Alpha, we chose to continue meeting together, and now do so monthly, usually on the third Thursday morning of the month. We meet to discuss our faith and relate it to our everyday lives and the world we see around us. Some of us are Methodist church members, others belong or have belonged to other churches, and some of us have never been part of a church before. Our discussions are honest and wide-ranging, and we feel free to question and debate. Currently we are using short DVD presentations by the American pastor Rob Bell as the starting point for our discussions.

We often meet for coffee and a chat between 'official' meetings, and some of us who want further opportunities to discuss our faith are now also meeting for Bible based discussion once a month. We are beginning by looking at the Sermon on the Mount.

Anyone who would like to explore the Christian faith in a relaxed and informal way is welcome to join us. Contact Rev. Helen Kirk (01477 537085) or Fiona Smith (01477 535713).

Mission to Britain (formerly Home Missions)

Once again my thanks to everyone who supported Mission to Britain enabling us to raise the sum of £1019.91 (£985.72 last year).

This is made up as follows:-Mission boxes and donations	£404.91
Contribution from Church	£550.00
Sale of Webb Ivory goods	£ 65.00
	£1019.91

In addition a further £89 was raised for Mission alongside the poor by displaying a Christmas card in the Goostrey Lounge- every little helps such a worthwhile charity especially at Christmas-and remember how cold it was last winter.

My thanks again to Rene Spencer for her invaluable assistance at selling the Webb Ivory Christmas products.

Janet Ford

World Mission

For the year ended 31st August 2010 a total of £476.93 was received from the collection boxes and personal donations which is very slightly higher than the previous year. Additional funds were raised at the coffee evening held at Bradshaw Brook and at the Beetle Drive and supper held at Middlewich totalling £166.50. Thanks to everyone who supported either via donations or by attending the fund raising events.

If anyone would like a collection box to help in this vital work, or to make a donation, please speak to me.

Margaret Shaughnessy

Christian Aid

The work of Christian Aid is so vital for millions of people throughout the world and I am pleased to report that the local committee raised £6,977 last year from the Coffee Morning & Christmas Card Sale, Quiz night, Lent lunches, Ascension Day collection and House to House collection.

This year the annual Christian Aid service will be held at the Leisure Centre on

8th May at 10.30 am. This will be an 'all age worship' which we invite all members and friends to attend and hopefully learn more about the ongoing work of Christian Aid. (This service has been arranged with all Churches in the village and there will be no morning service at our Church or St. Luke's) This is a new venture and we trust everyone will support this ecumenical service.

This year Christian Aid Week commences on 15th May and I will soon be approaching people to assist in the House-to-House collection which last year, in Holmes Chapel, raised £4,100.

On behalf of the Committee I thank everyone who has helped and supported any of the local activities for Christian Aid throughout this past year.

Rene Spencer

J.M.A.

A big thank you to last year's seven collectors and to those who support them. The fantastic sum of £618 was raised. We thank Pat Adams for all her previous work with JMA. We are now looking for a new JMA secretary.

Bumps, Babes and Toddlers

Bumps, Babes and Toddlers has had another good year with occasionally a few too many children with their parents or carers turning up to play on a Monday morning!

Our craft table continues to be very popular and the children have enjoyed a wide range of age appropriate crafts including making cress pots, teddy bear paw potato prints, puppets, Valentines biscuits and lots of messy sticking and painting with lots of glitter around Christmas!

In early summer last year we held a sponsored toddle around Brereton Heath, in aid of the High Dependency Unit at Manchester Children's Hospital, which supported one of our Mums, Pat Adams, and her family over the Christmas period in 2009, when her daughter Jessica underwent a serious operation. We were very pleased to raise a total of £300 for this worthwhile cause.

At the end of last summer we had a great trip to Wheelock Farm, where the children all had a lovely time feeding the animals and playing in the straw and the playground. We were lucky with the weather and many of the families chose to extend their stay and enjoy lunch in the café.

Our Christmas Party was as popular as ever, with all 60 available tickets being sold this year. Helen Kirk once again braved our rowdy toddlers and gave a lovely service, ably accompanied by Rene on the organ. The ladies in the kitchen did sterling work arranging all the food and drinks – we really couldn't manage without them. Our sincere thanks go to all those who helped make the event so welcoming and run so smoothly!

We have recently enjoyed another popular trip to Pirate's Paradise with over 30 of our children and their parents or carers, which made for a relaxing morning for those of us who usually set-up all the toys, as well as a great way of avoiding the painters in the church!

We would like to pass on our heart-felt thanks to all those volunteers who help with our refreshments each week and to Fiona Smith for organising it all for us. Their work behind the scenes is much appreciated and makes the smooth running of our sessions so much easier to achieve!

However, I cannot finish a report about our last year without mentioning the very sad note it started on, when on 7th April our friend, fellow Mum and long-standing committee member, Kathryn Crichton, passed away. Our thoughts are still with her, her husband and two children.

Sue Mitchell



Praise and Play

Praise and Play has had another enjoyable year this year, with around 16 children aged from new born through to 4 years old attending each session, although not always the same 16! Our children come from both church and

non-church backgrounds, and many also attend Messy Church and Bumps, Babes and Toddlers and find our church a place which they feel comfortable both in and with.

Praise and Play is held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, and is now held at the earlier time of 9.30 – 10.30, as this fitted in better with many of our busy members.

This year we have looked at Jesus' teaching (e.g. woman who gave her last pennies, sermon on the mount), Jesus' miracles (e.g. walking on water, healing the lepers) as well as stories for the seasons e.g. Harvest (feeding the 5000), Jesus as the light of the world (to link into Bonfire night) and Christmas.

We would like to thank Sue Oliver and Rodney Hoyle for their invaluable help, setting up crafts, making drinks and clearing up after us, it is much appreciated.

Rachel Cartwright

Parenting

As part of our outreach to the Community, our Church decided to run a 'Parenting Course' for parents and carers of children aged from birth to six years. Meeting for one and a half hours for six Friday afternoons, the children enjoyed a crèche whilst their Mums and Grandmas shared and discussed the many challenges of bringing up children, the input being from watching a short DVD and, at this first course, the Mums and carers talking about their 'child care' experiences.

At the time of writing the first course of six weeks has just finished but those attending have been delighted about how they have helped each other with suggestions and reassurances and have chosen to continue to meet on the first Friday of each month. The husbands of this group have also asked for us to arrange an evening for them to have a 'taster' session for this course.

More six week courses will be arranged; future dates will be displayed on the

please speak to the Rev. Helen Kirk or myself.

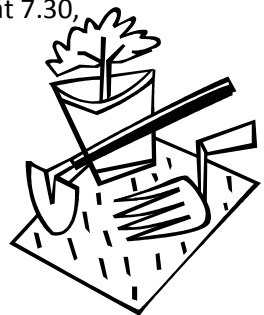
Dorothy Davidson

Gardening Group

It is now two years since the Gardening Club began and we are continuing to grow and attract new members from the surrounding area. We have had a wide range of speakers offering their expertise and knowledge on various garden subjects over the year, and the coming summer months will see us visiting gardens near and far.

Members pay a yearly subscription, but we welcome visitors and ask for a small donation. We meet usually on Monday evenings at 7.30,

Lorraine Rawlinson



L8R

Sunday night, discussion, games, food, silliness, 7.30, laughs, Jesus, Daniel, Joel, Sarah, Caroline, Emma, Emma, Matthew, Matthew, Ryan, Bethany, Mark, Neil, Sam, Hannah, Becca, Harry, Helen (telling us to shut up), Andrew (wanting someone to make tea); Clarissa (she's a cow....ceramic); God, faith, world, issues, cinema, environment, rounders, news, at the manse. lol



XPLORERS

As usual, we had a very busy year and would like to share some of our highlights with you.

On Good Friday, XPLORERS joined St. Luke's Sunday School to learn more about Easter. Using different colour themes, we attached various objects to decorated twigs to represent events that happened up to Easter Sunday. Following this, the children enjoyed hot cross buns and fruit juice. There were more treats on Easter Sunday when all the children received an Easter egg, courtesy of our dear friend Enid who was also celebrating her birthday.

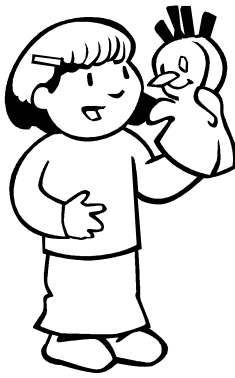
Holiday Club this year was called 'Champion's Challenge' and took the theme of sport. It was led by Rev Helen and each day alongside other children from our village, XPLORERS enjoyed playing games, doing various craft activities, singing, telling jokes & following the story on DVD.

The Sunday Club followed on from this with the title 'Race of Life'. We thought about how we live our lives and what we do with them; and we looked at people who have done extraordinary things through God's strength. A big thank you to all our helpers in the Sunday Club, especially Julia Tomes who helped with the organisation.

In October, XPLORERS had fun making both clay & 'post it note' houses and successfully helped raise funds for our Church Harvest project FAST Mission. In December, we rose to the challenge of dressing teddies for the nativity scene in the Teddy Bear Festival, hopefully admired by many. Our nativity service for 2010 was about 'The Real Meaning of Christmas'. With the help of our resident puppets (and some of REALity), XPLORERS presented a very enjoyable nativity, with some excellent acting, beautiful reading and singing accompanied by some very talented musicians. Well done to everyone who took part and thank you for the wonderful comments and notes of appreciation we received. Our year ended with a Christmas party and magical entertainment, undoubtedly enjoyed by everyone.

Finally, many thanks to all our leaders for their help & commitment with XPLORERS and for everyone's thoughts and prayers.

Janice Lysycia



REALITY

We meet on Sunday mornings during the main worship; except when there is a family worship. And cater for young people aged 11 to 17 (Years 7 to 13).

During sessions we continue our usual mix of games, activities, discussions, Bible study etc. And try to maintain a sense of acceptance where each young person is important and valued for who they are not simply for what they do. A place where they can voice their questions about faith and its relevance in their world. Sometimes we break up into smaller groups, other times we stay together.

Last year we took part in the Anniversary service which was themed 'The body of Christ'. We spent time in prep for this looking at all the many ways people are involved in 'making church work'. It was quite eye opening! We tried to mention them all during the service and used the reading from the Bible about 'The Body of Christ' which our puppets brought to life in the way that only they can! A beautifully choreographed and performed dance enhanced our sense of worship and was particularly well received.

For our party in the summer we enjoyed a hot meal together, as well as games and time to chat. And for our Christmas party we shared a fun breakfast together.....that was why you could smell bacon!

We also had an interesting time looking into the working of Fairtrade in Feb. We also made and decorated gingerbreads for the Fairtrade morning, using as many Fairtrade ingredients as possible ! They were quite tasty.

I am hugely grateful to Fiona Smith and Steve Best, for all their help and enthusiasm.

Barbara Rowland.

Prayer Group

This group meets most Tuesday mornings at 9.30 till 10.30 in the small hall or quiet room at church.

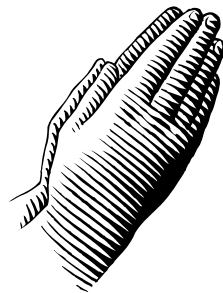
Although we cover a whole host of different topics both locally and globally, the main drive of our prayers is bringing all our church's people and activities to the Lord. Seeking His will and way for us and His healing and comfort too. We have a 'Prayer Box' at the top of the entrance hall, which you are encouraged to use. We include all prayer requests posted and know that people find this a useful way to ask for prayer.

On the 3rd Sunday every month, we share a United Prayer time with other Christians in our village. The location of these alter; so do check newsnotes for location. These times are particularly encouraging as our eyes are opened to the ways God is working across the different churches in the village. It's also a good opportunity to support each other.

Neither group has a 'set agenda'. We simply meet and open our hearts to the Lord, responding to Him and to His call to prayer. Some people pray a lot, some sit quietly, so we trust that all feel welcomed and able to take part in a way that is comfortable and helpful.

My thanks go to the faithful supporters and leaders of both groups.

Barbara Rowland



Last word - just to say a big thank you for all those who submitted a report enabling us all to read of the many aspects which make up our church community.

John 15:10-12

If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.