

Fellowship Report

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH



2025

Roles within the church

Minister	Revd Bob Adams
Secretary	Sue Hope
Treasurer	Wendy Whistler
Deacons	Hazel Adamson Sam Holmár Marianne Holt Sue Hope Wendy Whistler
Designated Safeguarding Person	Becky Dear
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person	Dawn Mills
Worship (to Aug 25)	Wendy Snead
Worship (from Sep 25)	Sam Holmar
Pastoral Care	Bob Adams
Property	Hazel Adamson
First Aid	Charlotte Holmár
Rotas	Mary Adams
DBS admin	Mary Adams
Church hire	Charlotte Holmár
AV Desk Coordinator	John Snead
Administrator	Charlotte Holmár

Pastor's Report

Pastor Bob Adams

Bethel Baptist Church Pastoral Report 2025

As ever, the hard work and commitment that has been put in this year has been a real encouragement as I know that many have had real personal challenges to face. Our testimony as a fellowship remains clear in the community and it is so good to hear folk talk about the Bethel folk in a really positive way.

The continued commitment to sacrificial giving of time, talent and finance is enabling us to be an effective witness to the community, and so, as always, thank you for your continued investment in the Lord's work here at Bethel.

It is hard to believe we are at the beginning of another year, and yet, it feels like we have lived through a decade in the course of the twelve months. Recent times have been, without exaggeration, some of the most chaotic, unsettling times in recent memory. Natural disasters are striking with unprecedented force. Wars rage on in the Middle East, Ukraine, and Russia. The administration of the USA has proved to be wilful and unpredictable in their deliberations. Food insecurity is on the rise, and despite global overproduction, 1 in every 11 people around the world in developed, developing and undeveloped nations are going hungry. Political systems are unsteady. Climate extremes are escalating. Economic pressures are tightening. The world is unravelling. Our systems are failing. And the truth is no one, despite the bluster, has real answers.

But amid this global turmoil, we must remember: **We are not without hope.** There is a promised future and a life more abundant for each one of us. But still, we have friends, family, and neighbours who don't know Jesus and many of them live without real hope.

Now is the time to speak the words of life into the lives of those we love and encounter. This is Jesus the one who said, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me."

We should be glad of the good we have in our lives, and determine, with God's help, to own the life he offers and speak hope into lives that are lost.

Visits

Visits continue around the fellowship, as ever, thank you for your kindness as you welcome me into your homes. I am also visiting the folks in residential care and hospital, also a number of new contacts.

The pastoral support team continue to give much of their time visiting and passing on any pastoral concerns so that I can react effectively and for this I am very grateful.

Preaching

Over the last year we have worked through series in Ephesians, Gideon and John's gospel. As we have started the new session we shall be continuing in John's gospel up until Easter and then a foray into the Old Testament. As ever, let me remind you sermons are recorded and available on YouTube and Sermon scripts are available.

Baptisms

We had the privilege of seeing Charlotte Crowhurst baptised and the dedication of her children Harry, Joseph, Isaac and Nancy. We then were blessed by the baptism of Charis Holt. Both were times of clear testimony, and we are thankful to the Lord for these special moments and memories.

Initiatives

Men's ministry

So far efforts have failed to get off of the ground but I do think it is worth persisting. If anyone would like to pick up the challenge do come and see me.

Joint services with St Andrews

These have been reduced to the Remembrance service although the new Rector did engage with the Christmas Carols in the market square.

Baptist Ministers fraternal

It is working well, we pray and meet on a regular basis which is a real encouragement.

Mentoring

Over the past two years I have been appointed the mentor to the pastor at Willingham Kwaku Efau. Kwaku's ministry has been a great encouragement, the Baptist Church in Willingham continues to see significant change and growth with an international flavour. Do continue to pray for them.

Swavesey and Fen Drayton Primary Schools

I continue to hear children read in the classrooms, year 1-2 at Swavesey and year 5-6 at Fen Drayton. I have stood down from the Governing body at Swavesey Primary, the

reason so that I can focus more on chaplaincy. I am now an associate governor. We are hoping that we can secure a theatre team again this year for Easter following the success of last year's event.

Prayer

I was saddened to hear that the Sunday morning zoom prayer meeting has come to an end, certainly I have benefitted from the prayers offered for Sunday mornings. In this next session I think it is expedient that we start making efforts to raise our prayer profile.

Prayer Breakfast

It is hoped to start running this on a Saturday morning on a monthly basis in the church building. Starting with a continental style breakfast then moving into a time of focussed prayer around a theme or missionary interest.

Prayer for Swavesey/Fen Drayton/Boxworth

It is also hoped as a follow on from the prayer breakfast, that we can encourage the communities that we as a fellowship represent to come to pray on a regular basis, maybe bimonthly. Prayer Room. We are privileged to have this space, and we need to start using it, so if anyone has any ideas for its regular use let me know.

1TIMOTHY 2:1a I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people

Secretary's Report

Sue Hope

Another year, and another opportunity to look back and give thanks to God for what He has done for us and through us.

We start with some figures:

Membership 39, an increase on 2024. We had resignations from Terry and Mary Crump as well as Stephen and Stephanie Tabram. We welcomed 6 people into membership; Bob and Eileen Kilpatrick, Martin and Ann Johnson and Viki and Eddy Letzer. They are already very much active friends in our fellowship and we praise God they have decided to become members. We have also seen more new faces worshipping with us during the year and we extend a warm welcome to them.

2 baptisms. We celebrated and praised God with Charlotte Crowhurst and Charis Holt as they shared their testimonies and went through the waters of baptism. It was a joy that Charlotte's four children, Harry, Joseph, Isaac and Nancy were dedicated in the service when Charlotte was baptized. A true family affair!

9 people regularly attending an Alpha course. This was spearheaded by the Tuesday house group in the Autumn of 2025 and we thank God for the lives impacted and pray that the journey of faith started by those participating will continue through 2026. A big thank you to John and Karen Smith and John and Wendy Snead for their dedication in the leading and teaching and for the members of the house group and others that supported with the practicalities of preparing meals, setting up and clearing away for the three months duration.

At Easter we sponsored a group who went into the primary school to present the Easter story which was well received and we hope to repeat in other years.

Our May church meeting saw the re-election of Hazel Adamson and Wendy Whistler as deacons and Wendy was appointed to continue as Treasurer. The Leadership team was very relieved at this and we thank God for Wendy's knowledge and skills as our Treasurer.

Becky had decided not to stand for re-election to spend more time supporting the family and we thank her for her service as a deacon over the previous years.

Some of our Gift Day monies were used to support Rhiannon Silvanus in her fundraising for a Girl Guide trip to South Africa in 2026. She very much appreciated this and we pray that through the trip her faith will be strengthened. We look forward to hearing about it in the future.

While Pastor Bob was on holiday we had preachers from our own Bethel family as well as outside speakers. We had a slightly different approach this year and asked them to go through Mark's gospel. It was interesting to hear different perspectives on familiar stories. We thank and praise God that we have so many willing and gifted people within our fellowship to serve us in this way.

In September Wendy Snead stood down as Worship Group leader after serving in this way for over 30 years. We have been very privileged that Wendy has used her God-given gifts to serve Him in this way for so long and she will be missed by the worship team. The church acknowledged its thanks with a gift that was presented in November, acknowledging that John Snead has also supported her and the group as well.

In December we saw the success again of the village carols, thanking God for good weather!

Our Advent and Christmas services were well received and many from the community came to the Candlelight service, giving very positive feedback.

During the year the Property team has been kept busy with repairs being taken on by members of the team and the lights being upgraded. There has been a longstanding issue with the roof that we pray will be sorted early in 2026. We give a big thank you to all members of the property team who serve so willingly in this area, keeping our building fit for use for God's work and worship. For those who may be newer, the team consists of Austin Day, Ed King, Peter Holt, Jon Mills, Hazel Adamson, Wendy Whistler and Bob Adams.

We praise God that we have each other as our extended family at Bethel as well as wonderful facilities that are not only used by Bethel but also many groups in the community. Our prayer is that God will use these connections and our relationships with the group members to bring more people into God's family with the help of the Holy Spirit. God bless you all as you continue to serve Him and if you want to try something new please reach out!

Finance

Wendy Whistler

Finance Report

The finance information and accounts reflect the work of the church which can be found within the individual group reports, and so this is a summary of the main things that have affected our finances.

Property

Some of the more routine items relating to the building and the Manse include boiler services, fire equipment inspections, portable electrical equipment testing. Smaller items of repairs and replacement include kettles, cafetieres, glass, blinds, fridge, bench, and water heater. There was also work involved with the storage 'project'.

The work to the lighting across the whole building has now been completed, most of the cost of these falls within the 2025 accounts, along with the scaffolding for the roof repairs. The remaining costs of both projects will be accounted for in 2026.

Thanks as ever go to the team who carry out this work and organisation behind the scenes.

Thanksgiving Day

The gift day this year amounted to £3750 when including gift aid and donations were made to Mission Direct, Rhiannon Silvanus' fundraising for future trip and Alpha costs. The balance went towards the storage project and other property items.

Employees

We continue to employ an administrator at 10 hours per week. It was agreed at the November meeting to raise the pay rate of the post to the national living wage as this is higher than the national minimum wage. We also agreed at that meeting to increase the stipend for our minister by the BU recommended 2.8%.

We continue to pray and consider further employment of a family worker.

Hire

The building continues to be well used by community groups and for private functions. Along with the church run activities it is a busy building!

Giving

We always aim to give money to other causes as a proportion of our income and in response to need. We continue to support Cambridge & District Youth for Christ, BMS Home Mission and BMS World Mission.

Income

As you will be aware, apart from a small amount of hire income, running the church and employing and supporting our minister is funded solely by donations and offerings from the church congregation. We are very tax efficient and maximise the amount of gift aid we can claim from these donations. This year's income has decreased from the previous year. The regular giving by church members tends to fluctuate as people's circumstances change, however at the end of the year our regular giving was higher than at the beginning.

WHY GIVE REGULARLY?

- We want to give thanks to God for His mercies towards us and His provision
- As an act of thanksgiving and worship, we want to be a generous people with our time, prayers and finances
- It is our responsibility as a congregation to fund the stipend and associated costs of the minister and his/her family
- If we want to have a limitless vision, we need to match this with resources
- Giving is our response to God's amazing grace and the indescribable gift of His Son to us.
- Generous giving blesses others and supplies the needs of God's people, it is also an act of obedience and trust during these uncertain days – in doing it we are saying that it is God, not ourselves or anyone else, who ultimately provides for our needs.

Accounts

With regards to income, we exceeded our budget in Donations (due to not budgeting for Gift Day), Events (e.g., Cafe Church) and Lettings. Gift Aid Tax refunds and Offerings/Regular income did not meet the budget.

We had originally budgeted for an in-year deficit of just under £8,000, but although regular income was down, we also spent less and ended the year with an in-year

deficit of £1,478. Our expenditure exceeded budget for giving and mission, but all other areas were well within their budgeted figures.

Our closing balance at the year-end was £36,499.

The accounts are reported below. We had 3 restricted funds, where income for that purpose can only be used for that purpose: Carols on the Green, Club Vintage and Time Banking Team. The General fund is unrestricted and makes up the main part of the accounts.

Income and Expenditure

Swavesey Bethel Baptist Church

For the year ended 31 December 2025

Account	2025 Total	Carols on the Green	Club Vintage	Time Banking Team	General
Income					
Donations	6,131.58	0.00	828.00	0.00	5,002.08
Events	4,284.45	580.00	2,542.40	0.00	1,162.05
Gift Aid Tax Refunds	14,836.57	0.00	0.00	0.00	14,836.57
Interest Income	347.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	347.90
Lettings - Church and Halls	4,618.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,618.00
Offerings	54,115.55	0.00	0.00	0.00	54,115.55
Total Income	84,334.05	580.00	3,370.40	0.00	80,082.15
Total Income	84,334.05	580.00	3,370.40	0.00	80,082.15

Expenditure

Administrator	6,552.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,552.00
Church Services	1,269.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,269.38
Cleaning	4,611.22	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,611.22
Equipment	1,708.62	0.00	7.60	0.00	1,701.02

Event or Activity	4,428.65	540.69	3,321.67	100.00	466.29
General expenses	18.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	18.00
Giving	1,866.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,866.50
Insurance	2,471.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,471.15
Minister	35,793.42	0.00	0.00	0.00	35,793.42
Mission	7,291.64	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,291.64
Office Expenses	2,631.98	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,631.98
Pastoral Needs	394.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	92.77
Repairs & Maintenance	7,812.59	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,812.59
Subscriptions	252.20	0.00	45.00	0.00	207.20
Utilities	7,893.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,893.40
Youth Work	881.72	0.00	0.00	0.00	881.72
Total Expenditure	85,876.74	540.69	3,374.27	100.00	81,560.28
Income vs Expenditure	(1,542.69)	39.31	(3.87)	(100.00)	(1,478.13)
Opening Balance	41,691.11	1,592.82	1,945.33	175.90	37,977.06
Closing Balance	40,148.42	1,632.13	1,941.46	75.90	36,498.93

2026 Budget

In the November fellowship meeting we agreed the following:

- To increase the administrator's pay rate to the national living wage of £13.45 per hour
- To increase the stipend payable to our Pastor by the BU recommendation of 2.8%

A couple of other points upon which the budget is based:

- Offerings have been calculated based on the level of giving in December 2025
- The Gift Aid has been calculated on the tax efficient giving of 2025.
- We expect the cost of utilities, cleaning products and general supplies to continue to increase.
- We need to ensure we have funds to tackle property issues and purchase of equipment as necessary to be safe and deliver services.
- We expect a further in-year deficit, but we have enough reserves to support this and any other projects or giving that we wish to pursue and support during the year.

2026 Budget

Swavesey Bethel Baptist Church

Account	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Budget 2026
Income			
Donations	1,100.00	5,002.08	1,000.00
Events	1,000.00	1,162.05	1,000.00
Gift Aid Tax Refunds	16,000.00	14,836.57	15,000.00
Interest Income	400.00	347.90	350.00
Lettings - Church and Halls	4,500.00	4,618.00	4,000.00
Offerings	56,500.00	54,115.55	55,056.00
Total Turnover	79,500.00	80,082.15	76,406.00
Income	79,500.00	80,082.15	76,406.00
Expenditure			
Administrator	6,552.00	6,552.00	6,850.00
Church Services	2,000.00	1,269.38	2,000.00
Cleaning	5,000.00	4,611.22	5,000.00
Equipment	1,000.00	1,701.02	1,100.00
Event or Activity	2,000.00	466.29	2,000.00
General	50.00	18.00	50.00
Giving	1,000.00	1,866.50	1,000.00
Insurance	2,800.00	2,471.15	2,800.00
Minister	36,500.00	35,793.42	37,500.00
Mission	6,500.00	7,291.64	6,500.00
Office Expenses	2,500.00	2,631.98	2,500.00
Pastoral Needs	1,000.00	92.77	1,000.00
Repairs & Maintenance	10,000.00	7,812.59	10,000.00
Subscriptions	550.00	207.20	250.00
Utilities	9,000.00	7,893.40	9,000.00
Youth Work	1,000.00	881.72	1,000.00
Total Administrative Costs	87,452.00	81,560.28	88,550.00
In Year Balance	(7,952.00)	(1,478.13)	(12,144.00)
Opening Balance	37,977.06	37,977.06	37,977.06
Closing Balance	30,025.06	36,498.93	25,833.06

Worship Group

Wendy Snead & Sam Holmár

Worship group

Leader: Wendy Snead

Keyboard: Jo Cayley

Eden Ludlam

Guitars: Sam Holmár Singers: Wendy Snead

Yinka Opaleye Charlotte Holmár

Connie Wilson

Sue Hope

John Snead

Ed King

Sam Holmár

Flute: Connie Wilson

Charis Holt

Recorders: Genny Silvanus

Jo Cayley

Clarinet: Ellen Sylvanus

Genny Sylvanus

Drums: Pete Holt

AV Desk Jon Mills

Jason and John Dear

John Snead

Pete Holt

John Smith

Sam Holmár

A note from Wendy

Many of you will know or have gathered by now that after serving God by leading Bethel's worship group and services for over 30 yrs I have taken the decision to step down permanently from this role. This decision was not made lightly but prayerfully, and was necessary not only for my own well being but to give opportunity for others to take on this role. In laying this down it will allow space for God to show me new and different ways to serve Him!

It says in God's word that 'There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens....' Ecc 3:1 and this is such a time.

I have always felt it a great honour and privilege to lead people in praise of God on a Sunday morning. Since the beginning of the worship group back in the 1990's when Richard and Sue Owen asked me to form and head this up I have felt truly blessed by all who have

joined me and enhanced the worship by singing or playing an instrument. Some of these people are now leading worship themselves here, or in other churches I thank God for them all old and young a like!

I am certain that those who carry on leading services will continue to seek God's guidance over the future of worship at Bethel and together with Him move on into new ways of worshiping week by week. This could be an exciting 'season' for them all and myself as we look to God for direction and guidance.

A huge 'Thank You' to the Worship team and Bethel family for your kind words, cards, flowers, gift and love shown to me. God bless you all richly as you serve Him.

Worship this year

It was with sadness that we said goodbye to Wendy as leader of the worship group in the second half of this year. We look forward to seeing how God uses her next. We are so very grateful, both as a worship group and a fellowship, for her faithful leadership at Bethel for many years. Many of us in the group have learnt so much from Wendy and her wonderful guidance and encouragement. We are pleased that both she and John remain an active part of the Bethel family and that we will continue to benefit from access to their wealth of experience.

It is such a joy to be able to take part in leading the Bethel family in worship, whether as a singer or musician. Our aim as a worship group is always to lift up the name of Jesus and help us all fix our eyes on Him. There are many parts of our services which come together to form our corporate worship, and the music and songs are just one aspect of that.

With Wendy stepping down this year we have made the decision to share out the responsibility of leading in our services to various members of our team, with Sam Holmár taking on a coordinator role. Sue Hope, Sam Holmár, Pete and Marianne Holt, Becky Dear and Bob Adams have all led services throughout the year. We work closely alongside Pastor Bob and other preachers (visiting and from within Bethel) to ensure that our services are sensitive to the messages being brought and are guided by the leading of the Holy Spirit. We seek to regularly incorporate prayer, for ourselves, our community and wider world into our services as part of our worship.

We continue to expand our choices of worship songs and hymns, drawing from a variety of styles both contemporary and ancient. We met as a team with Pastor Bob in the autumn to discuss plans moving forward and how we would operate as a group. We agreed to continue meeting weekly on Wednesday evenings, not only to

practise for the coming Sunday, but to also grow our skills and introduce ourselves to and practice new songs for the future. Our worship practices continue to be very fruitful times and offer a pause in the week to glorify God together. We also agreed as a team that we would benefit from worship training and are currently exploring avenues in which we can do this.

In addition to our regular services, we also had several opportunities throughout the year to take part in additional worship activities, particularly around Easter and Christmas. These included our Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Sunrise services at Easter and our carols by candlelight service at Christmas. With our carol service we were very pleased to welcome in some additional members to our group including Claire and John Ludlam, Ed King and Wendy Whistler. This service was a wonderful outreach opportunity and was well attended, we are so grateful for all who took part in this. Our plans for an additional all age carol service were postponed due to such a busy Christmas itinerary with hopes to put on an all-age service (with a different theme) later in the year.

Again, a huge thank you to all who take part in any way in worship at Bethel. We are so blessed to be able to join together worshipping our amazing God! If you feel led to offer any skills you have towards being part of the worship team then please do get in contact with any of the team.

Tuesday Homegroup

John Snead

Our group meets most Tuesday evenings although like other groups we take a break during the school holidays, or if most of us can't make it that week. A good part of our evening is spent sharing what's been happening in our lives since our last meeting. We share concerns and issues that are troubling us and our families, and this informs our prayers later in the evening. Some of us have navigated difficult health-related, personal and family issues this year; the support from the group has been tremendously helpful.

You may recall that leading up to Christmas 2024, we embarked on producing a series of short videos through Advent about different aspects of the Christmas story, sharing them on social media. Following the success of this venture, called *talkingchristmas*, we challenged ourselves to do something similar – but different – at Easter.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. After Christmas as we were considering how we could follow on from talkingchristmas, we decided to use the Empowered video-based course presented by Becky Pippert & Dick Molenhouse, which had previously been followed a couple of years before by the other Tuesday Group before it closed. The theme of the course is evangelism, with teaching on how to approach and be successful at this vital activity. At first, we weren't sure of the presentation style of the course, but soon realised that Becky, in particular, is a very powerful speaker, and her teaching was backed up by numerous testimonies. The videos were interspersed with Bible passages and discussion.

And so to Easter; we took a different line from our Christmas videos, choosing to focus on Jesus's last week leading up to his death and resurrection. On each day of Holy Week, starting with Palm Sunday, one of us read from the gospels an account of the events of that day - in real time so to speak - posting again on various social media platforms. To maintain the link to our Christmas videos, we called this series "talkingchristmas at Easter".

In the spring, the group was focussing more on Mission, and the idea of running an Alpha Course was born. After seeking approval from the church leadership, we spent several weeks through the summer planning for and praying about the course and the potential attendees. A major activity during this time was preparing all the advertising material, and we are grateful to those church members who delivered leaflets through the whole of Swavesey and in parts of Fen Drayton, Fenstanton and Over.

All members of the homegroup were involved week by week throughout the course, either by leading, catering, setting up and clearing, and of course praying, and we are grateful to those others in the wider fellowship who helped with many of these tasks.

We are certain that the Alpha course was a success, and we know that many of those attending had their spiritual lives enhanced by the experience. Please read Karen's report on the Alpha course which gives much more information about the course and its impact, including some feedback from many of those attending.

With the course running every Tuesday right up to Christmas, we didn't get round to arranging a homegroup Christmas meal, so in early January we spent an evening at the Three Tuns, our favourite local venue.

Thursday Afternoon Homegroup

Mary Adams

Beginning at 2pm or there abouts! This group is relaxed and warm. We currently have nine folks attending but in recent days have had a few visitors.

As per last years report we alternate between starting with prayer and or study.

Since the group started, we have been working through the Old Testament, kind of a 'walk through the bible.' Currently we are in 1Samuel. It has been helpful that we can look back at the history and travels of the ancient nation of Israel. It also helps to see the application for us as believers on our pilgrimage journey. Pastor Bob continues to prepare notes; these help as our discussions can be quite wide ranging. Our times together have become a 'safe space' to explore our faith together.

If you would like to come along, please do, we would love to see you. Sometimes we have cake!

Thursday Evening Homegroup

Kate Wilson

We have had another wonderful year with the Thursday evening home group filled with a lot of fellowship, love, prayer and support for each other through the challenges that group members have faced along the way.

In lent we studied the Wild bright hope - big church read study book that brought together 12 different voices bringing various approaches to dynamic hope.

We enjoyed a fabulous pancake evening altogether competing to see how many toppings could be fitted into one pancake - we think Charlie was the winner!

Later in the year we followed a study on 1 John and had one off sessions on identity - led by Jo, and prayer led by Janet.

We are now starting the new year studying the topic of grace using some fantastic videos from the bible project which have helped to promote some interesting discussions.

As a group we talk a lot about the various situations that we see happening in our world and have been focusing on these in our prayers both during and after the sessions.

The great strength of our group is the support that we are able to provide for each other in love and prayer and in more practical ways such as the delivery of physical tuition to our younger members, the support of group members in their dramatic productions, the cooking of meals in times of need - the provision and sharing of fellowship across the generations.

We are very blessed indeed for the opportunity that this group provides for us to come together in prayer to study the word of god and to support each other as we strive to live his will in our modern world.

Alpha Course

Karen & John Smith



During Autumn 2025, our Tuesday Evening home group organised an eleven week Alpha course. Twelve people booked to attend and nine guests stuck with us through the whole course. Alpha is a package- It provides essential training for the team, the videos for each week and support and encouragement from the national team, The Alpha App gives guests access to rewatch the videos and additional resources and the schedule for the course.

The meal and conversations whilst eating (a fundamental part of an Alpha course) provided a relaxed and unthreatening atmosphere for those who came and a time to get to know each other better.

The videos gave a clear explanation of the core of Christian belief. Our guests found the personal testimonies and talks by various Christian leaders interspersed with the main presenters, Gemma and Toby, were excellent: very thought-provoking and often emotionally engaging.

Peterborough Christian Bookshop provided a great selection of books to sell and it was wonderful that many guests bought a Bible, having weighed up the benefits of different translations. The Alpha recommended books which we lent or gave away were also a great source of interest and encouragement to guests.

As a team, we relied on the Lord at every step and we enjoyed serving Him together. Everybody in our group played their part from delivering leaflets to prayer back up to setting/clearing/washing up to catering to chatting, and leading sessions. It was a learning curve for us as a team with a few hiccups and challenges along the way but overall was rewarding and encouraging.

And what a positive outcome! For some guests it was a re-engagement with faith after many years, for some it was all very fresh and new, for some a deepening understanding of a particular aspect of faith. It was encouraging to see people's

thinking changed and their preconceived ideas about Jesus and particularly the Holy Spirit altered or better understood. It was a huge privilege to pray one to one with guests to be filled with the Holy Spirit and share with them what that felt like and meant to them. We felt blessed that all our guests were delightful and we enjoyed building new relationships.

Friendships were made and we know for sure that lives were changed for the better. At the end of the day, the real joy was to be found in seeing the Holy Spirit do His work as we shared in moments of commitment and recommitment to Jesus and this encouragement is our lasting focus.

Here is a selection of guest comments:



.....I realize even more (now) how special a time it was, a safe time with like-minded people, where you could share your thoughts and ask questions in a way very rarely experienced, even among friends.



..... it's guided me back to church, I did not realise how much I missed it.....



Each week I found memories and feelings about faith which had been quite buried, and indeed not talked about for many years..... It helped me to realise I still actually have a deep faith, albeit one which is quite personal to me. It has made me think about the power of prayer, community, and indeed the possibility of healing..... Maybe a small miracle happened, as it has given me my confidence back, and somehow I also have less pain.



Please accept my heartfelt thanks for all the Alpha sessions you so efficiently organised. Nicky Gumbel and the two young presenters made the films so awe-inspiring and interesting, giving me lots of food for thought..... So many thanks to everyone who's helped to make the catering happen, it really is quite special to eat together each week, especially for those who've been at work all day or usually eat alone.



.....But what an amazing experience this course was. After years in Christian limbo-land, I felt the Holy Spirit touch me last week and experienced God's healing on my soul..... I liked the videos a lot, especially the testimonies from people like

Reverend Paul Cowley, whose book 'Thief, Prisoner, Soldier, Priest' really spoke to me. I think a lot of people who are examining the Christian faith feel like they are not 'good enough' for the Christian life and are doomed to fail. Paul's candid autobiography expresses this so well. Very good, learning lots about Jesus and about Church.



.....It made a big difference to how I think about prayer.....

What a wonderful Christmas Dinner we were all able to enjoy [on the] last night. The last of many which have been so appreciated!

Club Vintage

Sue Hope, Wendy & John Snead



Leaders: Sue Hope, Wendy and John Snead

Helpers: Mary Adams, Leigh Clements, Lynda Dickerson,
Miggy Firth, Trisha
Howard, Judith Kitchener

Drivers: Hazel Adamson, Malcolm Clements, Sue Ellington, Genny Silvanus,
Steven Wilson

Now in our 5th year, we have continued to meet every week through the year on a Wednesday afternoon, apart from on Christmas Day and New Year's Day when we took a break! Our programme, planned quarterly, includes Love to Move exercise sessions, singing at Lyrics and Laughter, table games and puzzles, occasional craft afternoons and visiting speakers.

The chair-based exercise sessions are well received and participants enter fully into them. When the club started we used a programme designed by the British Gymnastics Society that was dementia-friendly, using songs that were familiar for the age group. During 2025 Sue obtained a grant from South Cambs District Council and trained to deliver a new programme of exercises that are suitable for helping older people to get fit and to be able to do their daily activities, keeping them in their own homes. These can be modified to individuals' needs and how they would like to progress. There are also active games which promote team work and collaboration, causing laughter and hilarity! As the group loves music, they have chosen the tracks we play in the background and popular choices are the music of Abba, Barry Manilow, Bee Gees and more.

At our Lyrics and Laughter sessions, we took the theme of 'Seasons throughout the year' and found songs about Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. We used some of these seasons to mark special occasions such as Easter, Remembrance Day and Harvest. We were joined by Polly Wilderspin for our Harvest celebration who gave us a good insight into the life of a farmer's wife and how it is to be working the land in these days compared to the past.

A special thanks go to Joe and Jan McLelland for helping with the musical accompaniment on the Lyrics weeks and for Joe's talks that are always interesting and informative and complement the theme of the songs.

We have just started a new theme for 2026 of 'God's created world', with hymns and songs about nature and wildlife.

This past year we have had several visiting speakers who have informed and entertained us on a variety of subjects:

- Well-known local “celebrity” Dr Larry Amure - promoting his biography!
- Joe McLelland, our pianist, who spoke about the history of the Salvation Army
- A repeat visit by Susan Bate from the Norris Museum in St Ives, who brought a variety of artifacts from their archives and asked us to guess what they were!
- Terry & Karen from the South Cambs Library service who with our local library assistant (and Club Vintage member) Jan Waller talked about the services that libraries can provide – and it isn’t just books and DVDs!

As in previous years we were entertained by children from Swavesey Primary School on two occasions: once during the summer term and again in December to sing carols. An unusual visitor on another occasion was Roxy, a cocker spaniel, accompanied her handler from the organisation Pets As Therapy.

In July with the help of some additional drivers, we all took a trip out to Waresley Garden Centre.

At our 4th Birthday Party in October, we were expecting entertainers who had been before but unfortunately had to pull out at the last minute due to a health problem, so we had to make some last-minute adjustments to the programme! We still had a lovely tea which was provided by our new cake baker who had just taken over from our previous suppliers following their retirement.

On 17th December we celebrated Christmas by cooking and serving Christmas dinner for 40, which was enjoyed by all.

During 2025 we have had 4 new members and said goodbye to 3, including David North who sadly passed away; Margaret Blackburn and Sue Atkinson moved into care and can no longer attend.

Our average weekly attendance is 16 and we have 31 on the register. New members are always welcome to join us and if you know someone who is lonely or a couple who need company, please do give them a copy of our programme (copies usually available in the Compass Room) or let us know so that we can contact them.

We are financially viable and still charge the same weekly fee as we did back when we started in October 2021.

We give our grateful thanks to all our volunteer helpers and drivers as we could not run the club without them. If you could offer help with driving, if only occasionally, then please let us know.

We praise God for our members and volunteers, many of whom are not church goers. We include short elements of the gospel when appropriate and always thank God for the food we share together. It was lovely to see so many at the Candlelight service and a couple of those attending have started coming to church. Our prayer is that our gentle approach helps folks to know God's peace and presence in their lives.

Compass Café

Ruth Day

Compass Cafe Annual Report January 2026

We continue to host Compass Cafe on the first Thursday in the month. The encouraging thing about doing this is the loyalty and camaraderie of the team of helpers.

Attendance at the cafe is down on earlier years, but there is a strong core of regulars who enjoy getting together. The cafe has become a major watering hole for Cycling Clubs in Cambridgeshire and the revenue that the cyclists bring in is most welcome. Each host group puts 10% of their takings into the Central Fund which is used to purchase tea and coffee etc for use at the Cafe.

We give grateful thanks to all those who help with making cakes, serving, washing up and clearing away.

Little Lights

Charlotte Holmár



We have had another wonderful year at Little Lights during 2025. I think the whole team will agree with me that our biggest blessing yet is the new addition to some wonderful parents joining our team rota. This has been such an answer to prayer for our team because it means that we can now take it in turns to have a week off.

Our Little Lights team for 2025- Charlotte. H, Emma, Janet, Kat, Marianne, Miggy, Rachel, Sophie & Wendy. S.

We ended the year much quieter than how it started. With a large group of our very first Little Lighters starting school/pre-school we now have a rather large (and quiet) gap. Although we were very sad to see them go, it was special to see the children that came through the doors, as babies, on our very first session, leaving ready to start their new school adventure.

Families join us 10:00am-12:00pm every Friday morning during term time for just £2 per family. During this time families are welcome to free-flow through the building where there are little cars and ride on toys in the meridian hall where they enter, drinks and snacks at the bar, a quiet room for reading and teddies in the lounge and lots of toys and activities in the main church.

We thank God for his provision of help this year. We have been overwhelmed by the growth in our team. We are also so grateful for those that have been with us from the start and pray that God will protect, nurture and care for them as they start their schooling journey. We pray that, through this early introduction to Bethel, they might know our building is a safe and loving place for them.

Please pray with us as we welcome new families through the doors. That they might also experience some lifelong friendships and connections here with us and will be led to Jesus.