

# Gorse Hill

## BAPTIST CHURCH

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### **Nurture and Growth**

#### **Introduction**

In May 2017 the deacons assigned seven deacons to work in four key areas across the church, Pastoral Care, Prayer & Worship, Discipleship and Evangelism. These were identified as the four main areas that GHBC needs to develop as part of its vision of 'Knowing God to make Him known'.

Following this assignment, the Members Meetings in July, September, October and November each spent time discussing one of the key areas. Each time was very different but equally effective in enabling everyone to engage with the issues identified. Those attending were also able to share their own thoughts, suggestions and concerns in an open atmosphere of discussion.

A copy of the paper discussed and accepted at the Member's meeting (January 2018) is available for information and reference.

The purposes of this brief paper are twofold

- **summarising progress to date (including actions agreed through 2018 MM's)**
- **detailing those matters (as agreed by members in Jan 2018 and through later MM discussions) which remain to be addressed**

### **Prayer, Praise and Worship (Shirley)**

#### *Progress to date*

- the number of recipients of the prayer emails has grown significantly over the past year
- the AV team project a roundup of the most recent prayer requests
- the flip chart has been used on a few occasions to promote reasons to pray e.g. be thankful, however this really needs to be led by the leader of the service
- prayer cards continue to be used and pinned to the prayer board in the foyer
- many worship leaders use different styles of prayer and aids to help/encourage others to pray: GHBC also has frequent prayer focus services
- following Transformed Life small groups have followed the HTB prayer series based on the Lord's Prayer. There are also opportunities for corporate prayer outside of the main services.
- GHBC has a number of worship leaders who lead our Sunday services with a variety of styles.

#### *Opportunities*

- new members to the music group are always welcome and to be encouraged
- the music group is going through a time of change and will be looking for a new leader in the spring
- develop our prayer life through Sunday services: making more use of Visual prayers (e.g. Flip Chart)

## **Discipleship (Steve)**

If we are to take our faith seriously and if we are to follow the calling God has given us as both a church and individuals, then we need to invest in

- how we journey and learn together
- how we support one another
- how we grow closer to God
- how we provide the essential foundations to support our prayer life, missional outreach/social impact and pastoral care

### *Progress to date*

- we introduced a church wide teaching program integrating Sunday teaching, home groups and personal discovery (Transformed Life)
- this was set within the broader theme of *Growing in Christ* linked to our motto text from Philippians 3:12 "pressing on"
- we have set up a new team bringing experience and different approaches to our Sunday and Home Group teaching
- we have seen a significant increase of those committed to Home Groups from c. 40 to over 130. Training and support has been provided for those leading groups following the appointment of a Home Group Co-ordinator
- we have reviewed our resource provision and have begun to draw it together: further work follows
- we've run two Marriage Courses which have been very helpful to those involved
- two young people have been sponsored by GHBC to attend a young leaders course run by Counties Evangelists

### *Opportunities*

- developing a mentoring/support program. This is in place for those facing significant personal challenges but needs to be applied more widely (not just in emergencies)
- extending the teaching team: making more use of the gifts we are already aware of
- providing more opportunities to train leaders and to encourage every member ministry
- discovering more ways of encouraging personal growth

## **Children and Young People (Lars)**

This area is included in this report as it represents a significant area addressed in 2018 through the C & Y P Review

### *Progress to date*

- the C&YP leaders will continue to develop the work of their activities, they are committed and have dedicated teams behind them
- there is a strong desire to ensure that children and young people develop a strong relationship with our Christ and stay with the church into adulthood
- to this end the leaders have asked that Tina Burbidge works with the teaching team to build on the co-ordinated teaching that was beneficial in the Transformed Life series
- the C&YP leaders aim to build on the survey completed in 2018 to tackle the issues raised on three levels:
  - issues that can be solved by the teams themselves, **e.g. ensuring every child has access to a bible,**
  - those solvable by the deacons and management teams, **e.g. addressing safety concerns for the crèche,**
  - and long terms issues that will need to be tackled by the church membership.

### *Opportunities*

- **the long term** issues and recommended ways forward are to be discussed in the January Members Meeting
- any changes required progressed through 2019.

### **Pastoral (Alison)**

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13: 34 – 35)

We are commanded by Jesus to love each other. As a pastoral care team we aim to ensure that anyone who is in need receives appropriate care.

### *Progress to date*

- continued support and care for those in need
- replacing 3 members who left the team during 2019
- a church wide survey to determine availability for supporting needs within the fellowship. The results formed the basis of database which is helping us to be more efficient in delivering care
- we are grateful for the fellowship’s support (both in practical terms and financially) for those needing close support over complex issues
- initial discussions on the link between the Pastoral Care Team and Home Groups

### *Opportunities*

- increasing the size of our pastoral care team
- extending the pastoral care database: inspiring everyone to become involved in care and support where possible and appropriate
- exploring and supporting the extension of pastoral care with each Home Group linking with a member of the Pastoral Care Team and being responsible for local care

### **Evangelism (Caleb)**

Go, the ‘Great Commission’, Jesus’ last command or evangelism. Whatever we call it, Jesus calls us to do it – to share the Good News of salvation, forgiveness and grace with those around us.

Reflecting on our motto text for 2017 from Romans 12, we recognised that we are all called to live out our faith in an authentic way, to stand out wherever we are and to enthusiastically proclaim the name of Jesus Christ: to personally evangelise.

Whilst we recognise that GHBC has a longstanding history of engaging with the Gorse Hill community regularly, there was the feeling that we could still do more! Building on the relationships we’ve made, sharing our faith in a personal and meaningful way, equipping each other with confidence and knowledge of our faith through discipleship, at the same time as also providing the key materials and relevant resources.

### *Progress to date*

- a building phase focussed on discipleship with the view to leading to evangelism, encouraging personal reflection through Transformed Life into Transformed Living. Bringing to life those with conviction to share more broadly and equipping them.
- Festival 2018 was a great success: we were blessed as we have been year on year. The fresh approach of leading into a 'discover' course led by Colin was successfully implemented, but the impact could be worked on for next year. Engaging with Counties Evangelism provided a valuable interactive resource in Key to Life that was well received on the day.
- Christmas saw us light up the Gorse Hill streets, bringing light and hope to others. Our day's outreach led by Steve H, to share our Christmas events, led to a number of people attending carol services etc that wouldn't normally.
- Community Carols with Gorse Hill Primary School gave a fantastic opportunity for Steve R to share a 'Cracker Gospel' message as prompted by the Spirit to a full church from the community!
- Friday C&YP continue to faithfully proclaim the gospel and grow in number. How we build on these relationships is to be worked on further.

### *Opportunities*

- Evangelism course / teaching series – utilise in house experience / bring in a resource to run a course. Likely to focus on personal impact and ministry – but could also have a specific drive in talking about how we reach wider as a church as a whole.
- engage with local schools and Counties Evangelism to see if we can use some of their resources to bless the local schools. Key to Life interactive media van or Jesus Live experience. This would form part of the schools' ministry.
- Festival 2019. Building on the work that's gone before and continue to improve what we are able to offer to the community. Continuing to acknowledge that although this may be a 'peak' of our evangelistic activities, it is not the be all and end all.
- Christmas Lights Version 2. Build on our lighting from 2018, enabling a custom message of 'Jesus, Light of the World' or similar to be installed on the Sanctuary roof – visible from the train tracks and most approaches to the Transfer Bridges roundabout.
- engage with activities to reflect on their evangelistic impact, can we do more / adapt to the changing world around us to have a greater impact?