



Walmer Baptist Church

*a Christian community
for the community
in the community*

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Annual Report on the Ministry and Mission in 2018

For the Annual General Church Meeting
Saturday 9 February 2019

MINISTER

The Revd Seyan Tills BTh

LEADERSHIP TEAM

**Kate Birrell, Rita Bishop,
Alan Cook, Truida Jardine,
Janet Saunders, Roger Saunders**

CHURCH TEXT 2018

My friends, watch out!

Don't let evil thoughts or doubts make any of you turn from the living God. You must encourage one another each day.

And you must keep on while there is still a time that can be called "today." If you don't, then sin may fool some of you and make you stubborn.

We were sure about Christ when we first became his people.

So let's hold tightly to our faith until the end.

Hebrews 3.12-14 (CEV)

Reports

Audio/Visual

It is a privilege to be able to continue with this task as a witness in the Lord's service.

Sincere thanks to all those who have made use of this service, so that the Word still goes out into homes.

Thank you to all those who take the DVDs having missed a service or for someone unable to attend. Please feel free to feed back any comments or suggestions for improvement.

Our "Missioners of the North" request that they would like the camera "waved about a bit!" – in order to see you all.

(It is disappointing that complying with the Privacy Law, often flouted in the outside world, we are restricted to the images we can record with/without permission so that we are unable to meet their request which is very frustrating and limiting to our Christian witness)

DVDs from last year are archived on the racks in the North Transept, recent recordings are in the Vestibule rack.

Anyone who would wish to make a donation for surplus copies, please ask.

Webcast and downloads are a challenge, with advances in technology outpacing operator knowledge and capability.

A request from the sound desk: please stand in front of the microphone – adjusting it first, up or down – whenever possible.

Thanks to those who step in with camera and sound desk operation when needed.

It is a privilege not only having this responsibility but being able to thoroughly digest the Message which takes a full day to edit to DVD.

Badminton

Another year has passed by and the group is still going strong!

We have had 3 new players join us in the summer who have fitted in very well and love it.

We are a very happy group of 13 players but we can always welcome more and even extend our time.

We have some good players, and those who can't see the shuttlecock.

We really have a good laugh.

Players can play as much or as little as they like, no pressure is put on anyone.

We do provide coffee, tea, sweets, cake and just plain water for the very active players.

Come on, work your muscles, have a fun time – £1.50 is good value for a lovely afternoon's play – we have all the equipment you need.

Banner Group

Although the Banner Group has not made a banner for church display this year the group members have still been active.

A modification to the wording of one of the banners inherited from Victoria Baptist Church has now made it appropriate to display in our church.

One member designed and created a banner for the "Knitting for the Needy" group. This will be displayed at group meetings and at craft fairs, etc., when the group has a "fundraising table".



An Advent Banner for 2019 is beginning to unfold....watch this space.

We give thanks to God that the banners continue to inspire visitors and our own congregation.



Bible Course

The Bible Society DVD course, had popular appeal and was run twice during the year with the added opportunity shared by a small group of the visit to the see the sacred texts the British Library in London.

Big Lunch and Other Barbecues

Summer sunshine added to the enjoyment of our Big Lunch Barbecue overseen by our South African "Braai" expert.

Barbecue fellowship on a sunny Saturday afternoon was enjoyed by South Kent Network Ministers. Representatives from Deal Area Churches Together similarly enjoyed a summers evening together around the barbecue and salad bar.

BMS World Mission Birthday Scheme

Thanks to all participants in the scheme.

We have gained five new members this year.

"Birthday gifts" of £265 were received throughout the year. (£65 in hand as BMS financial year starts in November)

Regrettably, we have lost eight members and there are some current members who have neither responded to their cards nor resigned.

Membership of the scheme can grow, please ask for details if you are interested in supporting BMS World Mission in this way.

BMS World Mission Stamp Bureau

Thanks to everyone who saved stamps, postcards, etc., for the Stamp Bureau which is greatly valued for BMS funding. Keep it up!

Book of Ruth Audio Bible Studies

Two groups gathered to listen to Methodist Superintendent Minister, the Revd Martin Turner, delivering a Bible Study Series recorded at a Christian Retreat Weekend.

These proved enlightening, challenging and relevant delivered with understanding and humour.

Catering

Another busy year!

Thanks to all who helped in any way throughout the year, including when we finished with our annual festive feast in December.

Exciting times ahead as our new kitchen installation begins – so help will be needed to prepare beginning with volunteers to empty all the cupboards!

Plans are in hand for serving refreshments at all events whilst the kitchen is closed - relying heavily on recyclable disposable cups and plates for biscuits!

Deal Area Churches Together

Supported by our Ministry Assistant, Pastor attends the regular Church Leaders' prayer lunches.

Songs of Praise, in June, on the bandstand saw the church well represented.

Marking Christian Unity Week, the Revd Julia Hedley shared in our Worship.



Deal Area Emergency Food Bank

Encouraged by Church Rep, the Food Bank Team make regular collections from our donations bin.

Thanks for the generosity from within the fellowship and regular users to the building, who respond to the "shopping list" need requests.

Elevenes with Pastor

Fortnightly fellowship keeps friends up-to-date with pastoral news and community activity.

Special sessions held with presentations from Community Wardens and Dementia

practitioners which were well supported.



Fabric Report

Thanks to the Fabric Team for their help as and when on various projects inside and outside:

Refit and refix lower slates on church roof as and when required) quite often) clear gutters and downpipes of mud, grass, dirt, etc.

Repainted handrails and main entrance.

Clear and clean gutters at rear of the Manse.
Varnish applied to exterior garden furniture and benches.
Repairs to the “rest a while” pew.
Renewed Perspex to outside noticeboard.
Electrical sockets installed in the hall, office, sanctuary to remove trailing wires.
Projector screen, blackout blind fitted in the hall.
Induction loop fitted in the lounge.
Badminton court tape replaced.
Overhaul of sanctuary light fittings with new lampholders and bulbs.
Various health and safety issues remedied.
New door to garden fitted.
All window winders repaired.
And already the list of jobs for 2019 is growing.



Finances 2018

2018 has been another stable year financially as the figures will show at the AGM on 9 February 2019. Yet again we have been very blessed with some very generous donations from Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church and American friends, in London, who support our minister in his ministry here at Walmer, with other friends giving regularly. We continue to support Baptist Together Home Mission and BMS World Mission on a regular basis and we have supported other charities during the year.

Thank you to each of you for your very generous giving, week by week, or month by month to the running and the ministry here at Walmer, to which we give thanks to God for the many blessings we receive.

Friends of Kent Churches Ride & Stride

Thanks to everyone who participated and sponsored in September
Kent raised over £116,000. Deal area £3420.
Our £500 was the second largest donation.

Fun and Games

Yes, fun is what it is all about!
You may think that it's just for the young folk that you would be wrong – there is no age barrier. With a variety of board games and for the more active people table tennis, air hockey and the pleasure of knocking down “JENGA” blocks you carefully towered up.
For a mere £1 you can spend a couple of hours and enjoy not only the games but snacks and a drink. What a cheap way to spend an evening, mixing with all generations, learning from each other, listening to other people's life experiences.

You will be surprised to hear some of the stories!
So don't be shy, try us, you never know you might enjoy yourself!
We must not forget to thank those responsible for setting up and providing refreshments – you know who you are!

Garden of Memories

Signs of tiredness everywhere, weather has taken its toll with some ornament damage, but as my dear friend "Percy" said,

"Leave well alone, wait and see, for there is nothing of grave concern, look close new growth forms on tender plants if we escape frost it could mean early spring".

As an early visitor once said,

"It is a most peaceful, colourful oasis here all my love ones rushed madly around inside my head, all wish to be remembered"

Dear friends, rest assured this little team who could never, "just walk on by"! It is a privilege to serve and remember them.

Every blessing for the year to come.

Percy, Cyril, Fred and just me!

Grounds Team

Thanks to those who:

...adopted or sponsored planters or donated to the Grounds Fund;
...planted, watered, weeded and tended plants and bulbs;

weeded paths, trimmed hedges, looked after the pond and trees, tended the Memorial Garden;

...mowed the grass and trimmed the edges, put green waste bags out and in, picked up litter;

...supplied horse manure, removed most of the church hedge and to the one who carted away;

...those who generously gave donations towards the produce harvest;

...and those who gave refreshments to the gardeners.



Hopes For 2019:

...to have a better display of blooms and receive a higher grade Walmer in Bloom certificate.

...to have what remains of the church hedge removed.

...to have the horticultural skill to be successful in growing unusual and colourful crops from the seeds two people gave as gifts at Christmas.

Hall Lettings

Regular Hirers continue to use the hall week by week.

One regular hirer comes 3-4 times a year from Boreham Wood, Hertfordshire

The Downs School Young Carers continue using the hall regularly to have much needed social time with their peers.

Pray for those of our community who come into the building week by week, pray they will be drawn to read the many posters advertising all our church services and events

Housekeeping

Thanks to the diligent duo of Henry and friend who, together with the dusting team, keep the sanctuary spick-and-span.

Thanks to all those who improve, repair and help in the upkeep of our suite of rooms the hall side of the sanctuary door.

New hand driers have made the toilet areas more hygienic and up-to-date. Thus we can welcome everyone with good facilities which will be augmented when a new kitchen is "up and running".

H is for hospitality we show to those who come
Over our threshold for spiritual uplift and for fun
United in our love of God

Supporting one another

Engaging in many activities

Knowing each other as a brother

Exciting sermon Seyan gives

Except at Christmas he says

Passiontide is more his scene

Instruction comes our way

No opportunities are left untouched

God we know loves us so much

Kids Kingdom

Thanks to our loyal mums, child minders and grandparents who faithfully support Kids Kingdom week by week.

We give thanks for the safe environment for the children to play and develop through play with their peers.



Highlights through the year have been the Teddy Bears picnic in the Church Garden,, the Christmas party and the visit of a wonderful Father Christmas who brought along presents for the children. Sincere thanks to those who help in anyway setting/ clearing up, catering, and filling in when I'm unavailable.

Ins and Outs - Church Membership: 34

No new members were welcomed this year.
One member, our oldest, was 'called home'.

Knitting For The Needy

Thanks go to all who have supported us during 2018.

Boxes of knitwear and other items have been sent to Hope Now and Operation Sunshine including several Christmas shoe boxes.

Twiddle Muffs are made and given to *Inchwater*, a local Dementia service for distribution to their clients backspace.

One of our knitters who died during the year was truly remembered with our entry for the Christmas Tree Festival dedicated to her memory with her knitted toys including some finished by one of our group

We are now the proud owner of a banner designed by one our talented ladies with the help of the banner group.

We continue to support The Foodbank and books, crayons, toys, sweets were given for Christmas.

Our Charity of the 2019 is Cancer Research UK.

Please continue to support us with your prayer

Lent Conversations

The interview series during Lent proved popular and enlightening this year as Pastor put friends under the spotlight on the hot seat.

Ministry Assistant

Thank you to the Fellowship for their love, prayers and support in what has been, at times, a challenging year.

The way that everyone rallies round when there is a need is a credit to the Fellowship and speaks of the real sense of community here.

My duties are too varied to list in a brief report, they could be summed up as whatever needs doing. They have included: repairing toys, moving furniture, driving Pastor, making tea, making phone calls, making power points and of course a lot of administration.

Often Pastor comes to me with a smile on his face and says: 'your mission, should you choose to accept it is' and I never know what is going to come next.

A big challenge at the start of the year was complying with the dreaded GDPR regulations. This meant making sure personal information is kept on a consent basis and is kept securely. My personal challenge was creating a database to store all this information and finding a way to keep it encrypted so that it is secure. Now it is done and all the forms are entered and it does make some things, such as making a Church directory, much easier.

A big thing for the office has been the new copier/ printer. I hope that the fellowship has seen a jump



in quality in what we publish. We are trying to produce more of our posters and booklets 'in house' as the savings are huge. We are still learning new tricks as we go along.

Encouraging the change to bright and economical LED bulbs has been rewarding; they do not cost a lot to run and they are immediately bright. Our Fabric Officer takes all the credit for changing the fittings in the sanctuary, with his faithful assistant and tea boy; the old sanctuary lighting was using over two kilowatts so this will yield a big saving for the Church. (The work is not finished so please bear with us.)

Keeping a good Church presence online, promoting activities where possible on local public groups helps reach a large number of people. Our website is kept up to date and regular information is posted on Facebook. On the website we are trialling a Monthly News Update – do take a look!

You can never be quite sure what each new day will bring, but serving among you is real blessing and a pleasure.

Missions Team

Our mission causes for the year were Denominational (Baptist Together Home Mission, BMS World Mission, Tools with a Mission, Operation Agri), Tearfund, Barnabas Fund, Sailors Society, Willing and Abel, Hope Now International.

Thanks to those who organised the Funding/prayer event for each cause.

The African Pastors Fellowship was the beneficiary for our Christmas Dinner proceeds.

For 2019 we embrace the London City Mission back as one of our causes in place of Tearfund.

Thanks to the mission team for their deliberations with God's guidance over the past year.



Our BMS Link Missionaries, Louise and Peter, keep us well informed of their activities in Bangladesh.

Miscellany

In the life of the fellowship, throughout any year, there are activities and contributions by individuals that do not sit easily under a heading that which need acknowledgement, such as:

Guest Preachers, Worship Leaders, Scripture Readers, Intercessors, Flower Arrangers, Furniture Movers and Chair Stackers, Communion Steward Women's World Day of Prayer, Table Top Sales, Cake Bakers, Leaflet Distributors.



Music Report

We continue to sing well known hymns and songs, trying different tunes to well-known words and new words to familiar tunes.

Our faithful guitarist continues his accompaniment each week.

Our determined keyboard scholar gaining in confidence finds it a great challenge to learn new songs and hymns to play for Sunday Worship – we give thanks for her willingness and keenness.

Thank you go to “relief duo” for being on standby, and for playing in my absence.

Supporting staff and children at The Downs School with collective worship on a Monday morning and singing practise on a Wednesday morning – the children love learning new songs, especially those with actions.

Thank you to all the fellowship for the support offered.

Thank you for the wonderful singing, without you all there is nothing to play against!



Pastoral Team

Thanks to the Pastoral Team for initiating our Shepherd/Shepherdess pastoral care networks.

Thanks to those who regularly visit our shut-in folk, those who take Communion to those who request it, those who provide transport to appointments at hospital or surgery.

The Flower Ministry which ensures flowers donated each Sunday reach a welcoming recipient(s).

Prayer

Meeting in twos and threes, or larger gatherings, for prayer is important to our community activity.

Pausing in the vestry on Sunday mornings before worship, meeting regularly on Fridays, gathering as People at Prayer for a specific focus, learning of a ministry or mission over early morning breakfast or contemplatively walking the Labyrinth Path are guided opportunities.

Quiz Nights

After a decade and more of monthly quizzes, started as fundraisers for the Spire Restoration Fund, over the summer, it was decided instead, to hold 3 or 4 quizzes per year in aid of specific causes.

Seasonal Favourites

Fun, food and fellowship shape the seasonal calendar with regular events of popular appeal, including this year:

New Year Social, Pancake Party, Maundy Thursday Supper, Easter Egg Hunt, Easter Breakfast, Strawberry Tea, Harvest Supper, Spuds and Sparklers and Christmas Dinner.



South Eastern Baptist Association

We continue to make our mark in the Association: Pastor attended the annual Ministers Conference at Ashburnham Place and many of the South Kent Network Ministers Gatherings at Willesbrough Baptist Church throughout the year.

Pastor hosted a New Year Luncheon for our local Retired Baptist Ministers attended by a Regional Minister



(thanks to our church caterers).

Pastor continues to encourage Regional Minister pastoral need awareness, through the Executive. The Executive's representation to BUGB and the release of a "Legacy Gift" from the former Deal (Victoria) Baptist Church, for the church kitchen renovations, is gratefully acknowledged and welcomed.

Sunday Club

Most of our cohort of children and young people are now of secondary school age.

They face the challenges and demands of our ever changing society along with peer pressure.

We seek through prayer the Lord's prompting and direction for our future ministry to them.

Those who have faithfully led them thus far are acknowledged as are those exploring new options.

The Downs School

Pastor continues to support the school as a member of the Governing Body.

Young Carers benefit from monthly lunchtime game sessions facilitated by two church hostesses who ply the staff with welcome refreshments and encourage the children at table tennis and snooker.

Our Director of Music continues to offer support to staff and children with collective worship on a Monday morning and singing practise on a Wednesday morning. The children love learning new songs, especially those with actions.

Volunteers offer support in school and when classes come to us for visits and for worship.

Special Fundraising Concert held for "Help Ellice To Walk" appeal by Snowdown Colliery Male Voice

Choir and to mark the retirement of the Head Teacher.



Welcomers

A warm welcome, along with a Contact Sheet and a printed service order, if required, is offered by our Welcomers Team. Supported by the Duty Deacon, visitors receive a warm welcome in the pews. During the year, Welcomers agreed to take up our offering within our worship service.

Worship

We continue to follow the Revised Common Lectionary, the Church Year and mark festivals and special Sundays such as Education and Sea Sundays. All-Age Worship at 10.30am remains our principle service with monthly informal Table Fellowship in the Hall.

Pastor's Postscript

Having read the reports submitted it is clear our Church Text for 2019 is affirmed by the Ministry and Mission we have shared together in the past year.

*The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases,
His mercies never come to an end;
They are new every morning;
Great is your faithfulness.
Lamentations 3.22-23 (NRSV)*

Personally, I simply say 'Thank you' for your love, care, encouragement and support throughout 2018.

FOOT NOTE

We've come to the end of our year,
And know there is more to achieve,
Lest we forget the help of our Lord;
Minister preaches we must believe.
Exciting prospects lie ahead.
Refurbishment of our kitchen,
Bringing scope for better catering
And not just idle wishin'.
Positive agendas, fun, study and care
Turning our minds to new vision,
Intent on what we can do in our power
Sustaining belief is our mission
The welcome we give matters greatly
Church means the collection of people
How far we progress means endeavour
Urging effort as high as our steeple
Revelations give hope for us all
Christ's gift is joy in salvation
His kingdom is the one true nation.