



Eastwood Baptist Church

Reports from 2022

For AGM 2023

Also available on:-

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# 1 Ministers report

## Rev Jo Hellenbrand

2022 was an exciting and busy year in the life of the church which saw us welcoming a new minister and his family, new members, baptisms and new ministries. The year started with Covid numbers still high and many precautions in place but thanks to the vaccinations, we were able to continue all our regular groups, which was especially good as our Foodbank continued to grow as we helped feed and signpost many people and families throughout the year, as more people in the community struggled with increases to food and heating costs.

We welcomed many new members throughout the year and sought to make everyone who came into our building feel it was a safe place as we added to our Dementia Friendly space by also becoming a Sight Loss Friendly Church.

We had a challenging Easter with many in our church coming down with Covid, however we were able to hold services on Maundy Thursday and Easter Sunday, and led a walk of witness through Eastwood followed by a service and Hot Cross Buns on Good Friday. We were grateful for the Live Streaming throughout this time and all year so those who were unable to attend the services could still be part of our services.

After Easter we welcomed Rev Martin Wright, Kim, Cooper, Macie and Essie into our fellowship, injecting new energy and ideas into the life of the church and we enjoyed cake and tea after Martin's joint Induction and Ordination service.

In the spring we started our Safe Haven Community Café, with all the volunteers Dementia Friendly trained, creating a safe space to enjoy craft, games and chatter over tea and cakes and later in the year Family Play started offering families a chance to have tea together with craft and games. We also started our Sunflowers Sunday school which was a real joy to the church after much prayer for children and families to return to the church on a Sunday.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee was marked with a family fun morning and walk and cake event and later in the year the funeral was shown in the

church for those who didn't want to watch it alone with us being joined by a lady from Rayleigh who didn't have a TV but wanted to watch this historic event.

The summer saw record hot days but the joy of 3 baptisms as we Baptised Christine, Kim and Sami which, as always, was a joyful time for us all.

The church looked outside into the community as it ran two Cap Money Courses, had Park Pastors walking around Eastwood Park chatting to people and again gifted 174 bags to the local care homes providing homemade gifts, chocolate, toiletries, cards and pictures (made by the children of Heycroft Primary School) for all the staff and residents of Havengore, Brooklands and Badgers both at Easter and Christmas.

Our leadership team worked tirelessly as always with so many talents and energy coming together to keep the church running safely and legally and also enabling so many new initiatives and ministries to start. This year saw all our deacons and officers remain in post with Graham being re-elected after his three year term ended which we were so thankful for.

We sadly saw several of our church going home to Glory and had the honour of leading their services of thanksgiving in the church as we said goodbye to Doug, Ann and George.

Our existing ministries thrived with the amazing leaders and volunteers of Pinocchio's, Friday Club, Energize and Women's Fellowship along with our Men's and Ladies Breakfasts, enjoying time together over a cooked breakfast and inspirational speakers for the Men. Our Singing Group also started as this talented group met to sing and learn new worship songs.

During our Sunday Morning services we looked at Philippians, Voice (Hearing stories from people in the church), Connected (exploring House Groups), and the Miracles of John and our Monthly Tea Services enjoyed a traditional feel with older hymns and plenty of cake and tea afterwards. The Christmas programme included Carols by Candlelight and Christingle Services, along with our Christmas Day and Sunday services. We also enjoyed our annual Singing Carols at the Oakwood pub.

Our Wednesday evening Zoom Prayer times created a time to pray together and were led by many different people across the church with our final one being led by Rev Hayley Young, Baptist Together President for this year, which was a blessed time.

Phew, that seems like a lot in just 12 months and it was so exciting to see God's hand, provision and blessing in all we did and the planning for next year with more new ministries and changes. One of those is that God called me to leave EBC after many happy years serving the church and community and to become the Pastor of Caring and Serving Ministries at Shoeburyness and Thorpe Bay Baptist church in the new year.

It has been a privilege and joy to lead this church and I look forward to seeing all God has planned in the years to come.

God bless,

## **2 Ministers report**

### **Rev Martin Wright**

What a year 2022 has been, there have been new ventures, new members, new songs and of course a new Minister, me. Below are a few highlights of my time with EBC from April 2022 to the end of the year. Just like John, I couldn't possibly write everything down because the whole word would not have enough room (John 21:35)

Through the year we have looked at the whole book of Philippians and then we focused on fellowship with the intention of developing house groups while working through a preaching series called 'connected. After this we began to work through the signs of John then as we entered into the Advent season focusing on the songs around the coming of Jesus. The service I believe has been well received and has sparked conversation, growth and I believe God has worked through these times building and growing his church.

House groups have been formed (or reformed) and the church now has three house groups meeting weekly with 29 people attending them which is above 50% of the church membership. This is a positive step towards deeper fellowship and discipleship. The studies are based on the previous Sunday's preach and passage, which are written by myself or the preacher. The feedback from those attending has been very positive.

Family play which is a space for families to come to church and engage in different activities and crafts, to enjoy a meal and then to play some larger group games. This group runs twice a month and has seen positive fruit with families engaging in differing parts of the church life. The volunteers for this group have been wonderful and really connected well with all those who attend.

The school's work is back to where it was prior to covid, I have contacts with Heycroft, Edwards Hall and Eastwood primary schools and have welcomed them to our church as well as visited them for assemblies and lessons. This has been a wonderful thing to do and has helped develop connection and bridges with families and teachers

The leadership and volunteers within the church have been a wonderful gift, not only to me but to the whole fellowship. I have witnessed so many acts of love, acts of service which demonstrate a deep faith. I have seen this in Pinocchio, Energise, Friday club, Safe Haven, Foodbank, Sunflowers, Women's Fellowship, House Groups, the Tech Team, Communion preparation, Flowers, bring and share lunches and so many other events and groups.

The deacons meet every month and we start our meeting with communion, acknowledging that although we have differing views and opinions our place at the table is the same. We are unified through Christ and not through anything else. The meetings themselves are productive, insightful and fun to be part of. We have by no means had an easier run but I have left each meeting feeling that God spirit was amongst us and the decisions we make are Kingdom focused.

As I have been settling into the family of EBC, getting to know the fellowship, the community and the groups we run, I have been holding the question, who are we? What is the heart of our church? or as John suggests in revelations who is the Angel of our church? This coming year I hope to be opening up this conversation with all parts of the church family. My hope is that this will give us a sense of identity as a fellowship, but also a more guided path in which we should travel, into what God is calling us to.

## 3 Secretary's Report

### Val Statt

January 2022, we started the year with the knowledge that we can look forward to a new Minister to lead us - Martin Wright and a date was to be confirmed later in the year. Due to the pandemic we had not been able to say a proper farewell to our previous Ministers Darren and Melanie Pike, and were able to rectify this by having them to lead us on 16th January, with a celebration lunch that followed. Many were able to attend and wish them well and it was very good to see Daisy, Molly and Thomas.

February - On the 1st February, I had a meeting with Jo H and Martin and we knew that Martin and family were able to join us in April, 2022. This meant a busy time for me to start the preparations for Martin's Induction and Ordination Service. Many invitations were sent via email and post with not many not wanting to attend. We had our first members meeting on the 6th February, and we met in church with David Mayne chairing our meeting. You may also remember that we had a bad storm in February, called Eunice! Our Zoom prayers on a Wednesday continued and were a blessing to those who attended. I think the best prize goes to our dear sister Margaret who despite the technology still managed to join us each week. On the 24th February, we heard the news that Russia had invaded Ukraine, a country that is predominantly a Christian country. Sadly, this invasion has seen many casualties and their people having to defend their land as others flee to safer places. As a church we have prayed and given support to the BMS Ukraine Appeal in our Gift Day Offering.

In March, our dear brother Doug Miles had his home call. He had enjoyed his 90th birthday last year and had been married to Pam for close to 65 years. Doug also used to play in our music group and was a fine musician.

We agreed to send Jo away for a well deserved mini break, but it was followed by her catching Covid-19 and was not at all well.

Arrangements were continuing with the Wright family's move and I met with Kim, Masie and Essie to look at the manse, at which time our tenants had moved out. Masie also secured a school that she would be attending for the summer term. Cooper and Essie also had secured schools for the summer term.

On the 2nd April, whilst I was away, we had the Thanksgiving Service for Doug Miles and this was well attended and his talented grandsons played "The Lord bless you and keep you" on their violins, which was a lovely tribute to their grandfather.

On the 5th April, Martin, Kim and family moved into the Manse with their start date being 18th April.

During Holy week we had daily devotions on YouTube by Simon, Martin and Jo and we held a Maundy Thursday service on 14th April. We went on a walk of witness on Good Friday, not as far as we wanted and it was also a time when many within our fellowship caught Covid-19. This prevented many of us coming together for the service in church. We had our Easter Breakfast on 17th April. It was also lovely to see Martin and family join us for this and Martin also joined us for the walk of witness on Good Friday. Along with others I caught Covid-19 just after Easter and thankfully was well enough to attend Martin's Induction and Ordination Service on the 30th April. This was an amazing occasion with many friends and family plus our own church family and many local ministers within SABN. We then discovered that Kim could bake! Along with others we had cake and refreshments at the Eastwood Community Hall and thanks is also given to Rosie for arranging the use and obtaining all the crockery etc and spending time setting all up.

In May, both Martin and Jo were working together and making plans for EBC going forward, and I was having fortnightly meetings with them both which was very helpful. Both Martin and Jo and their families went to the Baptist Assembly from 13th - 15th May in Bournemouth and Rev Jo received her official handshake on the platform.

We held our Members' Meeting on the 22nd May, where David Mayne handed over the chairmanship to Martin, we also presented a gift to David as a thank you for being our Moderator.

In June we celebrated our Queen Elizabeth 11nd's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations. Around the country many were planning many events and at EBC, Martin organised a Create Event on 2nd June for families to come along and make all things connected to the Queen. We had a cardboard cut out of Her Majesty for photo shots. Many came along and it was very successful. On Friday 3rd, we organised a walk from church with some going on the longer walk and others just to Eastwood Park. It was great to continue to get to know Martin and family and he us.

On Sunday 5th June, we had a wonderful celebratory lunch with games and a quiz. The church looked good with royal and national bunting across the Sanctuary. Later in the month Jo and Martin attended the EBA Ministers' Conference from 14th - 16th June at High Leighs.

Sadly on the 21st June we heard that our dear sister Ann Howson had gone to be with our Lord after a stay in hospital. A well loved sister who had many friends within the church and attended our Women's Fellowship. Ann's funeral was held on the 28th July and we joined with the family to remember this dear lady both in church and afterwards at the Bell House for refreshments.

The month concluded with a glorious baptism of Christine Joses and Kim Wright and Christine brought many of her family on 26th June.

The summer of 2022 will be remembered for being a very hot one and Martin and Kim opened up their home and garden for a BBQ after the morning service on July 3rd. Their hospitality was very evident and wonderful to share with visitors from Ukraine as well. On the 8th July, some of us put on a 'stall' at the Edwards Hall Fun afternoon. Martin and organised games and craft activities to do. Thank you to those who came along to help. On the 31st July we had a walk along the Southend seafront and we are very thankful for Nicky who invited us along for tea and cake at her beach hut afterwards.

At the start of August Martin designed a card with a tea bag attached so that we could use this to pray and he called them "Kettle Prayers" Our

clubs and groups had a break but we still rejoiced in another baptism of Sami on the 14th August and also joined her for a celebration afterwards. We welcomed Matthew on the 21st August, a young man of 17 looking at going into the Ministry who currently is at Selsdon Baptist Church and known to Martin. Ending the month on the 28th August Martin conducted a Dedication service for a young child from Pinocchio's. Many family members were present to witness the service.

In September we resumed church clubs after the summer break. It was on the 8th September when our Queen Elizabeth 11nd died at Balmoral Castle in Scotland. Our country was in mourning for a much loved Queen and we saw many floral tributes in London. Her state funeral was on 19th September with thousands paying their respects at Westminster Abbey. We opened the church for those who wished to see the service not on their own. The procession and military involvement was the finest anywhere in the world and finally the day ended with our Queen being taken to Windsor Castle for interment with her late husband the Duke of Edinburgh. Earlier in the year we enjoyed all the celebration of her Platinum Jubilee that being 75 years as our Queen. In which she said that she would serve her King Jesus Christ and her country to the end of her life. This our Queen did so extremely well.

During September we launched our new Sunflowers Sunday Group and on the 11th we had our friends Puppet Partners come along to lead our service and our 2022 Shoebox appeal was launched on this Sunday with our newly formed group helping with the puppets at the end. We also hosted a Worship Unlimited event which saw our church full of praise and worship. These are local musicians whose only agenda is to lead people to worship our Lord Jesus Christ. Although we were meeting in church, we still continued with our Wednesday Zoom Prayer Meetings giving those at home an opportunity to join a group for conversation and prayer and different leaders each week. We held our AGM/Members Meeting on the 25th September and had our Harvest Celebrations, including a bring and share lunch and collected food for our Foodbank. In the last week of September, Rev Jo organised a film afternoon and all enjoyed "Downton Abbey - A new Era".

October was a busy month with involvement in Harvest events at the local schools and Rev Jo and Simon held CAP money management courses each Monday for 3 weeks. During this month Rev Jo announced that she would be giving her notice and had accepted a new role at STBBC. Jo would be giving 3 months notice. It is fair to say that we all were saddened that Jo was leaving us but after 17 years at EBC our Lord had further plans for her. I know it has been said - we have been very much blessed by Jo's Ministry to us and will continue to keep in touch with her through many friendships and the SABN. It did mean however, that Rev Martin would be leading our church without Rev Jo, but we have also been blessed by new members joining us with preaching skills and an excellent Diagonate in which we thank God for. On the 30th October, the Olive Tree (Christian Counseling) held their yearly Thanksgiving Service at EBC.

Behind the scenes in November, Rev Martin with the help of Kim transferred our current way of working with emails and printed documents to a more online version called "shared drives". This was certainly for some of us a learning curve into the 21st Century. Once mastered will be a more effective way of communicating and storing. Thanks is given to both Martin and Kim. In November we all were experiencing the rise in fuel, energy and food prices. To help with this Rev Martin with the help of volunteers started our twice monthly Family Play. This was on a Wednesday afternoon after school and gave families a place to bring their young ones. Craft and Games and a simple meal was provided, this has proved so very encouraging to see families come along and all have come back each time. An Act of Remembrance was observed on the 13th November and Rev Martin also took part in the annual Memorial Service at Eastwood Memorial Hall. On the 20th November, we collected our Shoeboxes and together with those created online sent 90 boxes off for distribution by Samaritan's Purse to Eastern Europe including Ukraine. Rev Jo had a holiday in Australia from 5th to 24th November. Kim also traveled to Australia as part of her job for International Needs. Graham our Quiz Master held a very good evening 26th November and raised funds for Church funds. Rev Martin and Rev Jo went on a day Retreat with other

ministers in the EBA on the 30th November. Finally our last Members' meeting was on Sunday 27th November after our morning service and lunch. Our Christmas Tree was installed as this was also the first Sunday in Advent.

Then before we knew it Advent had begun and December had arrived. Our last Zoom Prayer Meeting on Wednesday 7th December was held with a very special guest leading us - Hayley Young who is the president of Baptist Together. We saw Edwards Hall use our church for their Christmas Carol Concert both in the afternoon and early evening of 7th December.

Sadly, our dear friend and husband of Joan, George Sage went to glory on the 8th December, having battled so very much with health problems. He is missed and always had so much humour with him alongside his faith in Jesus Christ.

There were many social events in December, with the Women's Fellowship having their Christmas lunch on 12th December prepared by Kim and Peter. The Diagonate had their meal later than evening as well. On the 10th December, a couple of ladies Nicky and Lauren had the idea of holding a Christmas Craft Workshop which was held on 10th December, which was a very fun time for everyone. Well done! to all who helped with stalls and refreshments. We held a Community Cafe and 2 Family play sessions and included a Cinema Afternoon, with popcorn. We sang Carols at the Oakwood on the 20th December, which was well received by those joining in with song sheets and thanks to Simon who helped us with the music and led the session. Because of the World Cup we held over our Carols by Candlelight to the 19th December and as always the church was filled with worshippers and the candles and flowers looked lovely along with the glistening lights on the Christmas Tree. A loyal group of volunteers also helped with putting the Christingles together on 24th December ready for our service in the afternoon with Neil K and Rev Martin who dressed up as a large Christingle (we found out later that he had put it on back to front

😊). It was well put together with a short video explaining the Christmas story and all enjoyed the amazing Hot Chocolate afterwards, thanks to Kim. On Christmas Day, both Rev Martin and Jo lead our Christmas Celebration by opening the boxes of Joy, Peace, Love, Faith and Hope.

Then the year came to a close after a very encouraging year for our church. We invited Rev Martin Wright, to be our new Minister, and he has been very proactive since his arrival and taken us through Phillipians; The Voice; Connected and the 7 Miracles of John during our Sunday Worship times together. We have had 3 baptisms; 1 dedication and saw 12 new members plus Martin and Kim. Three of us went to Glory, Doug, Ann and George. Finally, we also knew that our dear Rev Jo was going to move on to join the ministry team of STBBC early in Jan 2023 but we have been blessed by her ministry.

As always it is a great privilege for me to serve as Church Secretary, alongside a fantastic Diaconate. Thank you to everyone who helps run groups, takes care of the everyday running of our church and you will see all their reports as you continue to read through 2022 reports.

## **4. Treasurer's Report**

### **Andrew Edwards**

Finance report for December 2022

Income came out almost on budget if you ignore £20000.00 legacy.

Apart from that, manse and other income had been budgeted at £7543.20 as we were expecting to rent out manse for 6 months but were delighted when Martin and family arrived in April.

Expenditure was £14000.00 above budget due to higher ministry costs as Martin arrived in April instead of July. We also spent £975.00 on manse fixtures and fittings left by the previous tenant and £4359.00 in replacing the central heating boiler and upgrading system.

## **5. EBC Website**

### **Rev Jo Hellenbrand**

Mark and I continued to manage the website this year, making sure it remained up to date and adding special images and pages for events like Easter, The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas.

With many people viewing the various pages with info about groups and services, what we believe and photos of activities this continues to be a great source of what the church does and believes in, and a good way for people to find out about us before making that brave step into our building.

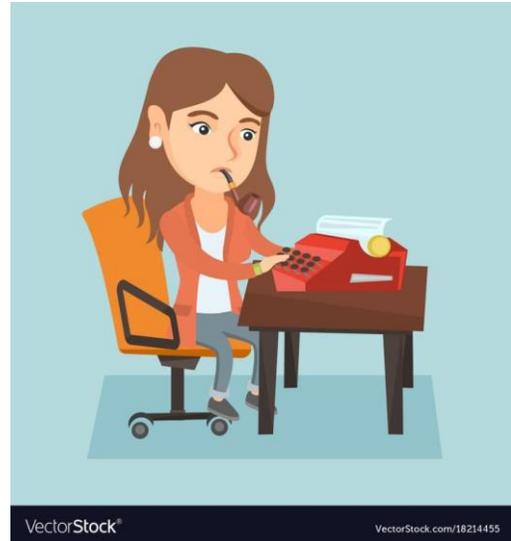
## 6. Weekly Newsletter

### Rosie Midson

The news sheet is a useful tool to keep everyone aware of all that is happening in the church. It is available on the church website and accessible to all who have the internet but several people prefer to have a hard copy.

During 2022 Graham and Rosie continued to deliver hard copies by hand to those unable to collect them at church as a few folk, who are connected with the church but unable to attend many meetings, still like to receive copies; that keeps them up to date with our church activities. Advance events can be publicised as well as updates as to what has gone on. The Food Bank team often put in requests for items for the week and this is helpful for those planning to shop and bring goods in. Sharon had been helping produce these sheets when Rosie was away and then Kim generously volunteered to take on the role with Rosie supporting if required. We also decided that a fortnightly edition was sufficient as many of the activities are very regular. This cuts down on costs and wastage.

We are trialing two versions of the newsletter – the usual one with all of the advertisements that is easier to read for those that receive on email as they can expand the pages. For those that receive hard copies we have a 2<sup>nd</sup> version that is larger print with no pictures. We will review this with the membership through 2023. Any thoughts are greatly received. Should people want to add to the newsletter then please do contact Kim. Using the newsletter we have also been able to add a notice reel to the beginning of the service to advertise events that are upcoming.



## **7. FISH GROUPS (Fellowship in Someone's Home Bible Study)**

### **a Green Fish - Rosie Midson**

At the start of 2022 Green Fish group continued our study in Ephesians then enjoyed the 4 week Lent study before returning to Paul and looking at Philippians in depth which took us from May until August.

Knowing that the groups were going to change we decided to finish then and await the fresh grouping following the preaching series during the summer.

We have enjoyed fellowship in sharing prayer and studying God's word together, with Stan Warnes kindly leading the studies when I have been away.

### **b Blue Fish - Val Statt**

We met fewer times during 2022 from weekly to fortnightly, and mainly in Margaret's home which we were very thankful for. Our topic was to listen to recordings made at Letton Hall Christian Retreat centre. The speaker was Derek Tidball and it was called 'Joseph - A Dream Comes True'. Our last meeting together was on 5th July, and Rev Martin came along to meet with us. A new look at house groups was going to be formed by Martin in the Autumn. Our time together was always a blessing with discussion, prayers ending with refreshments.

## **8. Fabric**

### **David Flatman**

Various work was carried out on the Manse in the early part of the year to prepare for the Wright family, including decoration, kitchen repairs and garden fences and general tidying.

New central heating system fitted in manse

Repairs to toilet taps and resetting pipes in church.

Upstairs hall repainted

Leaking roof in vestibule repaired.

In the church several lighting tubes and bulbs have been replaced as necessary.

The normal yearly procedures for fire alarm testing and emergency lighting, fire equipment and gas safety checks were carried out. One replacement fire extinguishers were required and fitted.

## **9 Fire, Health & Safety**

### **David Flatman**

I am pleased to report we strive to keep the church premises and facilities in good condition. We keep our regular statutory safety requirements (fire, gas and electric) up to date.

## 10 Friday Club

### Rev Martin Wright

Friday club is a group for children in which for an hour they can enjoy games, challenges, activities and also reflect on something of the christian faith. When joining the group in April there was a little bit of an identity crisis. The group was small and attendance irregular, they had just begun to meet face to face after covid and although Jan had done a wonderful job staying connected to the children, they were having to reform as a group. One of the first tasks was to promote this group on social media and within schools to see if we could develop the numbers more and help create a more regular attendance. This seems to be successful and the numbers were higher than they were plus the children are committed to each week, as are the parents. Relationships with the children and parents are developing well, with them being invited and attending other events/groups within Church life. There is a growing sense of community among those attending and it seems that God is working massively in this space.



We have a team of 6 volunteers (a parent has joined the team), we take it in turns to lead the teaching, games and also ensure that they have a friday 'off'. This has brought a lot of creativity and styles from each persona and the children have engaged well. Volunteers, you are all amazing!

## 11 Energize

### Rev Martin Wright

This group has a good number of regular attendees of which some identify as Christians and some do not. All enjoy the different activities we run, these include games, challenges, crafts and of course biblical teaching. We have welcomed new young people as well, all of whom seem to be committed to the group.



We have also run special events such as 'I'm a celebrity', quiz night and a sleepover. all of which were well attended and a lot of fun.

## 12 External tenants

### Jo Keeble

We continue to have a steady group of outside bookings.

New Eastwood U3A meets every 3rd Tuesday in the month, 1-4pm.

Pilates every Tuesday morning.

Cake club (Parenting group) every Thursday, 10-12pm.

Mum's Night Out ,every Thursday,2-4.30pm

PHOLK cookery club, every Thursday, 5.30-7.30pm.

Olive Tree Counseling Services also hire out additional spaces throughout the year, for supervision and training purposes.

In addition, the Police community, Beaver Tower Residents Association and local elections have hired our spaces and a 4th birthday party was also celebrated!

At present, fees remain at £20 per hour for the Sanctuary/main church and £17.50 per hour for the Lower Hall.

Kitchen use is free, along with tea/coffee.

## **13 Pastoral Care**

### **Graham and Val Back**

The pastoral needs of our church are supported by the prayers of the members and others in our fellowship, and friends of our church . We send prayer requests via email so that as many people as possible can be involved in the prayer life of the church, including support of the Members, their families and friends.

The continued effect of Covid 19 and other health issues on many people's health (both physical and mental) has meant that during the year the need for contact by phone or email has been very important. The diaconate has continued to make regular contact with our Members and church friends during this difficult period, when attendance at church for services and other events for some has been restricted, and for some, not possible.

We recognize that in the future, there will be a need for visits to encourage and comfort those who are unable to get to church, through illness or physical needs.

In September Rev Martin invited Rev Jo and Graham to join him every two weeks to discuss and pray about pastoral care issues. At about the same time Rev Jonathan offered to become more involved in pastoral care matters. Towards the end of the year this has included Jonathan taking communion to some people in our fellowship who have been unable to come to church.

A meeting was held after the church service on 6<sup>th</sup> November to discuss with those who had expressed an interest in pastoral care matters.

Towards the end of the year Rev Martin developed plans to relaunch Home Groups early in 2023, with the intention that, as well as discussing the subject which had been preached on the previous Sunday, that this would provide an additional layer of pastoral care for those involved in those groups.

As we close this report, we thought it would be helpful to try to define what pastoral care actually is.

Pastoral care may involve

- Sustaining others through prolonged difficulty or immediate need
- Enabling a person's journey of healing and wholeness
- Supporting someone through the process of reconciliation with self and others
- Offering guidance about resources

A Pastoral carer is someone who either formally, as part of a pastoral team, group or network, or informally, as part of their fellowship group or everyday relationships in the community, offers care and support to another.

So we think that, to one degree or another, we are all pastoral carers!

And finally - - - - towards the end of the year we learnt that Rev Jo was leaving us, to continue her ministry in another Church. It is important for us to remember that the pastoral needs of our Church were overseen and managed for many years by Jo, and many people in our fellowship were cared for and uplifted by her personal involvement.

## **14 Safeguarding**

### **Rosie Midson**

Our AGM again provided the opportunity to show the level one safeguarding video which reminds us all of our responsibilities to all classified as vulnerable; children and adults. 2022 saw the return of face to face training which I attended to do at Level 3. A resumption of our Children's and Youth work means that many leaders and helpers have had a fresh DBS check this year and will undertake Level 2 training in 2023. Some safeguarding concerns have been appropriately dealt with. Please do not hesitate to discuss any worries with me in full confidence; we all have everyone's best interests at heart.

# 15 Women's Fellowship

## Rev Jo Hellenbrand

Women's Fellowship has continued to meet on Monday afternoons, originally in the church at the start of the year due to high Covid numbers and feeling safer, but we moved back to the lower hall after the summer which was more intimate and kept the heating bills down, something the ladies are always so mindful of.



We have enjoyed a variety of speakers, which our Secretary Andrea arranges for us, from Local Baptist Ministers, ladies from other churches and speakers from the projects we support.

The ladies chose to support two projects this year choosing Films for Girls and Baby Basics and as always their amazing generosity saw us raising £500 for each charity.

As always we enjoyed several afternoon cream teas, one of which was served and provided by Kim, who also cooked us a two course Christmas Dinner followed by a Carol Service. This was especially enjoyed as it was our first Christmas meal since before Covid.

This group continues to be a blessing and has seen new ladies join and remains the highlight of many of the ladies week.

# 16 Pinnocchio's Parent and Toddler Group

## Jan Noble

2022 has been a time of rebuilding following our closure during the Covid lockdown. We are now beginning to see numbers increase as more families begin to come along regularly. Our 2 groups are smaller than they were which gives us more opportunity to talk to parents and to get to know the children better. It also gives the parents/carers more chances to get to know each other and it's good to see new friendships being made.



Gracie Redding left the team at the end of the summer term and has been missed by us all. We give thanks to God for all the families that come along week by week to help both upstairs and with refreshments, it is greatly appreciated.

## 17 Men's Breakfast Bar

### Graham Back

At the start of this, our tenth year, the continued problems of Covid restrictions and uncertainties meant that we were unable to have the breakfast we had planned for January.



However, our other four breakfasts at EBC itself, each with a guest speaker, went ahead as planned, as did our two breakfasts at The Oakwood (Hawaiian shirts in July, Christmas jumpers in December).

At each of the breakfasts this year “in house” at EBC, we invited the guest speaker to nominate a charity or cause for a retiring collection. This resulted in a total of £295 being raised in total, for Mencap, Guide Dogs, International Needs UK, and for a football team for children with disabilities.

We will continue to encourage our guest speakers to talk about what they are doing in their Christian lives. As James said in Chapter 2 verse 26-“As the body without the Spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead”.

Having two of our breakfasts at The Oakwood gives our cooking team (Andrew and Graham) a welcome break from the need to make early starts to prepare the food for our “in house” breakfasts.

## 18 Ladies Breakfast

### Val Statt

Our Ladies met for breakfast 5 times during 2022, and we went to The Oakwood each time. The ladies enjoyed chatting, networking and sharing time together. We welcomed new ladies and some daughters too! . The staff at The Oakwood are also happy to see us and serve us so well.



## 19 Foodbank

### Sharon Watkins

Our foodbank has continued to develop and grow over this past year in many ways. We are a team with lots of people involved in this project without whom we could not operate. We recognise the time and love given by these volunteers. In a few words let me explain the work that is undertaken. These volunteers oversee the collecting in of donations at church, the transportation of these to Friendship House in Southchurch and the collection of the prepared boxes for distribution, the Wednesday morning front of house distribution of food and gifts, the returning of the empty boxes, coordination of these activities, a voice on the trustees meetings and the support of our prayer team. We give thanks to those who regularly donate much needed goods and money which is essential to the functioning of the whole foodbank and the work of the Trussell Trust nationally.



The end of year figures, 01/01/22 to 31/12/22 (2021 figures for comparison) show just how we have grown and also reflect the growing needs of the society we live in.

361 (193) vouchers were issued that fed 1033 (539) people full meals for three days which works out giving to 588 (321) adults and 445 (218) children.

4686 (4403) Kilograms of food has been donated via Eastwood Baptist Church. That works out at 4.5% (5.8% ) of all the food donated to Southend Food bank. The church was still the fourth biggest channel of donations, the three highest being supermarkets.

This year we have started to undertake training to develop the signposting element of the food bank. Guests that visit often have other needs and in conjunction with Southend Food bank, Southend Council, the local Trauma Alliance team, Cap and a few other organisations we have been able to guide them to different types of help. This is very much a work in progress.

So thank you for your support and helping hands that have made this project what it is.

## **20 Tea Services**

### **Rev Jo Hellenbrand**

Thanks to Rosie, who continued to bake and serve delicious cakes and plenty of tea and coffee, and Cecilia who came each month to play the organ, we were blessed by our monthly Tea services. These afternoons have been a chance for older folk in the church to meet with friends and enjoy a traditional service, with hymns sung a lifetime, and have a chance to hear poems and watch videos of artists singing beloved songs.

Graham has picked up many elderly people unable to drive or walk and made sure they safely got home which is a Godsend for those unable to get out to the morning services.

It's been a joy to see new people come to the services and those not connected to the church and receive a warm welcome and leave with a bag of cakes to take home!

## **21 Shoeboxes (Samaritan's Purse)**

### **Sharon Wakins**

We had a very exciting launch for our shoe box appeal in September as we were visited by Puppet Partners making their first outing since covid. Not only did they perform in the service but offered to teach our Sunday School children all about the puppets and how they worked. This led to the children doing their own performance at the end of the service. It made a brilliant start for the new EBC Sunflowers Children's group and was much enjoyed by all. We watched videos that explained where the shoeboxes were going and the work of Samaritan's Purse charity.



We are always pleased to receive the boxes in November and acknowledge that they are prepared with love and care. This year we collected around 90 boxes including several that had been prepared online, to be sent to Eastern Europe including the Ukraine. Thank you for your support with this work.

## 22 Social Events

### Graham Back

Historically, social activities at EBC have tended to be run in the Spring, and then in the Autumn. In Spring this year we were only just beginning to get back “into the swing” of things after coming out of the long period of Government Covid restrictions. However, we did have a Quiz Night in the Autumn, with monies raised being paid into church funds.

In September we were saddened to hear that Queen Elizabeth had died, but we were pleased that we gathered together in June to celebrate her Platinum Jubilee with lunch, followed by games.

Although not strictly coming under the heading of social activities, at our church service launching our Shoebox appeal, we were pleased to have as guests the Christian puppet theatre from Rayleigh Baptist Church...see the photo.

In fact, several of our church activities have spread out into regular social events, such as the men’s and ladies’ breakfasts, Safe Haven (Community Café), and Family Play.

We continue to look at opportunities for further social activities, both for our church fellowship, and for others in our local community.

## **23 Flower Ministry**

### **Rosie Midson**

During 2022 it has been a real pleasure to see the resumption of regular flowers in the church. These are donated by anyone who chooses to do so and a sheet to sign up for this is in the vestibule. You can choose to arrange your own flowers or ask Rosie to organise one of the flower team to do this. Sharon and Sami regularly help- with many others doing a 'one off' display. We have vases as well as the pedestal stands as flowers are increasingly expensive so smaller displays using the communion table are often a better choice



Following the service the flowers are given out, to encourage, say thank you or simply recognise the pleasure of God's beautiful creativity.

Do see me if you would like to be more involved in this.

## **24 Safe Haven Community Cafe**

### **Rev Jo Hellenbrand**

It was good to finally open our doors and start this new ministry after initially planning to open in May of 2020, which of course we couldn't. Covid changed our thoughts from providing just a Dementia Café to a space that welcomed anyone, especially as the pandemic highlighted the need for social interaction with each other, but we kept the Dementia needs considered with all the volunteers being dementia friendly trained and providing many Dementia friendly activities. We are also joined by the Dementia Navigator from Southend Council most months which provides a

chance for carers to have a chat and get advice while their loved ones are being chatted to by the volunteers.

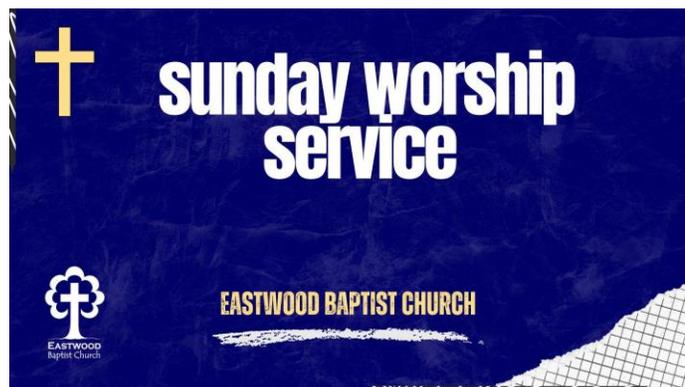
Carol comes each month with different craft activities which always draws a crowd around her as her ideas are fabulous and Graham spends the afternoon playing games, especially dominos which always goes down well, Jo makes sure we all get plenty of tea and cake and the other volunteers make sure there is always a warm welcome in this safe place.

It is a blessed afternoon.

## 25 Live Streaming

### Neil Keeble

During our Deacons meeting in May 2021 we discussed what options we had with regards to being able to get our services out to members/friends of EBC that could not attend in person.



At that time there was a lot of work and duplication getting a service recorded & released. We also found that it was difficult to ask outside speakers to not only record their sermons but to attend in person.

With the assistance & guidance of our friend Jon Stanton from Earls Hall Baptist (EHB), Jo Hellenbrand & myself (Neil Keeble) went and viewed the Live Streaming system that they use. This was our first viewing of ProPresenter.

After some month of viewing various YouTube tutorials, we proceeded to ask Jon to advise on what equipment was required. Jon kindly provided a list along with costings. EBC have been blessed in that a very generous donation was made to specifically be used for Live Streaming.

Therefore, New computer (refurbished), camera, cabling etc was purchased. Jon came and assisted me in setting up the equipment, & David Keeble assisted with the laying of cable.

We then found that there were issues with the sound, getting a constant hiss. As a result we needed to seek further advice.

I'm pleased to say that we were able to live stream Jo Hellenbrand's ordination service in Dec 2021. We've had a few 'wobbles' but we were pleased with the outcome.

Thanks to David Mayne's help I was introduced to his 'AV Man (Audio Visual) & met with Harry in early February. We had a good chat & he looked around at our current set up. The sound-desk is analogue & if we want to improve things, we needed to replace it.

He then started to re-adjust the controls on the desk, including those for the loop. He re-connected the input lead from the sound-desk to the computer as the position used on the sound desk was incorrect.

We then played around with recording ourselves & listening on playback. Although we hadn't got rid of the hiss, we have certainly made improvements. I'm pleased to have received positive feedback after the adjustments. We also had to purchase some new radio microphones as the original ones were failing & old.

We then discussed the sort of equipment we would need to replace the analogue sound-desk. I received a detailed spreadsheet with items, prices & links to the suppliers. The initial cost being approx. £3,750. Again, EBC have been further blessed as, without hesitation a further donation of £4,000, which gave me a little 'wiggle-room' was made.

Therefore, a new digital sound desk, cabling & other peripheral equipment was ordered. Unfortunately, the new digital sound-desk has a long lead time. It finally arrived at the end of June.

I met with Harry where we spent a whole day unplugging the old sound desk & tracing cables & connecting the new equipment up. It was remarkable how much clearer the sound was.

The first use of the new desk was in early July & when listening to the live stream it was “music to my ears!”. The only issue we then discovered after the service was that the hearing loop wasn’t working,

Yet again I arranged to meet Harry at the Church & we traced wiring under floorboards etc & connected the loop to the sound desk. All good, we were pleased with ourselves...so we thought. Late in July we sadly had a huge amount of issues in the church building, plus the live streaming was also affected.

Yet again we called in Harry to go through & trace the issues. We were able to narrow the issues down to the fact that once we turn the hearing loop on we get hissing, reverberation, echoing, & mics picking up sound when they are off. With the loop turned off everything works perfectly.

In September 2022 (having to arrange a day off from work) I met with an engineer from SFL Group. This firm was recommended by Shoebury Baptist. They work in the professional business of shows etc, but also understand Church requirements.

The engineer spent about 3 hours with me & was able to make some resets & get everything operating with the hearing loop. Even the lectern microphone had been resolved.

The hearing loop does not need replacing at this time but may do in the future. The hearing loop was checked with a special gadget & although there was a slight hiss, we seem to have things working.

We will need to replace the current microphones as we were advised that they were not illegal. Also we found that the lectern microphone failed again so in due course we will be speaking with SFL again to seek their advice. In the meantime, we are okay with what we have.

I can't emphasise the gratitude to the generous donations made by Church members for this project. Without that we would be a lot further back in our endeavours.

Also I can't thank the membership for the encouragement & patience.