

Parish of St Ebbe
with Holy Trinity and St Peter Le Bailey,
Oxford

Annual Reports
2018-19

Contents	Page
Rector's Report	3
PCC Report	4
Finance Review	6
Fabric Report	8
Deanery Synod Report	9
Safeguarding Report	9
Central Congregations	10
Central Church Life Reports	13
Headington Report	30

I hope you'll be encouraged by these reports, which give a snapshot of what happens at St Ebbe's. We owe a great deal to a very dedicated and hard-working staff team and to the large army of volunteers who enable all that is recorded here to happen. Of course, there is much in our life as a church that goes unseen, and is therefore unreported, and yet is hugely significant in our life and ministry: the prayers of church members and many supporters all over the world, sacrificial giving, acts of loving service and, prompting and enabling it all, the gracious work of our loving heavenly Father.

When we made the decision to add a gallery in the main church building, the PCC resolved that we would aim to expand and export, with the goal of future church planting from a hopefully larger base. None of us expected to be moving forward quite so quickly, but the Lord had other ideas and providentially provided us with the opportunity to plant into the former URC building in Temple Cowley, now in the ownership of the Littlegate Trust. Ben Vane was appointed to lead the new congregation and will now begin to gather a team and make preparations for a launch, hopefully later in the year.

Our longing in Cowley, as in Ebbe's downtown and in Headington, is that many more will come to know the Lord Jesus through our ministry and that we ourselves would grow together in knowledge and love of him – to God be all the glory!

(Extract - Full report included within annual accounts)

The full PCC met seven times during the year. The major new subject for discussion was an opportunity to plant a church in the Cowley area of Oxford, the practical and financial implications and the appointment of a minister to lead the church plant. Progress with the planning for a refurbished and extended Church Centre kitchen were considered during the year and approved at the PCC's first meeting of 2019. The PCC was also concerned with staff appointments, finance, safeguarding appointments and Church of England matters, and received regular reports from sub-committees and congregation leaders.

It has been a relatively quiet year for senior staff changes, the most notable being Dave Reid leaving Headington at the beginning of the summer after nine years to join Lymington Rushmore Holidays. Along with Helen, Timothy and Rachel he leaves with our deep gratitude and very best wishes. Leon Catallo joined the Headington team in September and we are delighted that he, and his wife Charlotte, have returned to St Ebbe's. Becky Lee, who left in the summer following husband Matt's ordination, made a significant contribution to our ministry amongst students and will be missed, but has been ably replaced by Helen Hambling. We also said good bye to Kate Phillips, who has served us in various capacities since joining as an apprentice in 2014, most recently ministering to our postgraduates. She left in the summer but retains close ties as she, along with Alex and Euan, are now our mission partners in East Asia. We welcomed Nancy-Page Lowenfield as Postgraduate Worker. Headington's Children's Worker, Laura McKee, left in May with our thanks and best wishes and, with a re-arrangement in responsibilities, Hannah Craig moved from being an apprentice to the new post of Children's Ministry Coordinator. In September the Headington congregations were delighted to welcome back a former apprentice, Tom Midgley, as Student and Youth Worker.

As usual, we had a large turnover of apprentices during the summer, with five staying for a second year and eight joining us. Those leaving us have moved to many different pastures; we hope and pray that they found their time at St Ebbe's beneficial - we most certainly did. We also welcome this year's new apprentices. In a large church it is too easy to take for granted all that they do, so we warmly record our thanks and appreciation here.

Sunday is the main opportunity for us to meet together - during term-time we have eight services, including three at St Ebbe's Headington, and OAK (Oxford Asian Koinonia). A major aspect of our Sunday services is attention to the preaching of God's word, and during the year we appreciated series in Galatians, Acts, Isaiah and Ecclesiastes amongst others. Our buildings are very well used during the week, with an activity nearly every day, including hosting the South Central Gospel Partnership Ministry Training Course on Tuesdays, Mum's & Toddlers Groups on Wednesdays (Sparklers in the city centre & Splat in Headington) and Thursday Afternoon Fellowship. Students meet during the week for Focus, iFocus/Explore (internationals) and Conversation (language students), and our weekly postgraduate ministry (Thesis).

Week-night clubs are also held for children and teenagers. Many adults are members of regular fellowship groups and, for 20s and 30s, Roots meets each week for Bible study, prayer

and encouragement (20s & 30s group at Headington). Our annual children's Holiday Bible Clubs were once again well attended and appreciated, as were similar one-day events during half-term breaks.

Our ministry to children, youth and their families has continued to grow and develop over the year. On average over 220 children/youth attend our Sunday groups each week, in addition to those attending mid-week clubs and holiday clubs. We are so very grateful for all the leaders who care for and teach in these ministries.

Week by week we continue to seek to grow in the knowledge of God, to increase our depth of fellowship and unity and to proclaim the gospel. We have held a variety of events throughout the year to enable people to hear the good news of the gospel, some tied to particular ministry areas, and some for the whole church family to engage with.

Chairman of PCC: Vaughan Roberts (Rector).

Elected members of the PCC: Susan Berry (PCC Secretary), Graham Collins, Al Cory (Churchwarden), Matt Davidson (from April 2018), Anna Gittins, Philip Goh, Edward Heywood-Lonsdale, Robert Horner, Jeff Hunter, Richard Mortimer (to April 2018), Trevor Rayment (Hon. Treasurer), Georgina Smallman.

Representatives on the Deanery Synod (and thereby also on PCC): Julia Cameron, Simon Neal, Paul Taylor (Churchwarden), Penny Wearn, Suzanne Wilson-Higgins. Also Jonathan Anelay as member of Oxford Diocesan Synod (to July 2018).

*(Full details included with annual accounts)***St Ebbe's Oxford - Financial Summary to 31st December 2018**

£	Central	Headington	Total	Year Change £	Year Change %
General Income					
Voluntary Income (including Gift Aid)	1,025,947	305,032	1,330,979	93,409	8%
Other Income	84,551	5,059	89,610	(7,288)	-8%
Total General Income	1,110,498	310,092	1,420,590	86,121	6%
General Expenditure					
Mission Giving (UKMG, OPSG, other)	164,437	57,193	221,630	(28,653)	-11%
Staff (incl. Quota and Housing)	688,172	200,952	889,124	(72,895)	-8%
Property costs	61,735	15,866	77,601	18,335	31%
Admin & Fees	52,353	14,415	66,768	5,421	9%
Cowley Church Plant running costs	2,511		2,511	2,511	
Marlborough Road Mortgage	15,000		15,000	0	0%
Total General Expenditure	984,208	288,426	1,272,634	(75,280)	-6%
Catering & Activities - net income (cost)	(10,002)	(5,552)	(15,555)	9,317	-37%
Underlying Surplus / (Deficit)	116,288	16,113	132,401	170,718	
Exceptional items - Net Income/(Expense)	8,237	(3,150)	5,087	101,908	
General Fund Surplus / (Deficit)	124,525	12,963	137,488	272,626	
Building Funds					
Income	189,774		189,774		
Expense	(110,962)		(110,962)		
Gross building fund	78,812		78,812		
Add back capitalised expense	0		0		
Net Building Fund (before depreciation)	78,812		78,812		
Other Funds & Changes					
Other Restricted Funds net movement	8,110		8,110		
Pension Fund Provision Adjustment	79,000		79,000		
Valuation adjustments on investments	(5,667)		(5,667)		
Depreciation	(145,211)		(145,211)		
Revaluation Church Centre & Dale Close	5,000		5,000		
Net Movement in All Funds	144,569	12,963	157,533		

The above is a summary extracted from the full audited accounts, copies of which are available from the Church Office or our website stebbes.org

Our God has provided wonderfully for our needs. Taking a long view of our accounts it is clear that the Lord has provided each year just what we have needed to do his work. The financial account shows this, but the numbers are a little complicated.

The General Fund (including Headington) showed a surplus of £137,488 in 2018 before the accounting impact of pension fund adjustments and depreciation are included. This must be

compared with a deficit of £135,138 in 2017. The deficit in 2017 arose from the one-off additional costs incurred whilst we were meeting out of the main building during the Building for Growth project. The PCC agreed to meet these costs from reserves and at the start of 2018 the reserves were £55,000 below target. At the end of 2018, reserves have been replenished and £60,000 has been committed to essential works on Cowley and the main building downtown leaving an unallocated surplus of ca £10,000. The Lord has provided for the needs of St Ebbe's – praise him!

The Headington Restricted Fund recorded a surplus of £12,963. (In 2017 there was deficit of £66,026 largely due to expenditure on the heating and the new office spanning two financial years.) The surplus arises from the timing of some staff changes, but mostly because of the Lord's loving provision at the November Gift Day.

The vast majority of our income comes from the faithful regular giving of God's people. In 2018, the Lord inspired his people to increase both regular and one-off gifts to meet the challenges at Headington and to prepare for planting a new congregation at Temple Cowley.

Once Gift Aid is included, in 2018 we received regular gifts of £921,479, which was a large increase on the previous year (£813,420). We thank God for the commitment of our regular givers, many for a great number of years and at significant personal cost, and particularly for those who have started to give regularly this past year. Our Gift Days in May and November are significant moments in the year and are necessary to meet the balance of our general expenditure and for specific new expenditure. This year £237,586 (2017: £173,900) was given across our Gift Days, including £35,000 designated for Building for Growth, for which we are full of thanks and gratitude. This allowed the PCC to commit to employing a minister and apprentice for Temple Cowley. Funds have been provided in the year to repay the shortfall on the reserves, and to pay for future essential building works (preparatory works at Temple Cowley and drainage for the St Ebbe's building).

Friends of St Ebbe's Trust (FoSE) have continued to support the student work at St Ebbe's, and we remain exceedingly grateful to FoSE for their ongoing support.

Our total expenditure across all Funds in 2018 of £1,610,551 (2017: £2,793,480) is no longer greatly affected by buildings projects but does include £145,211 for depreciation on our new works (2017 nil). The provision for pensions, which had increased in 2017 (by £59,000) has been reduced in 2018 by £79,000. Our core general expenditure (including Central, Headington, Cowley and student ministry) fell by £75,280 to £1,272,634. In 2019, general expenditure is expected to rise because of the new congregation at Temple Cowley. Exceptional items in 2018 included income from the past sale proceeds of an oak chest which can now be accounted for, and gifts for the Cowley church plant, less payments for repairs at 81 Marlborough Road, the church roof and Pennyfarthing roof, final costs of the new Headington heating system and the commencement of repairs at Cowley.

The opportunity of planting a congregation at Temple Cowley has reminded us that money is given to share the good news of Jesus and build new congregations, and appropriately our greatest costs are to pay people to minister this good news, either directly or indirectly.

We are committed to paying 19% of our previous year's regular income as grants to support the work of the gospel overseas and 6% within the UK. For 2018 a total of £199,162 (2017: £204,746) was given away as grants for this work. We also raise one-off collections for special causes (e.g. Harvest Offerings).

The Honorary Treasurer, Trevor Rayment, and Tim Wilson (for Headington) have guided the PCC throughout the year, supported by our Finance Committee and with regular reports to Standing Committee, Headington Committee and the PCC. Under the direction of our Church Manager, Andy Menary, all day-to-day financial matters are handled by Bev Adam for Central and by Rachel Browning at Headington. We are thankful for their care and attention.

Fabric Report

Alastair Cory & Paul Taylor

This is the report of the Churchwardens on "the fabric of the Church and the articles appertaining to it" under Section 5 of the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991. For a record of the properties held by the church, and of the contents of the church building, and for a full account of the work done in the last year, reference should be made to the Terrier, Inventory and Logbook, which are available in the church office.

Following completion of the Building for Growth project in the main church building, we await completion by Benfield and Loxley of minor defects (snagging) works following the end of the first year after works. When these are completed that will allow us to release the remaining retentions.

In May 2018 Heritage Roofing (Oxford) undertook repairs to the church roof, replacing cracked, worn and missing tiles and slates.

The Quinquennial Report commissioned in December 2016 made a recommendation to address the condition of the low brick wall around the chestnut tree in the churchyard. During the autumn that wall has been demolished and all the debris removed so that it no longer presents a danger to children playing in the churchyard.

The Churchwardens would like to express their thanks to all who came to help on the work parties during the autumn to start the work of clearing up the churchyard following its use as a builder's yard during the Building for Growth project. Special thanks to Hannah Bossers for planning and organizing those sessions. Further work is still required to restore the garden and fulfil the terms of the planning conditions, mainly the planting of a few trees and shrubs. We should also record and express our thanks for the gift of a wooden picnic bench for the churchyard, in loving memory of Pat & Gerald Phipps.

The long-standing problem of providing suitable shelter for buggies has been resolved by the installation of a substantial awning to cover the paved area between the churchyard and the church centre. This was provided and fitted by Deans Blinds in February 2019.

A serious roof leak in the Church Centre above the office has been repaired by Mo Hill.

The issue concerning the warping of the new oak floorboards at the west end of the church has still to be resolved. Work is in progress to improve the drainage of rainwater in the vicinity of the west wall in an attempt to reduce the humidity in the area below the flooring at the west end.

The kitchen planning group has continued to meet and has presented plans for the approval of the PCC which has now appointed contractors to carry out the work of refurbishing the existing kitchen and converting the old crèche room into a dishwashing and storage area. The work is to be carried out over the course of summer 2019.

We should like to offer our thanks to all those who have helped to maintain and clean the church premises over the last year. We should also like to appeal to any members of the congregation with DIY and/or gardening skills to help on future work parties.

Deanery Synod

Paul Taylor

The Oxford Deanery Synod has met four times since the last ACPM. At the June meeting at St John's Hall Church, Kidlington, there was a presentation on the Deanery visit to the Holy Land earlier in the year.

The September meeting was the annual joint meeting of the Oxford and Cowley Deaneries. It was held at St Clement's Church and the main business of the evening was a presentation by the Diocesan Generous Giving Advisor, Jonathan Farnhill.

In November the Deanery Synod met at St Philip and St James, the home of the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies. Its director, Paul Bender Samuel, led a presentation on the work of OCMS, and the Lay Chair of the Deanery Synod, Prudence Dailey, gave a talk about the Prayer Book Society.

The most recent meeting of the Synod took place in February in the Pennyfarthing. Pete Wilkinson gave an excellent presentation on what goes on at St Ebbe's, and then Rev Jennifer Brown (Science Missioner & Research Associate, Ian Ramsey Centre for Science and Religion, Oxford University) spoke on the subject of effective dialogue on Science and Faith matters.

Safeguarding

Ian Fry

In line with national guidelines, this year saw the quality and quantity of safeguarding training required by the Diocese undergo large-scale change. In close collaboration with the new Diocesan Safeguarding Team we have sought to implement the new requirements in an orderly fashion. Thus far 117 staff, apprentices and volunteers have completed the new training process.

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Our current PSO, Ros Clark, will be standing down from Easter. She has performed her role with calm efficiency and has been of great help. We are delighted that Alison Willis will be succeeding Ros in September. In the interim, Ian Fry will be acting PSO.

Central Congregations

9:45am Congregation

Pete Wilkinson

The 9:45am congregation is a wonderful mix of ages and nationalities, singles and marrieds, and it has been encouraging to meet as one family in Christ and grow in our love for him and for each other. We have grown a bit numerically this last year and we are very grateful for the increased space for children's work which the Pennyfarthing now allows. The crèche has moved upstairs to the French Room, with a separate room for mothers and babies next door, where the service can be followed on the screens. In terms of the teaching we have had series on Psalms, James, Ecclesiastes, Hebrews, and The Gospel and the Body.

Many are involved each week, serving in a variety of ways, and we are very grateful to those who are able help on one of the rotas. Those leading the different serving teams are Trevor and Janet Rayment (Welcome Team), Tim Kane (PA), Philip Percival (Music), Youngha Cho (Tea and Coffee), Georgiana Seigneur (Communion set-up), Elaine Mullins (Crèche), Diana Moule (Woddlers), Phil Legg (Trekks), Toni Searles (Explorers), and Wes Xu (Pathfinders). Toni Searles is stepping down now from Explorers (7-10 year olds) after leading that work for a number of years, and it has been wonderful to see that group grow under her leadership both numerically (to over 40 children now) and in terms of their understanding and engagement with church. Thanks too should be given to Tor Swayne and Summer Klug, both of whom have led the crèche team during the last year.

11:45am Congregation

Joel Knight

The 11:45am service began in October with the new academic year, and it was exciting to meet lots of new people. For the first three Sundays of the year we ran 'welcome desserts' as an opportunity to welcome newcomers to St Ebbe's. Things have settled down since then and we're now well into the swing of another academic year. We've had teaching from the book of Hebrews, a particularly helpful book given common confusion about the Old Testament, and the gospel of John, which has given us opportunity to behold Christ as John offers him to us. It's common to have those exploring the Christian faith with us, and 11:45am members seem to be happy to invite friends along.

Many thanks to all those involved in the 11:45am; the musicians headed up by Sam Glover and Liv Chapman, those on sound desk and projection, the welcome teams, those involved in leading, praying, reading, communion administration and Hannah Bossers and Alexi Andriopoulos for all they do to prepare church lunch.

City Congregation

Matt Pope

St Ebbe's Church is surrounded by the urban poor. Historically it was a slum parish. Today in our parish we have one of the most deprived council estates in Oxfordshire, and sadly now only one hostel, Simon House, which will be closed at some point this year. Our wider city includes many more urban poor people. Oxford itself has the highest population of homeless

people outside of London (per head). I am sure you are becoming aware that this situation is on the rise as you walk around Oxford's streets. Just as we feel uniquely placed here by God to reach the student population, as a church we feel the same to reach the urban poor of Oxford.

City Congregation has a primary aim of reaching such people in our city with the love and good news of Jesus. City has all the same elements and aims as the other congregations but with an awareness that the people we are striving to reach and attract are not middle-class. City's service reflects this fact. We have a desire to meet people's needs in three ways:

- 1) Through the gospel and seeing people live in and for Christ.
- 2) By being an active daily church family in people's lives. In order to do this, we strive to be open and honest about struggles in our hearts and lives.
- 3) By practically meeting present needs in lives we are involved in. I love John Piper's phrase, "All Christian people should seek to help alleviate all suffering when they see it, especially eternal suffering."

Wonderfully, as I write this, we have seen someone come to faith and the number of guests coming has been growing over the past term. It has been a blessing to see people growing in faith and sharing lives together more and more. Over the past few months a group of St Ebbe's members have been meeting together to think about how we can develop our outreach to the local urban poor community. Hopefully we will make some significant steps in our work with the urban poor of Oxford in the coming years because of this group's input.

There will be big changes at City this summer. I am moving on from leading the work and a number of the congregation will be heading off to Cowley to support the new church plant. Andrew Turnbull will be taking over running City. I am delighted by this and confident that City will flourish under his leadership. Please pray especially for this transitional summer.

6:30pm Congregation

Vaughan Roberts

The 6:30pm congregation continues to be a varied group of people. We have teenagers, undergraduates and graduate students, those in their 20s and 30s, longer-term city members and a few senior citizens. There is also a wide racial mix and we are always joined by those who, as yet, are not convinced Christians. We want the 6:30pm congregation to be a place where everyone feels at home and where different groups mix well together. Our various mid-week small groups provide the pastoral support and fellowship which deepens our Sunday meetings.

In terms of teaching we have had series from Acts, Mark's gospel, Isaiah, John's gospel and Joshua and on the people of God and the fight in the Christian's life. We have been well served by our musicians and by members of the congregation who have read and prayed. We have also enjoyed visits from various overseas mission partners. Each term we have held an invitation service and speakers have included Richard Coekin and Jamie Child.

We are grateful to Lorraine Ow for all she does to help us practically, as well as the many who serve as welcomers, provide refreshments, and in many other ways.

During the past year, we have been encouraged to hear news from OAK friends who had returned home. One lady had a calling to serve in mission in North Korea. Another lady, who came to faith some years ago, is now going to study theology and get more involved with church ministry in Japan. Through the work of OAK ministry, we cannot anticipate who will turn to faith. However, the Holy Spirit continues to work with those who are hungry to commit themselves to God's work. We are deeply grateful for all his providence and plans for the sake of the gospel.

At OAK, we have spent time getting to know more about Jesus' teaching through the gospel of Luke.

Last April, Han and Dawn had a follow-up trip to China (Shanghai, Huang zhou & Nanjing cities) to meet up with around 30 former OAK members. It was a very encouraging time and a reminder of the importance of staying in touch with people.

The OAK returnees conference was held in Taiwan in January 2019. The gospel talks were freely permitted and attended by local Taiwanese friends, and friends from China and Japan. The Bible exposition was from Ephesians.

We are grateful for our OAK friendships, some for over a decade now. As we are brothers and sisters in Christ, we can see and share how they are staying firm in the faith within their society and community, particularly in Taiwan, between traditional belief and Christian faith.

OAK continues to provide a place to explore the word of God. Generally, 80% of those who attend are newcomers, along with a steady number of regular members too.

In each term, OAK has organised activities alongside fellowship on Sundays:

- Summer BBQ & Summer Bible discussion (July-Aug 2018).
- Welcome meal, invitation for newcomers (Oct 2018-Feb 2019).
- Day trips to Cotswolds, Bath & Blenheim Palace (Feb-Apr 2018).
- Sport days - badminton & table tennis played on Saturdays.
- Retreat in Snowdonia, North Wales (19th March).

Huge thanks for the support and prayers for OAK ministry year after year. OAK's role seems like a small outreach yet it has a great impact when one person comes to faith and changes their life.

Central Ebbe's Life Reports

Apprentices

Joel Knight

At St Ebbe's we're served by, and serve alongside, a fantastic team of apprentices. This year we have been thankful for Alexi Andriopoulos, Kyle Auterson, Josh Baylis, Hannah Bossers, Abby Cornelius, Sam Glover, Peter Greenman, Lorraine Ow and David Sarjudeen. Halfway through the year, they were joined by Diana Gegeniger from Germany, interning with us for six months.

Each of them has faithfully and sacrificially thrown themselves into, between them, almost every area of church life. This means that if you want to know what St Ebbe's is like as a church, they're best placed to tell you! One recently arrived couple to St Ebbe's remarked to me how impressed they were with the apprentice team, particularly given how hard they work and yet how genuinely enthusiastic they are. We're very grateful to the Lord to have each of them and we as a church owe them much.

Our longing and prayer for the apprentices is that their time with us is significant for them, training them in discipleship and ministry gifts as they seek to discern next steps. We are very pleased that Kyle, Sam, David, Josh and Hannah will be joined next year by four more apprentices, all of whom are currently members of St Ebbe's and Oxford University undergraduates.

Celebrate Recovery

Hazel Cook

Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centred 12-step programme which seeks to help people overcome their hurts, hang-ups and habits. The programme is in its fourth year at St Ebbes. We currently have a men's and women's group meeting every Monday in term-time, with both new and returning participants. A number of participants have now worked through their spiritual inventory and are sponsoring others through this process. We continue to be encouraged by personal recovery testimonies.

In the immediate future, some participants will attend Celebrate Recovery's UK conference in Derby on 8th June. This will provide an opportunity to share ideas, learn from other churches and celebrate what God is doing through this programme. Our longer term aim is to grow the programme as we believe it can help many people, both at St Ebbes and beyond.

Central Prayer Meeting (CPM)

Pete Wilkinson

Once a month on a Wednesday evening we come together from across the church family to pray for the work here at St Ebbe's and for our mission partners in the UK and overseas. It is vital, of course, that we continue to commit all we do to God in prayer, relying on his grace not our programmes, and it helps to maintain our sense of being one church, together committed to the different ministries that are going on, rather than solely being interested in the particular area of church life we are involved in. This is a meeting that we would love all who are committed to the work of St Ebbe's to make a priority and to come to whenever they can.

There is a meal for those who can make it (huge thanks to the Roots teams for that), which provides a good opportunity to meet new people and catch up with others from across the church family. As well as slots to pray for different aspects of the church's ministry, each month Vaughan speaks for 15 minutes on some matter or issue of particular concern.

Church Weekend Away

Lizzie Ling

We have a Church Weekend Away (CWA) every other year and this year many of us went away together on 22nd-24th March. A total of 213 people, from across the Ebbe's congregations, came for the whole weekend (including 48 under 16s) with an additional 61 coming just for the day on the Saturday. It was also great to have several overseas partners with us.

In particular, we hope that at the end of the weekend, people will have met lots of new brothers and sisters in Christ and had the opportunity to deepen friendships with others. This year, we met at a new venue, Kent's Hill Park in Milton Keynes. This came with some logistical challenges but all-in-all the response to the weekend was overwhelmingly positive. When asked what people found most helpful about the weekend away, this is what some people said:

Excellent fellowship, new friends, really helpful teaching.

Wonderful talks from James Fletcher.

The calligraphy seminar was great fun – just what I needed when my brain had worked plenty enough!!

Having such an incredible team doing kids work throughout each session.

Time to get to know people without needing to rush off.



Golden Oldies: Singing favourite hymns around the piano – with Penny Wearn and Jonathan West



Calligraphy Seminar



Saturday afternoon team games

Thanks go to:

- James Fletcher for his talks on 'The New Heaven and the New Earth'.
- James Poole, Jeremiah and Lydia James, Nancy-Page Lowenfield, Vaughan Roberts, Helen Hambling and Justyn Terry for leading seminars.
- Jeff and Jo Hunter for organising the fun and games on the Saturday afternoon.
- Sue Berry for leading the walk.
- Justyn Terry, Jonathan Crozier and Sam Glover for the Saturday night jazz.
- The apprentice team for running the children's/youth sessions.
- Lizzie Ling, Esther Byrom and Cathy Terry for organising it all.
- And to many others who baked cakes/gave lifts/helped with creche and generally looked out for others.

Families, Children's and Youth Work

Ian Fry

Families are served particularly by a variety of Parenting Forums which aim to address practical and cultural issues to enable parents to raise their young by faith rather than fear. Ongoing pastoral input also takes place through home visits.

Children:

There are 40 volunteer helpers who ensure that both Sunday and mid-week clubs continue to run smoothly. The Sunday Clubs which comprise Woddlers, Trekkers, Explorers and City Club, enjoy excellent leadership which creates a secure environment for the children. Woddlers continues to be led by Diana Moule, Trekkers by Phil Legg, Explorers by Toni Searles (who stepped down at Easter) and City by Heather Nevard. Mid-week clubs – ZAP, Whizz Kids and 2-2 - are ably led by apprentices.

There are 101 children on Sundays and 24 children mid-week. The Bible continues to be at the heart of what is done week by week as the clubs partner with parents in their calling to teach their children the gospel.

Youth:

There are 17 volunteer helpers running week-night and Sunday youth groups. Five youngsters attend OX1, 23 come to Impact and 13 attend Pathfinders. Once again, the Bible teaching sets the tone and creates the culture in which the youngsters can thrive. Ollie and Katie Lansdowne and Sam Mitchell co-lead Impact and Wes Xu leads OX1 and Pathfinders.

Holiday Bible Clubs for 5-11s:

To help families outside the church connect the holiday events together we now have three one-day HBC's (formerly Hullabaloo) and a four-day event at the end of the summer holidays. We have seen more settled behaviour amongst the youngsters and have increased Bible time, which the children love. A team of Wes Xu, Phil Legg and Naomi Harwood have been instrumental in developing this ministry.

Sparklers

Janet Rayment

Sparklers is the St Ebbe's group for pre-school children and babies and their parents, grandparents and carers. We meet in the church building every Wednesday morning during school term time. The group is very popular, and we regularly host between 30 and 40 adults and 45+ children.

The vision for Sparklers is two-fold; that friendships will be established between Christians from St Ebbe's and the non-believing families who attend, and that those friendships will give opportunities for sharing the gospel; secondly, that friendships between Christian parents will be strengthened. Over recent years, we have become much more aware that, although our talk and craft activity are aimed at the children, most of our focus is towards witnessing to the adults who attend.

Looking back, we give thanks and praise for:

- a group of church families committed to this work of outreach,
- the servant-heartedness of the apprentices and those from the wider church family,
- a core group of parents & carers from non-believing backgrounds who attend almost every week,
- a welcoming and happy environment.

Looking forward, please pray for:

- others to commit to serving at Sparklers, as many families move on from Oxford this summer,
- boldness in speaking about our faith and trust in the Lord Jesus,
- the team, as we look afresh at how we build friendships and engage non-Christians and their children in the truth of the gospel.

Sparklers is supported by many families from St Ebbe's. Sheila Stapylton-Boyce and Nia Short work alongside Janet Rayment to welcome families and ensure the smooth running of the group. The refreshment team, Peppy Smeaton, Mary Golding, & Ann Blacker serve faithfully each week, as do our wonderful Apprentices. Recently we have been joined by Jee Lim and, until the summer, Diana Gegeniger.

Fellowship Groups

Pete Wilkinson

Within a large church like St Ebbe's, fellowship groups are vitally important, both in providing a base for receiving pastoral support, as well as being a context in which to learn to give support and encouragement to others. Groups tend to be linked either to the 9:45am or

6:30pm congregations and meet two or three times a month in homes around (and beyond) the city. Bible study is at the heart of what the groups do, and over the last year the groups have studied a bit of John's gospel (chapters 14-16), 1 Peter and Haggai. Each group also adopts one or two of our overseas mission partners to support in prayer.

During the last year Ed and Liubov Brooks, Mike and Shirley Dobson, Rohan and Alanna Glover, and Simon Neal have stepped down from leading groups, but five new groups have begun, led by Philip and Kate Percival, Jacob and Tessa Rodriguez, Ollie and Katie Lansdowne, Paul and Jennie Gatenby, and myself. Others currently leading groups are Frank and Beverly Adam, Anthony and Nicola Bewes, Sam and Jordan Brewitt-Taylor, Sam and Juli Cohen, Micah and Katie Coston, Matt and Becky Davidson, Ben and Jane Elvidge, Ian and Nina Fry, Tim and Gillian Kane, Richard and Liz Mortimer, Simon and Rebecca Pillar, James and Caroline Poole, Trevor and Janet Rayment, Colin and Sue Townsend, and Tony and Sue Wales.

Flowers

Margaret Chambers

We continue with our work of enhancing and welcoming through the flower arrangements for each Sunday, plus occasionally supporting brides for their wedding day. I thank the regular, dedicated and faithful team of nine arrangers for their contribution and service, plus the skills of Carol Anelay who arranges the flowers for weddings. We seek to praise God for his creation and glorify him.

The Flower Team: Hilary Blair, Johanna Cook, Margaret Chambers, Eve Hitchens, Angie Menary, Mary Pegler, Esther Riepma, Sue Townsend, Hilary Whitehouse, Carol Anelay.

Men's Ministry

Ian Fry

Our goal in the men's ministry is to encourage and equip men to be men of prayer and the word in their lives. We anticipate this overflowing to reach other men for Christ. To begin to promote this, a monthly daytime Bible study for men has begun this year. We are working through the excellent resource *Reliable Men* produced by St Thomas's Sydney. Men's breakfasts have also been revived with two successful events held so far.

Ministry Training

The Anna Project

Lizzie Ling

The Anna Project (Anna's) seeks to equip and train women for gospel ministry in local church contexts. It is different to, but in some ways, parallels the Simeon's group. Anna's is open to Ebbe's staff and apprentices and the wives of Wycliffe ordinands. It meets formally twice a term. Alongside regular meetings it seeks to provide opportunities for women to explore gifts/test out skills.

We pray that God, in his mercy, would use it to bless his people down the years as women serve in local churches - using all the gifts God has given them in various capacities and in different contexts.

Simeons

Alexi Andriopoulos

Simeons consists of 26 young men who meet with Vaughan Roberts twice a term for training in the task of preaching and once a year individually to review a sermon and receive feedback. Topics covered range from the handling of different genres of Biblical literature to the framing of a sermon with its structure, illustration and application. As part of the training each member preaches once during the year in one of a number of different churches. We are grateful for the openings we are given regularly at Stoke Poges Free Church, the group of churches in and around Chipping Norton, Long Hanborough, Syresham Wesleyan Reform Chapel, Souldern Chapel, Oxford Chinese Christian Church, Northway, Stowe and St Laurence Appleton. Several of these churches have a long relationship with Simeons and are very appreciative of their ministry. Banner of Truth have also kindly supported the Simeons ministry in providing free and discounted J.C. Ryle books for the Simeons edification.

Simeons has now been running for 18 years. Our prayer is that God will use these meetings to prepare a new generation of preachers to build the church and reach the world.

South Central Ministry Training Course

Matt Searles

The South Central Ministry Training Course (SCMTC) is a course that meets 10am-4pm every Tuesday at St Ebbe's, seeking to equip people to understand and teach the Bible better. We give thanks for 75 attendees this year, from around 25 different churches.

Looking back, give thanks:

- For the excellent teaching we have had from a wide range of Christian workers, both local and further afield.
- For increased numbers of training events in Burford, Chesham, Reading, Maidenhead, Chipping Norton, Basingstoke.
- For contact with new churches.
- That Matt Searles is now full-time (from Jan 2019) in order to develop training across the partnership.

Looking forward, pray:

- For fundraising to cover increased costs with Matt now full-time.
- For possible partnership opportunities with other organisations in the area.
- For good numbers to sign up for the coming year.
- That those who finish the course this year might have grown in Christlike character and be equipped for whatever ministry they are involved in, now and in the future.

Music

Philip Percival

We love to sing at St Ebbe's! And the reason we sing is that God uses our songs as a ministry of his word and the Holy Spirit; a ministry that we all engage in as we sing the word to one another and respond to him in praise and thanksgiving (Colossians 3:16). As always, I am very thankful to all the music and sound teams who give up their time and skills each week in order to serve Jesus and the church. Our musicians are wonderful servants whose desire is to help the church engage with Christ and each other through the singing each Sunday.

Please pray that God would continue to bless St Ebbe's with gifted people to serve, with great new (and old) gospel songs, and hearts and minds that are open to God working his will in us when we sing the gospel.

Open Door & Homeless and Vulnerable Ministry

Josh Baylis

Open Door is one way we try to share Jesus and show his love for people from all walks of life. It's a Bible study group for people affected by homelessness which now meets on Wednesdays at late lunchtime. We chat, have food, study the Bible and pray together - we've recently finished Colossians and are now in Mark.

There are several regular members who come most weeks and various others whom we see occasionally - over the last few months we've had anything from one to nine people at once. A range of people are there - some Christians with an encouraging faith and evangelistic zeal, and some non-Christians.

Besides Open Door, we sometimes have homeless people coming to the church door asking for help with practical needs - we try to help where we can and pray for opportunities to share Jesus with them too. The Oxford Winter Night Shelter section of the report has more information as well.

A lot of us might wonder, 'What can I do as a Christian to help homeless people?'

- Don't rush past, but smile and say hello, even if you don't stop.
- Ask people for their name and tell them yours!
- Flyers for Open Door and the City congregation are available in church and we'd love to welcome people to those.
- The Oxford City Council website has more details on where homeless people can get meals and what to do if you're concerned about someone.

Pray for Open Door:

- Give thanks for the regular core who come and for the faith of some.
- Pray for growth together in Christ and for conversions.
- Pray for wisdom and love for leaders, and for minimal distractions.

The other Open Door leaders are Andrew Cowan and Philippa Wilson, who are doing a fantastic job!

Oxford Winter Night Shelter (OWNS)

Matt Pope

It has once again been a great privilege to be involved in the OWNS. The project's aim is to provide overnight shelter for homeless people during the coldest months of the year, and this year 10 churches in Oxford, including St Ebbe's, have hosted in this way during January, February and March. It is wonderful to see God's people meeting such an obvious need in our city. We have barely scratched the surface of the problem - we only offer 20 beds, which is an improvement to the 10 offered last year. This year we continued opening our doors on

Wednesdays but also opened them on Saturday nights as well. Each session would see guests arrive at the Cabin in the Rectory garden at 9:30pm.

Our guests arrive pretty promptly and are greeted with smiles, tea, coffee, pot noodles, cake and chat. Though these guys often get a bad press, we have never had any real trouble - the guests simply come for friendship and a bed to sleep in. Once they have eaten and washed, ear plugs are distributed, and the lights are turned out.

We have seen the same people most weeks and this has meant that genuine friendships have formed, so we have a real laugh together and I often find myself the subject of banter. But don't cry for me - as you might imagine, I give as good as I get! I am very tired... (along with a lot of other St Ebbe's volunteers), but very thankful to God for what he has been and is and will be doing for some of the neediest in our city in and through us.

Thank God:

- For churches working together on this project.
- That our harvest offering raised a substantial amount of money to fund the scheme.
- For lots of church members helping the scheme run.

Please pray for:

- Learning from this year's scheme and planning for next year.
- The 20 people who came to the night shelter to continue friendships with Christians they met.
- These 20 people to find permanent housing.

Overseas Partners Support Group

Penny Wearn

2018-2019 has been another busy year for OPSG. It is very exciting to be involved and informed about the worldwide ministry of God's family and we feel very privileged. However, we become more aware of our inadequacy as a committee to meet all the needs of our partners and so we are increasingly grateful for, and dependent on, the whole church family contributing to this responsibility. So thank you if you have provided accommodation, meals and shopping, hospitality and transport. Thank you if you take seriously your communication with your small group partner and write, skype or send presents as appropriate. Thank you if you know about the ministry of at least one partner so you can pray intelligently for them. Of course, the main support you give is your sustaining prayer and in generous financial giving to St Ebbe's and to particular partners.

We are fortunate to have a monthly opportunity at Central Prayer Meetings to pray for our partners and also every week in our congregations. The prayer diary - faithfully recorded by partners' scribes - also helps us daily to pray for our overseas church family. Our partners are very aware of our support and grateful for it.

At the time of our annual meeting we have 23 "families" comprising of 41 adults and 35 children in 16 countries. This year we gained Nick and Harriet Algeo going to The Gambia; Andrea Becciolini returning to Florence; and Alex and Kate Phillips moving to East Asia. We also gained five babies: Julian in Asia, Edward Richards, Micah Bell, Tessa James and Isla

Woodliffe. Jacob and Tessa Rodriguez returned from Ethiopia so Jacob could do a PhD at Wycliffe Hall – praise God. Mary-Anne Johnson has decided to take time off from IFES in Geneva and Jonny and Beth Burgess will be returning from The Gambia in the summer. We also give great thanks for the lives of two of our former South American partners Eileen Murphy and Elizabeth Richards.

Our numbers will not be depleted! Preparing to leave are Matt and Helen Pope with Eva and Judah, going to Chile in August; Rob and Claire Law with Barney and Toby moving to Naples in September; and Sarah going to Central Asia in September. In addition, Heather Moate is considering short-term service in Africa, also leaving in September. The increased giving to Ebbe's last year is a wonderful provision for which we thank God [and you!].

OPSG meets every couple of months but also frequently with potential partners and visiting ones. World Focus Sunday was in January with Phillip Jenson from Sydney speaking to us and phone calls from partners. Our World Focus prayer meetings, when we cover all our partners, are held in May, and this year will have at least six visiting partners! This year's prayer meeting is Wednesday 8th May.

Our committee is Esther Byrom, Mike Dobson, Debbie Gallacher, Annabel Heywood, Edward and Susie Heywood-Lonsdale, Paul Taylor, Penny Wearn [chair] and Gail Willow.

Pastoral Care

Annabel Heywood

This PCC subcommittee aims to have an overview of, and to encourage and support, pastoral care in the church. We meet formally twice a year.

Ongoing pastoral care is overseen at the congregational level and is largely carried out within the various small groups. These provide regular meetings enabling people to get to know each other, and so be able to support one another through prayer, a focus on Christ, and in practical ways.

The committee helps by considering particular needs and by seeking to ensure that the burden of care is sufficiently shared and that some resources, training and support are available.

Last year internal training and support included:

- A Sunday seminar on Anxiety. There is a further one on 12th May on Perfectionism.
- Celebrate Recovery, helping a number, some new to the course, some continuing and some not from St Ebbe's (see the Celebrate Recovery report on page 14).
- A support group for those caring for elderly relatives and friends has continued to meet once a term.
- The support group for those who experience same-sex attraction, meets once a term.
- *Real Change*, a six-week course to help address areas of life in need of change, was run for members of some of the women's Bible studies, and there are options for more groups during the summer term.

- Parenting forums, to help parents think how to engage with culture and communicate wisely with their children. This year the topics are 'Understanding and responding to our transgender times', 'Raising girls', 'Helping our children handle social media', and the meetings are held at various locations. There will also be a Saturday morning considering 'Caring for children with additional needs' on 8th June.
- There are informal one-to-one and more formal or intentional pastoral counselling meetings with a handful of individuals over a number of weeks, for a range of issues – we look to Christ for change, as together we engage with Biblical truth, applying it to the specifics of an individual's struggles. This area of pastoral care is supported by occasional referrals for more specific counselling, especially to a Biblical Counsellor who visits for 2 days once a month.

Outside training has been received from Biblical Counselling UK, through their certificate course, and eight people (three from Headington, and five from Downtown) attended the BCUK annual conference.

The pastoral care committee is now made up of Pete Wilkinson, Jonathan Crozier, Ian Fry, Nina Fry, Annabel Heywood, Helen Hambling, Phil Legg, Lizzie Ling, Rose McKendrick, Caroline Poole and Beverly Priddle.

Roots

Annabel Heywood & Matt Pope

Roots is aimed at workers in their 20-30s at St Ebbe's. We have 80+ coming each week. Our aim is to be a prayerful people, seeking to enjoy and serve God in his church and world, expecting to see him make a difference in us and the world around us. To help us do this we meet each Wednesday evening. Three sessions out of four we eat together, study the Bible and pray. Once a month we join the wider church family at the Central Prayer Meeting.

We are a pretty transient group. This can be especially hard for the longer-term members. They are a really servant-hearted bunch, making up most, if not all, of the Sunday club teams, serving at half-term HBC's as well as Holiday Club in the summer. Some even took annual leave to serve the wider church in this way.

Next year will see Andrew Turnbull taking over the leadership of Roots. I (Matt) am delighted to have served with the leaders of Roots who are a very gifted, faithful and fun team. I would like to thank them for putting up with me! and loving me.

Give thanks for all who come, and the leaders who work hard to serve the groups. Pray for:

- Andrew Turnbull as he takes over the work.
- The people only with us a short while - to grow and be helped so that they can make a real difference where they go next.
- The longer-term members to make good long-term Christian friends.
- People to be engaged in evangelism.
- People to be open and honest with each other so we can support each other.
- All of us to keep learning together from God's word.
- Leaders for next year (we lose lots each year!)

Student Work

Conversation

Simon Posner

Conversation is an evangelistic ministry to people in Oxford who are learning English as a foreign language, including language school students, working people and visiting scholars.

We meet on Mondays to practise English and study the Bible. In Spring 2018 we worked through nine Bible studies in Luke, and since then we've been working through 15 studies in Mark. We have seen a steady increase in attendance from 7-10 guests per week in 2018 to current levels of around 15 guests. The vast majority stay for the Bible study and we're thankful to God for those who show a strong interest in finding out more. Several have become involved in wider church life, e.g. 6:30pm congregation, Roots, iFocus.

This year saw us move to the Pennyfarthing basement, which has proved a good location, although our new Monday-evening slot means we no longer benefit from sharing a cooked meal. We have, however, hosted special events at Christmas, Chinese New Year and Easter. We're thankful for a number of guests who are taking the gospel seriously and are considering what it means in their lives. We pray on for them as they return to their home countries.

In the coming year we will maintain our core strategy of weekly studies in the gospels, while also working to improve our one-to-one ministry and build relationships with local language schools.

Conversation leaders this academic year: Gary Davidson, John Liao, Temple Zhang, Sean Ravenhall, Lauren Delapenha, Gail Willows, Iona Farrar-Bell, Anastasia Posner, Simon Posner and Alexi Andriopoulos

UK Undergraduates

Joel Knight

This year we've been studying Romans together at Focus, which is the midweek group for UK undergraduate students, which has both challenged and comforted us. Our prayer for the undergraduates is that, like Paul, they would be increasingly eager to see the gospel of Christ preached across the world, particularly where Christ is not known. To this end the theme of Ledbury, our four-day getaway at the end of Hilary (Easter) term, was on the theme, 'To the Ends of the Earth', and we were so encouraged by the grip that this topic seemed to have. We pray on that as a church now, and for students in the future, we would both be 'holding the rope' for cross cultural partners, and also that some would 'go down into the pit' by being sent cross-culturally themselves.

We've enjoyed welcoming a new bunch of Freshers, who seemed to trickle in more slowly this year than they have before and we're grateful for those who have been taking the first tentative steps in the Christian life with the help of Focus or who have been exploring the Lord Jesus in the context of Focus.

We welcomed Helen Hambling to the team in September and she has done a brilliant job building relationships with students, investing in many and making things tick in far too many ways to mention here. Many thanks also to the rest of the student team; Abby Cornelius, Peter

Greenman, Hannah Bossers, David Sarjudeen and Sam Glover as well as the many Focus leaders who serve faithfully throughout the year.

International Students

Glenn Nesbitt

iFocus meets on Thursday evenings in term-time. We share food together with Focus and then we all move into our different discussion tables, with over 50 international students meeting in the Pennyfarthing. Several times during the year, Focus and iFocus have mixed socially over hot chocolate and tea in the Pennyfarthing basement.

Like Focus, we have studied Romans, supplemented by talks from guest speakers and members of St Ebbe's. These have included how to share the gospel with our friends, relating to our parents, and relationships. A few non-Christians have joined us at various points in the year. The internationals also enjoyed the student conferences at Ledbury with good numbers attending each one.

For the past four years, Mary Hudson has led at iFocus in a humble, loving and wise way and, while we are delighted she is marrying Nick Wooldridge (who led at iFocus in 2017-18) in May, we are sad she will be leaving us. Jack O'Grady, from Wycliffe, has done a super job of leading iFocus this year and Hannah Bossers is a great ministry apprentice. We are assisted by a faithful and loving team of table leaders, a mix of undergrads, postgrads and young professionals. They are Alexi Andriopoulos, Sarah Bolton, Linette Chan, JR Chua, Alice Fox, Ryan Friets, Shalom Gurjar, Zixin Jiang, Abraham Ng, Matthew Ng, Kirjon Ngu, Lucy O'Grady, Olivia Ong, Luke Saville, Jarel Tang and Naomi Wang.

Postgraduate Students

Glenn Nesbitt

Thesis is made up of graduate students, spouses, and some early-career academics. The community as a whole is diverse ethnically and culturally, with a mix of Masters and DPhil students from a variety of disciplines. Typically 100 people meet on 10 Tuesday evenings per term. We have been blessed with a committed and faithful leadership team who lead 12 Bible study discussion groups. Two of them have been particularly evangelistic, focusing on Mandarin and English speakers.

Throughout this academic year on Tuesday nights, we studied 1 Corinthians through a mixture of short talks and small group discussions. We also had several evenings on the topic of relationships. On Friday mornings, a smaller number (20) have gathered for our Going Deeper Breakfasts in the basement of the Pennyfarthing. As well as praying, we discussed Jen Wilkin's book *None Like Him* on the attributes of God, and also the line in the Nicene Creed, 'I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic church'.

Evangelistically, Thesis has hosted two 'special events' this year: one for American Thanksgiving at which McLean Rabb spoke, and another for the end of Chinese New Year with Enoch Cheng as the guest speaker. Over 100 people attended each event. In Hilary Term, Thesis members attended the OICCU Main Event (Human) and Tim Keller also spoke at a lunchtime meeting for Christian postgrads entitled 'Christian Wisdom for a Plural World'.

We continue to appreciate our partnership with the Oxford Pastorate. Thesis members were involved with the International Student Welcome (ISW) events in October and Developing a Christian Mind (DCM) conferences in February and March. We also assisted with the Catalysing Postgraduate Ministry Conference in March.

During Michaelmas Term, we held our weekend away at Ledbury, on the theme of 'Pleasing God', with Lee Gatiss as our excellent speaker. Over 70 people attended and we particularly enjoyed hearing five Thesis members share how their faith impacted their lives and studies.

In August, Nancy-Page Lowenfield joined the team as Associate Minister and Kyle Auterson as Postgraduate Ministry Apprentice. At the end of the academic year, we will sadly say goodbye to Lorraine Ow after two wonderful years as our Postgraduate Ministry Apprentice. Joe Martin has continued to serve faithfully as Honorary Student Worker.

Postscript on Japanese Ministry: We used to have a Japanese Ministry within Thesis to reach out to the Japanese students in Oxford the last couple of years, but it was no longer viable for us to continue with that this year as we had no Japanese-speaking Bible study leader. In place of that, we have had an English/Japanese Christianity Explored table led by Lorraine Ow and Jon Chan. For the last two terms, we've had a regular attendance of between two and four non-Christians and new believers. We used the 'Uncover Mark' series (produced by UCCF) for the first term and have gone through selected chapters of the first half of Acts for last term. We are intending to finish the book of Acts when Thesis restarts next term. However, two of our members will have left by then and we pray that the Lord will allow the seed planted in their hearts to grow. Do also pray that more will join us to learn more about Christ.

Those currently leading groups at Thesis are: Pete Alston, Tania Loke, Jonathan Yeung, Edward Keene, Julia Cameron, Tim Kuiper, Danica Kuiper, Matt Cherukara, LaRae Ferguson, Sam Aroney, Steven Firmin, Susannah Grice, Aron Donaldson, Matt Patterson, Abigail Patterson, Andi Wang, Hazel Gardner, Georgina Prineppi, Ollie Bartlett, Jon Hunt, Christine Lo, Kyle Auterson, Femi Awe, Ashley Wright, Rusty Glenfield, Sheng Chao Ho, Christy Wang, Jon Chan, Lorraine Ow and Joe Martin.

Summer Socials

Lizzie Ling

Summer Socials again took place on three Thursday afternoons in August. We watched a film together, had a short time of discussion and enjoyed a delicious afternoon tea. The films we saw were *Hampstead*, *Hidden Figures* and *Viceroy's House*. They were greatly enjoyed.

Everyone is welcome at Summer Socials but, in particular, they provide an opportunity for regular TAF members to meet up during the long summer break. For some, it's been a stepping stone to coming along regularly to TAF.

Thanks go to those who helped set up and host the event – as well as those who baked cakes and prepared food.

Summer Mission Teams provide an opportunity to serve long-term mission work going on elsewhere and to grow a vision for God's worldwide church. Each trip includes training and serving with local people.

Last year we ran three trips. In July, Josh Skidmore and Ashley Wright, with the help of Colin and Sue Townsend, led a team to visit African International Christian Ministries in Kabale, Uganda, where they ran holiday clubs in schools, did prison and hospital visiting and taught the Bible at the local vocational college. In August, Jonathan Mannouch and Christy Wang led a team to East Asia in partnership with Christ Church Durham. They engaged with university students through teaching English and ran a holiday club for local children who wanted to improve their English and learn about the Bible. In September, a team led by Gwilym Tudur visited Francophone Switzerland, where they led seminars, Bible studies and talks at the Christian Union's annual conference, and helped with Freshers' Fair stalls at Lausanne and Geneva universities. Each team member learned lots and grew in their faith and we pray for lasting fruit in the lives of those they served in the different countries.

This year we are running two trips: Uganda, led by David and Abigail Felce, and East Asia with Christy Wang as our contact (the team leaders are from Christ Church Durham). Unfortunately, Mary-Anne Johnson stepping down as an Overseas Mission Partner meant we had to cancel the team to Switzerland, but we will investigate re-establishing it in the future.

Thursday Afternoon Fellowship

Lizzie Ling

TAF meets on Thursday afternoons in term-time when 15-25 women get together to sing hymns, share news, pray for each other and listen to a short talk. This year, we have looked at a selection of passages from John's gospel and Isaiah 40 and the topic of prayer. We've also introduced the occasional Q&A session which has been well received.

Give thanks to God for his work in all our lives. We have seen faith persevere and grow and fellowship deepen. We continue to pray that more younger women would come along. Those of us who are involved in this way have found it a huge blessing.

We are very grateful to all those who have spoken at meetings over the past year as well as to those who have served on the TAF committee: Fil Hatfield, Lizzie Ling, Sue Townsend, Penny Wearn, Hilary Whitehouse and Magdalena Tarras-Wahlberg. Particular 'thank yous' go to Fil Hatfield who stepped down from the committee after many years of faithful service and to Penny Wearn who provides such wonderful meals at the monthly TAF lunch.

UK Mission Group

Tim Dossor

The UK Mission Group supports and encourages Christian ministry in the UK, passing on news and prayer needs to the congregation, and making proposals to the PCC about whom to support financially. We sometimes give 'seed money' that will start a ministry or prepare someone for full time ministry. We pray it will be strategic and significant as God grows his work across our increasingly secular country. We also support a few church plants in less

wealthy areas that may never be financially self-supporting. 6% of the money given to St Ebbe's goes to mission in the UK (19% goes to support those working overseas).

The members of the group are Tim Dossor (Chairman), Sarah Bond, Sam Cohen (Treasurer), Hilary Edgcombe (Headington), Joel Knight and Richard Tilson.

We have given support in three main areas:

1. Recruitment and Training: supporting Santhosh Thomas and Gareth Loh, training at Oak Hill Theological College, and John Martin at Grace Church, Cheltenham as they appointed their first apprentice Ben Holmes, who is also training on the South Central Ministry Training Course based at St Ebbe's. We also supported Matt Searles as he ran this course and '9:38' who exist to help people consider full-time paid ministry and run conferences, including those for apprentices. Each year we give book tokens to all those training full-time for ministry who are members of St Ebbe's.
2. Deployment in ministry: the three main areas of support are for those working:
 - a. With students: Tom Chevis, Ali Reid, Stephen Fraser, Ollie Lansdowne, Sarah Pickett and, Charlotte and Pete Downing (all working with UCCF).
 - b. In schools: Samantha Cragg (working with Oxford Schools Chaplaincy).
 - c. In church planting (including those working in smaller churches in areas where ministry is not self-sustaining financially): Malcolm Riley at The London Underground Church (changed recently to 'Trinity Central'); Mark Simpson at Wellfield Church, Leyland; Gerry Straker at Church by the Bay, Morecambe; Chris Statter in Salford, Manchester.
 - d. We also support Ken Campbell, vicar of the village church in Appleton.
3. Organisations: We prefer to support individuals, but there are a number of organisations we have links with: Oxford Brookes CU, OICCU, Friends International (working with international students in Oxford), and the Anglican Mission in England.

We've been able to welcome a few of those we support to St Ebbe's Central Prayer Meetings to hear more of their work. Our prayer is that one of the results of this is that we will understand more of the need for gospel workers around the UK and that God would raise up more workers from St Ebbe's.

Since St Ebbe's Headington was started, the UKMG has represented and given money from donations to both St Ebbe's downtown and in Headington. From the beginning of 2019 'Reach the Nations', the overseas partners group of St Ebbe's Headington will take on responsibility for both overseas and UK mission partners. UKMG will focus on St Ebbe's downtown. Current partners have been divided naturally between Headington and downtown.

Women's Ministry

Lizzie Ling

Women's Bible studies have continued to meet mid-week during term-time - both in homes and centrally at the church. Most women who attend are members of St Ebbe's but

significant numbers come from other churches. They are a huge support and encouragement to those of us who go. Over this last year, several groups have benefited from going through *Real Change* – a course promoted by Biblical Counselling UK (<https://www.biblicalcounselling.org.uk/realchange/>). We are grateful to Caroline Poole for leading those sessions. Thanks go to the leaders of the groups: Susie Fletcher, Nicola Bewes, Georgina Holt, Victoria Marcham, Rebecca Pillar, Rose McKendrick, Annabel Heywood, Lizzie Ling and Nina Fry.

Evangelistic brunches have continued once a term at the church and are open to all women and their friends. Talks this year were: How to Stop Losing it with Those we Love (Caroline Poole), Contentment: Just a state of mind? (Nina Fry) and, on Valentine's Day, Can Love Last? (Lizzie Ling).

This year a couple of Christianity Explored courses have run on a Thursday morning. Thanks go to Kate Phillips, Temple Zhang and Kathy Havell for leading these.

An occasional Friday night gathering of Ebbe's women, Weekending, set up with women who work in mind – although all Ebbe's women are welcome – started this year. A short interview/testimony, time for prayer and an opportunity for fellowship at the end of the week – before the weekend gets underway. We're grateful to Rose McKendrick for hosting these events and to Georgina Smallman, Liz Mortimer, Cathy Terry and Rose McKendrick for testifying to God's goodness and faithfulness in the ups and downs of their lives.

Two Christmas craft nights were held again this year at Ewan and Rose McKendrick's home. These were a great success – a wonderful atmosphere, lots of guests and a great talk. Thanks go to the McKendricks for the use of their home, Caroline Poole for speaking and to the organising group (Honor Merriman, Rose McKendrick, Rachel Payne, Lizzie Ling, Szilvi Watson and Kate Browne).

It's been a year of change, and new things, undergirded by the faithfulness of God, and his Word.

Our staff restructuring seems to be bearing fruit. Tom Midgley has begun in our new post of Student and Youth worker; Leon Catallo has joined us as Associate Minister; Hannah Craig stepped into the part-time role of Children's Ministry Co-ordinator. All have settled in well and are being used by God for us.



We were amazed and thrilled at how God has provided with the purchase of the URC building in Cowley, to enable a church plant jointly between us and central St Ebbe's. We are looking forward to that being a good jolt to us to trust God more deeply for continued growth.

We have been thinking how best to structure our small groups across church family so as to help the 'one anothering' that the New Testament urges on us. We are looking to add a greater 'menu of options' to better serve those who can't make home groups, or have shift work, or would value something of perhaps a few weeks' duration, or on a particular topic.

In August, we commissioned John and Jenny Miller (and the boys) to go with Crosslinks to South Africa, where John is teaching at Johannesburg Bible College.

In January, we commissioned Katie Rowell to serve God with Latin Link in Colombia. She will be working with a church in San Mateo, Bogota for the next 18 months or two years.

God has been kind again on our finances: we finished the year with a small surplus.

In other news:

- We have enjoyed teaching in Isaiah, 1 Corinthians and John's gospel, and more.
- We had our biggest ever weekend away in February, with Steve Midgley giving talks on a right fear of the Lord, and Dan Adams helping with the children's ministry.



Esther is begin



- Our student worker, Cockram, shortly to her maternity

leave. Eleanor Cornes has been appointed to cover in her absence.

- We are currently advertising for our children's ministry role (Hannah Craig leaves for Northern Ireland in the summer).
- We have formed a Practical Support Group, with the aim of keeping a watching eye on those in particular need across the church family.
- Our new website is on the brink of being launched.
- We had a profitable men's weekend away last summer; matched by a well-attended new programme through the year called 'Women across the Ages.'
- We thank God so much for the lives of Bob Carter, Pam Blaby and Rose Wharton, who died last summer.
- In the year ahead, our Committee will also give attention to thinking through our church family outreach; and to the possibility of creating a women's ministry co-ordinator post.

We would, as ever, value your prayers.

These reports represent a selection of all that happens during the year at St Ebbe's, but they are certainly not the whole picture. We are most grateful for the many other activities (organised and informal), and their leaders, that have not been mentioned here. Special thanks to everyone who has written a report. Any errors are the fault of the editor.