

Aston Clinton Baptist Church

“We are called to serve God and to share his love with others”

Annual Report & Accounts – 2013



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Introduction

Welcome to our 2013 Annual Report. Its purpose is to inform the fellowship of our activities and financial affairs during the past year. The report includes a reflection of what individuals and groups have done which has contributed to our corporate life together.

As you read it, I am sure you will find items which are news to you and may even refresh your memory and hopefully stimulate you into your own personal reflections and memories of the year gone by.

I would like to briefly but sincerely offer my thanks to everyone at Aston Clinton Baptist Church and pray that you would all know you have played a valued part in the ministry of the church in 2013 which has seen many blessings.

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Minister's Report

As I look back over this last year I am so pleased that we have seen increasing changes within the life of this Church as a whole. I hope to describe some of these during the following paragraphs.

Whilst we have struggled to see new people come onto, what was once our regular Christianity Explored Course, I have sensed tremendous growth in the lives of those who have become new Christians in recent years. Through conversations and interaction with people, I believe this is how things are. I think we can all praise God for this, because salvation is more than just a moment when someone first responds to God, but is about what is happening thereafter. It is about being true disciples of Jesus, something we are all growing in. I am absolutely sure that God is amongst us, and his Spirit is leading us. I am also certain that through the home groups and the one-2-one relationships we have, as well through the pastoral ministering I do, many people have found healing and change in their lives as a consequence of these things. The love of God has been upon this Church, and we have loved others in response too.

After 5 years of being here, I still sense, as I have done throughout this time period, the presence of God in our Sunday meetings and elsewhere. I think this is important, and a vital indicator and test of how we are doing. I trust that the services have been vehicles for the presence and action of God for you also, and that through different means, and in particular the sermons, we have learnt much together, which has propelled us into a greater Word-based-life and a closer abiding relationship with The Word, Jesus. Knowing Jesus and understanding that we are 'sons' has been an important feature in recent months, and supports the vision we have agreed to. I feel that the worship is freer than it was, and the reality of the Spirit is more pervading too. We are beginning to move in the 'prophetic' realm, although I think this still needs to develop and it seems to be less of a feature than it was this time last year. I feel that all of us have moved on in the Lord over the years and I am so pleased to be part of this Church. It is pertinent to note that the numbers attending the morning services has been relatively consistent. If everyone was to attend a morning service, we might touch 80. On the other hand, the evening service numbers have noticeably dropped off this year. Last year we were at about 30, but we are now averaging only half of this figure. I have talked to other ministers about their evening services, and this is a national trend, although sad to behold, especially as we were doing so well, comparatively, only very recently.

There has been development in the home groups, and that has been felt in the discipleship group that I have overseen with Susanna too. I believe that we are all recognising that home groups have a lot of potential and capacity in so many ways, and the vision for the home groups expresses the intent of this. Alan Cookson has maintained good co-ordination and oversight of them and this has helped them stay focussed with the direction God has given us. As a group truly hears, knows Jesus and moves in the Spirit, I am sure that the individuals within it will become closer to God, and the groups as a whole will be a good foundation for the church; a structure upon which many other things can be laid. I trust that what happens on the Sundays will support what is occurring in the home groups and vice versa. It will aid us in many other ways too. I am pleased to note that Jo Drury has recently become a new home group leader, along with Cathy Graham, as part of this.

The Diaconate has worked very hard this year and deserves our thanks, as has Assunta Loxley and Cathy Graham in their respective and demanding capacities. On a more general level, the fact remains that the support and the commitment by so many at ACBC is remarkable - this Church cannot be what it is, without the many persons playing the parts they do.

We also agreed earlier this year, to adopt a new Church vision. Principally this new vision was one of 'Jesus at the centre' of everything we do; whether that is our individual lives, ministries or Church as a whole. Everything about us together must be assessed in the light of this. The vision is based on Jesus being the Living Stone, the Capstone, in whom we are 'living stones' being built up into a spiritual house, 1 Peter 2v5, 9.

Whilst the outworking of this is different for each life, we agreed 5 core values, to give some shape to what Jesus at the centre might mean. The five values are: a welcoming, worshipping, sacrificial, prophetic and missionary community. We also thought in terms of each of the ministries we have at our Church, as a 'room' in the spiritual house. But, whatever the case, the centrality of Jesus in our lives and how he is at work in us is how the spiritual house will be built, including these ministries. Related to the vision were three targets or objectives for the year and although these were passed in November 2012, they are mentioned here because they are ongoing. We agreed to develop a Christians Against Poverty ministry, to develop the men's ministry and to pray for 10-15 persons to become Christians.

It is with great pleasure to be able to write that the Christians Against poverty 'money management course' was set up in May this year through Assunta and Keith Loxley, and Gerry Bessent. So far we have had approximately 25 attendees on the course. Everyone has found the courses to be beneficial and we have even run a course for 6 young people, who for example, are going off to University. Some of our members have met with various men over the year for social events and it would be good to develop this further for 2014 together with a men's prayer team. We have not had anyone baptised either, and in turn no new church members for 2013.

The Youth Work has continued to develop and Susanna has been working admirably within her role. Many youngsters are beginning to be part of us and the ongoing teaching of the gospel on the Friday night clubs is making an effect in the lives of some. Susanna's commitment to this is excellent and with recent changes in the Youth Cafe on Wednesdays, with Marco Loxley coming on board, we are beginning to see development here too. It was sad to let Aylesbury Vale Youth for Christ go from our cafe, because they have been very supportive of this Church for many years, and generous within that. As a membership we have continued to prove ourselves to be spiritually and financially faithful to the youth ministry; those who support Susanna at her clubs and cafes with their physical presence deserve our special thanks.

The Tot Spot groups have developed through Nicky's work, with Tina, Sylvia and Cathy giving support. This has continued the building up of relationships with the Mums (and some Dads) and has enabled us to maintain better links with people, which is supportive of being a welcoming community – part of our vision.

Fresh Horizons is still proving successful, although the numbers are variable – averaging at around 10 per month. Alan Cookson has continued to oversee it and is gearing himself and the group for new things over the coming months. I am very pleased that the group is fulfilling its role in the vision of the church. Alan hopes to re-advertise it for the New Year, in order to attract more persons. The evangelism co-ordination overseen by Gerry Bessent has been a vital feature of our Church life and I am pleased about the commitment of the group, because it has enabled us to have a focus for our broader forms of evangelism and thus something to invite friends to. A recent success would be the Quiz Night. We have also had 'togetherness' nights, which have been good for the 'fellowship', aiding relationship building and unity between us.

I believe that the profile of the Church in the community has continued to be good and that lives are being touched. I only had Year 1 from Aston Clinton School come to the Church the other day, which was a good time. The buildings are in regular use by outsiders; in fact the buildings have been improved and are being carefully monitored. We are grateful to Bob Taylor and his team in this regard. I am so pleased that Valerie Owen has continued with the 'bookings' aspect of church life – it remains an essential role, aiding our income too.

I do believe that a concern I mentioned this time last year, has eased, and that is that there are some on the peripheries of church life. I feel that more of us have a sense of 'belonging together' than we did, which has helped this, and new faces are appearing regularly!

My heart is still one of desiring each person to belong and grow, and to know the risen Christ in their everyday life. I yearn for this to occur across the board, through the various ministerial expressions we have. We need to keep our momentum and not let it go – indeed to build it up. We need to keep ‘in the Spirit’. God is going to ask more of us this year, especially if the new vision we have agreed to really starts to affect our lives. We must not let fear rob us of faith for that which he will lead us into. We have seen exciting things already, but more is to come, in this New Year.

On a personal note I would like to say on behalf of my own family how wonderfully supportive you as a Church have been to us, generous and prayerful.

God bless you, with Christian love.

Simon

Secretary's Report

As I consider the year just gone, once again I find myself humbled when I think of all the willing and sustained contributions made to the life of Aston Clinton Baptist Church in so many different ways; we have much to be grateful for.

I would like to start by saying thank you to Simon, in particular for his ministry, dedication and commitment to our church. Simon is blessed at meeting the spiritual and emotional needs of so many people within and outside of the church. We also thank Nicky for her part in the life of the church and to Emily and Anaya who bring their cheerfulness and eagerness to support their dad.

Together as a church, we are finding new strengths in our fellowship; we are learning to support each other in achievement, and I pray this will continue with our Lord's wisdom and guidance for 2014. "*We are His ambassadors*" 2 Cor 5 vs 20 and I pray He will continue to give us many more opportunities to draw people from the outside into His presence.

Let us now look at the broader picture of 2013; we have our own particular memories of things that may have affected us personally throughout the year, but I hope as you read the various reports you will get a good summary of how the Lord has blessed us all.

Leadership Team

At the February 2013 AGM saw the election of Sue as Deacon whilst myself as Secretary, Cathy as Treasurer and Faith, Gerry, Gill, Martin, Merlyn and Tina continued to serve as Deacons. The Diaconate continue to meet twice monthly under the chairmanship of our Minister, Simon.

The role of our Diaconate is to be equipped by God to be a servant of the Lord in the church, overseeing policy, leadership and spiritual guidance to the fellowship whilst helping to promote growth. We are like a body with each part playing its own part for the good of the whole (Ephesians 4:16). We also review any fiscal and legislative requirements as they arise.

During the year, some of the major topics the Diaconate has been led towards or continued to develop further included:

- Development of Worship Leaders and Music
- Development of Youth Work and increasing the paid hours of our Youth Leader
- The development of the Church Vision and its Core Values
- Christians Against Poverty
- Evangelistic and Social Events including 'Togetherness' Meetings
- Leadership Away Day
- A revamped ACBC website

The leadership team shared in the annual Away Day in October during which we debated and agreed matters of strategic importance as well as the development of the Church Vision for 2013 and the aims to be achieved during 2013 and beyond. We believe the core values mentioned in Simon's report, will form the foundations of our own personal spirituality and also that of the body of the church.

The following ministries agreed in 2012 for application in 2013 are still ongoing:

- To look at and develop Christians Against Poverty (CAP) Money Management.
- Develop Men's Ministry including a prayer meeting focussed on the men.
- Aim to have 10 to 15 new Christians by the end of 2013

As you will read from the CAP report, we have had a fantastic start to this programme and we continue to pray for our Lord's guidance and in His infinite wisdom that He will draw those from our community according to His will.

Some of our members have met with several of the men for social events this year. Please continue to pray for this and the development of a prayer team for men. Let us also continue to pray for our Lord to draw us to 'the lost' and provide us with opportunities to reach out to our community.

Church Diary

The annual Pulpit Exchange took place on Sunday, 3rd March when we welcomed Rev Sam Owoo from Hivings Baptist Church, Chesham. One comment Sam shared with me before he left was that we were very much blessed as a welcoming and friendly church.

We shared the usual Maundy Thursday joint service with St Michael's at Aston Clinton Baptist Church where we all took part and enjoyed the "Passover Meal" and after our Good Friday morning worship, we completed a walk of witness around the village. Our Easter celebrations were complemented by an Easter Morning breakfast and my thanks to all those who were involved in making this a joyous event.

The Easter Allsorts party took place on Friday, 12th April 2013 where 15 helpers and about 40 children present. There were various Easter activities; the children had a great time and then went into the church to watch a sketch. Many of the parents came in and joined in the singing at the end.

On Sunday, 12th May 2013 we launched Christians Against Poverty (CAP) by having a CAP Sunday Service and we welcomed Andrew Gilroy who gave us his testimony of how CAP helped him and brought him to faith and how other individual lives have been transformed through the CAP Money Management Programme. The CAP Money Management Course is a fantastic tool that empowers churches to provide financial education to their communities. On the following Monday, 13th May we ran our first CAP Money Management Course with 4 people attending.

In July we finished the summer term with another successful Allsorts programme – this time the theme being "Light, Bread, Tree, Water and Door". About 50 children attended and there were 23 adult helpers during the week. The Allsorts BBQ took place after the Allsorts Sunday Service on 4th August; many mums and dads from Allsorts attended this event which was a great success, despite the windy weather.

Throughout the year a number of other evangelistic and social events took place and I thank our Evangelistic Team and all those who put in a lot of hard work to make these events so successful. Some of the evangelistic and social events that have taken place in 2013 are as follows:

- ACBC Follies Evening
- Togethershship Evenings
- Quiz & Games Night
- Various Mexico 2014 Fundraising Events
- Sunday afternoon Treasure Hunt and Cream Tea
- Allsorts BBQ
- Harvest Supper
- Light Party – alternative to Halloween
- The Marathon
- Carols in the Street

In July some members of our fellowship took part in the annual Flower Festival at St Michael's Church Buckland; the theme was 'The Jubilee' and a lovely flower design was erected by the main entrance and was enjoyed by many visitors that weekend.

In October, Faith and her body of helpers organised an alternative to Halloween 'The Light Party' and this was a great success with about 25 children attending. Thank you to all those who helped to make this event so enjoyable for the children and adults!

We joined the Remembrance Sunday worship at the War Memorial on Sunday, 10th November, followed by a joint service at St Michael's Parish Church.

On Sunday, 24th November we celebrated the Bucks Forum Service at Aston Clinton Baptist Church and welcomed our guest speaker Danelle Nightingale from Mill End Baptist Church.

On Tuesday, 17th December 14 members of the fellowship gathered to sing carols in Roseberry Avenue and Beaconsfield Road on a cold, wet and windy night. However this was well received by the local residents – many of whom were very surprised that we were not collecting money after singing carols. What a great witness!

Finally we celebrated our annual joint Christmas worship with St Michael's at the Parish Church on Sunday, 22nd December, and Simon delivered a Christmas message. This was followed by our Carols by Candlelight Service in the evening and we were blessed by the fantastic choir of 'singing heralds'. Our thanks go to Gloria for her dedication and hard work and to Ian for playing the piano, putting up with the laughter and giggles and opening up his home for practice. The new Christmas Reflection Service took place on Monday, 24th December which was also well attended.

Membership

Despite no baptisms or new members for 2013, we have to date a healthy total of 58 members.

Worship Leaders

We are very grateful to Alan, Ben, Gerry, Helen, Jo, Julie, Marco, Martin, Merlyn and Sue of our own fellowship, and Rev Ian Crawford from Maulden Baptist Church, who in their various capacities have led worship services during the year. We pray that the Lord will continue to inspire them to grow in the grace of hearing His voice and speaking His word for 2014.

Final Thanks

During the year, valuable work has been done in maintaining our church website (www.acbc.org.uk) and we thank Paul for this, but now Merlyn and Paul are to be thanked for their efforts and time to creating a brand new, exciting and interactive website. Please look out for the launch of the new website in 2014 with a new website address; it will be full of information and a good way of catching up with notices and forthcoming events.

Thank you to Keith and Paul for advertising all our evangelistic and social events on the church notice board. I am sure many people who pass by give a glance as to what goes on at ACBC and it is a pleasure to see such excellent art work. Our thanks also go to Valerie for her time as booking secretary for the church buildings; we owe a debt of gratitude to Valerie for keeping this going especially when she has been in considerable pain and discomfort in recent months. Thank you also to Penni and Martin for overseeing the pastoral visiting during 2013.

Thanks to Sylvia for taking on the BMS Birthday Scheme – the Baptist Missionary Society operates a scheme whereby people are encouraged to make a gift to the Society on his/her birthday and receives a card from the Society via Sylvia. Thank you to all those who have taken part and if anyone is interested in joining this scheme for 2014, thus helping the society financially, please speak to Sylvia for further information.

A final note – I would like to take this opportunity to say a very special thank you to all of you for your support in 2013. Let the love of our Lord be your constant companion and trust Him in all things. Rest assured that our Lord is with us always and let us look forward together to what He has in store for us in 2014. I leave you with 1 Thessalonians 5 vs 11 – *“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing”*.

God Bless You.

Assunta Loxley

Treasurer's Report

Once again, a big thank you to all who have helped so much with the church finances in 2013. I am very grateful to Anne, Julie, Martin, Sylvia, Valerie, Penni and Rodney for their help with counting and banking, to Valerie for managing the hall lettings once again and to the deacons and Simon for their support. In 2013, we achieved a surplus of £3,255 compared to a budgeted breakeven position and a surplus of £2,223 in 2012. The reasons for this improvement are analysed in greater detail below:

Income

Our overall income for 2013 at £68,291 was £5,811 or 9.3% better than we had budgeted and over 9% ahead of last year. Offerings and tax recovered totalled over £63,000 which was 12.7% better than our budgeted figure. During the year, the diaconate made a call for the fellowship to increase their giving in order to fund an additional 3 paid hours per week for our youth worker. Part of the increase in offerings resulted from this with the remainder due to new and more regular giving. The balance of the positive variance was attributable to the fact that we were able to claim gift aid on small cash donations in this financial year. Offsetting this slightly, was a drop in income received from donations, principally hall lettings, which fell by almost 20% against budget as a result of two key users not running courses or going elsewhere.

Expenditure

Total church expenditure at £65,036 was 4% over budget and £4,717 higher than last year. As can be seen from the various analyses in the accounts, just over 50% of the total expenditure in 2013 was on the minister's pay, manse and working expenses. Expenditure on this area was almost £500 below budget due to lower than expected pastoral expenses.

Mission including Youth activities and Allsorts amounted to 20% of the total net spend. Expenditure on Youth was 9% over budget but this was wholly attributable to the extra paid hours for our youth worker (impact on 2013 - £1,600). Other youth costs were significantly lower than prior year, partly because prior year spending was high to utilise a £1k grant. Late in 2013, the church received a further grant of £500 for youth work via AVYFC and this has been carried forward to be used in 2014. Mission costs are lower than budget largely because the anticipated trip to Soul Survivor in 2013 did not take place.

Approximately 15% of our total costs were on maintenance, cleaning, heating and lighting of the church property. This category is over budget due to an increased allocation to the building fund this year (£3,500 compared to a budget of £2,000). Utilities costs were in line with the budgeted figure. For 2013, gas prices were fixed, however our usage of gas was higher than budgeted because of a cold start to 2013. The figure included in the accounts reflects the British Gas billing as at the end of the financial year, but this figure should be higher because we have not been invoiced for the months of November or December 2013. I estimate that the additional cost for gas should be around £800 which will impact negatively on 2014.

Gifts to other causes such as Home Mission, AVYFC, BMS, Toybox etc was budgeted at £5,000 or 8% of budgeted income. In 2013, the church gave £6,215 to other causes, an increase of £1,215 over the budgeted figure. At the November business meeting, members approved an additional donation of £750 to support the disaster in the Philippines. The balance of the increase in this category reflects the increase in income. Individuals supported a number of causes including BMS Philippines, Iain Rennie and Spurgeons.

4% was spent on equipment and miscellaneous which includes boiler maintenance contracts, fire checks, subscriptions, refreshments etc.

Once again, the whole church has been very generous with both money and time in 2013. Thank you all for your generous giving. 2014 will be a year of challenges once again as we try to undertake God's vision for the church and all that He is calling us to do within a balanced budget. I pray that God will continue to guide us and give us His wisdom to use our resources wisely to do His work.

Cathy Graham

Property Report

It has been another challenging year and many items have been attended to with lots of help from many people. I am most grateful to all those that have helped and supported me this year.

The grounds have been kept tidy and I wish to thank the lawn-mowing team and Angela for the gardening that she does.

To recap some of the main items are as follows:

- Carpet cleaning, we used the carpet cleaner hired from Morrison's. This was carried out on Tuesday 22nd January, many people came to help, it was a full day's work and we managed to move all the chairs back during the later part of the day.
- Between March and June we carried out the construction of a raised floor to the cellar. We used timber pallets supplied free of charge and collected from Kings Langley Building Supplies. This has proved to be most successful since it reduces the need to dewater the cellar every time it floods. The areas can be accessed and used for storage at all times without the equipment becoming damaged by the ingress of water.
- April routine servicing of church boilers by British Gas was carried out.
- Repairs to the gravel beds around the main church building. This was finally completed in November to the perimeters of the Church.
- August - repairs to masonry and glass replacement works to the classroom windows were completed by Boden and Ward.
- Recently, during November we have repaired Simon's office door and fixed a security lock.
- Many other smaller items were carried out including replacing a light fitting, bulbs and strip lights, unblocking the toilet, shelving, glazing and painting,.

Manse

- April Smashing Windows carried out repairs to the manse front door.
- I know that Simon carries out some general maintenance work and wish to thank him for that. For example recently he has repaired his fence.

Items remain outstanding

- The church hall floor requires sanding and varnishing. I have made enquiries at HSS Hire in Aylesbury regarding the cost of materials and equipment and estimate that the costs will be in the order of £370. This includes hire of sander pack, sand paper, dust bags, varnish, and safety kits. In calculating this I have allowed for ten litres of varnish, which should be sufficient for two coats. I hope to organise this during first school holiday in the new year
- The lights behind the wooden cross suspended to the front façade of the church have failed. It has been agreed that this will be attended to together with the refurbishment of the cross.

Bob Taylor

Youth Work

During 2013 things have been steady, with the highlights being 2 new Christians, Robert and Tom, and a solid and growing group of 9 Christians who now all attend a bible study cell group each Monday.

Another highlight has been the decision to take on Marco Loxley to run the Wednesday Youth Cafe with me. It is going well, with 40-50 young people regularly attending, and we also plan to begin a new Christianity Explored course with some of the young people starting early next year. This group will be run on Thursdays, and we are hoping to invite 6-8 non-Christians along to this. Please pray for this group, that God will be preparing hearts and drawing them in – your prayer support is so invaluable. On Wednesdays, Marco and I have been developing the young people to work as a team, and we now have 14 junior volunteers that help out at the groups, and that we are able to invite to other events. This is an important stepping stone for them, to begin to be included in church family life, and we are hoping that they will begin to attend Christian events like Youth Church next year.

The Mexico team have been busy fund-raising, and have now almost reached their target of £14,300. There are 11 young people going on this trip, led by Ben Barnes and Chloe Lamport. Out of this group, 3 are non-Christians. Please pray that God does a life-changing work in all eleven of them. The dates of the trip are 5th – 15th April 2014.

Fridays continue to be challenging with a ‘lively’ audience for my weekly ‘God slot’ at 9:00p.m! However, although there are some disruptions, I celebrate the fact that the name of Jesus Christ is spoken and Bible Truth is read and discussed every week - to a group of young people that have absolutely no other Christian influence in their lives. Most weeks there are 18-20 young people who stay for the Bible bit, and only 5-8 of them are already Christians, which is an incredible ratio, and a wonderful opportunity. Please continue to support this group in prayer, and if you feel able to offer practical help on Friday nights, it would be hugely welcome. I have a rota of faithful and supportive helpers for which I am so thankful, but if we had more help it would ease the burden for the others. Please talk to me if you are interested.

Thank you to all my helpers, once again. There truly would not be a youth ministry at this church without all of you!

Susanna Lamport

Totspot

We have had a good year at Totspot. The number of people coming along continues to be consistently high, with a mix of regular attendees, but often new people as well. We have continued to make use of the hall, lounge and school room, with activities being set up in all three areas. In the warmer months, the children very much enjoyed playing in the garden, with all the outdoor toys that we have.

In December we had two very successful Christmas parties and a very enjoyable Christmas meal, one evening, for the adults only! A few regular attendees have taken up the opportunity to attend the CAP money management course and one of the mums came along to our church for her first ever church service!

People, who come along regularly, have remarked to me how grateful they are that Totspot exists, which is encouraging to hear! Last, but not least, a very big thank-you to everyone who helps out, particularly Sylvia, Cathy and Alison, for all their work in the kitchen.

Nicky Downing

Sunday School

We have seen some exciting changes going on in Sunday School this year.

We have had a steady flow of children joining us on the Sunday mornings, numbers varying from 5-15, but predominantly around 9-11 come each week.

The first half of the year we have been looking at 'Gods' purposes for our lives', followed by 'Mission', focusing on Paul and his missionary journeys, and how we can be missionaries in our own lives, here and now.

In September Emma and Sue joined me in praying for the Sunday School and praying through where God wants to lead us. As a result of this we thought it was time to try splitting the group into 2 groups again (which we did try, unsuccessfully, over a year ago). Since September we have had the younger ones (age 2-6yrs) lead by Emma and Kate and a team of fantastic helpers, and the older ones (7-10yrs) lead by myself (Faith) and Chloe. This seems to be working really well and the children have adapted really well to it. This has meant that we have needed more helpers but people have been truly wonderful in supporting us in this venture. So a big thank you to those who have agreed to join us in caring and reaching the young hearts for His Kingdom.

Faith Rollins

Allsorts 2013

The Easter Party proved to be a good opportunity to keep in touch with the children we see in the summer. Using games, activities and a sketch, we were able to teach them the importance of Easter. There were 40 children and 15 helpers; they all enjoyed decorating biscuits, making egg nests, creating an Easter garden and friendship bracelets. Smashing blown eggs with bible verses inside proved a favourite. The hall was beautifully decorated with egg bunting and the Easter tea was enjoyed by all.

Many thanks to all who made sandwiches, prepared activities and spent time talking to the children and answering their questions.

Summer Allsorts

Our 13th Allsorts and probably the most enjoyable. The themes we chose for each day were Light, Bread, Tree, Water and Door using each to look at Jesus and our relationship with Him. With fewer children this year the general atmosphere was calm; giving us far more of an opportunity to teach and listen to the children. The answers to our prayers were amazing as we saw God working through the week.

Crafts are a good way to illustrate our teaching points. The children made sandwiches, candle light holders, Tree photo frames, snow domes and pencil door hangers.

The 3 games leaders organised varied and fun activities for each day with Thursday and water probably the most popular.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the teaching, organised crafts and games and gave a large part of a week to reach out to the families in our village. Over the years we have seen some amazing "fruit" from this work and I constantly thank God for his faithfulness.

Tina Gibbs

Fresh Horizons

Fresh Horizons meets on the first Thursday each month, meeting at 2.15 pm in the church lounge.

A varied programme is arranged and last year we visited the Milton Keynes Museum and paid a return visit to the Horse's Rest Home at Speen which has been greatly updated with a lovely cafe.

The meetings are designed for all people of all ages who would like to spend a couple of hours a month listening to interesting speakers and having a natter over a cup of tea and a cake.

This year we plan to have a speaker from Berkhamsted Castle to tell us of its interesting history and the following month to visit the Castle for our outing. A copy of this year's programme is at the back of the church or check the notice board in the hall for each month's activity. And lastly and most importantly a big thank-you to those who do the refreshments, where would we be without you!

Alan Cookson

Christians Against Poverty

In March 2013 we made contact with the Christian organisation Christians Against Poverty (CAP), attended an introductory session in Dunstable and signed up to become Money Coaches. We (Gerry, Assunta and myself) attended a Coaching skills course in Ealing run by the CAP staff and also Assunta and I sat in on a local course in Berkhamsted to get a flavour of the real environment. The Ealing course fees were about £100 each and we attended the Berkhamsted CAP course by invitation.

CAP has an excellent website (please take a look if you wish @ www.capmoney.org). They have an on line shop and we are able to buy publicity and training course support materials – this includes individual student work books, trainers guide and tutorial DVD. Using these materials we have now completed 5 courses (25 people attending, including 1 course especially tailored for school leavers / students with 6 young people attending).

Course #6 is underway, and we plan to extend our range in 2014 to Work & Pensions, Citizens Advice and the local Health Centre; anywhere in fact where a need exists from people who wish to manage their money and either get out of, or avoid debts. We all truly believe our church can be of practical and evangelical use to the wider community removing confusion and fear from personal finances. We do not *pay* debts or get people out of legal trouble – that's not what CAP sets out to do. We are here to help all those who may just need a little help with organising their finances.

From the outset we believe Jesus has led us all the way with CAP and will continue to do so in 2014 and He is offering comfort to those who wish to receive it. A quote from one of the course books "Wise planning will watch over you. Understanding will keep you safe" Proverbs 2:11.

Please continue to pray and support this ministry for 2014. Thank you.

Keith Loxley

Men's Breakfasts

2013 was a year in which we have seen some changes. An extra cook joined the ranks of the chefs, bringing with him his own speciality. So this year eight different men have taken turns on the rota to provide their own menu for our 'Full English Breakfast' each month. A very big thank you to all of you!

Spread over the year, a further change has seen the introduction of an occasional short after-breakfast presentation on someone's hobby or hobbies. Alan Cookson covered 'Stamp Collecting' and 'Researching Family History', whilst Ian Brownell covered 'Fishing for the Big One in French Lakes'. Our thanks go to both of you. (Three others have already offered and are lined up for 2014.)

Twenty-one men have attended during the year, although at any one time thirteen has been the highest. This in itself tests the equipment and logistics to the limit. Talking of logistics, these were truly tested in October when, half way through cooking, all power to the kitchen area was lost. (Fortunately the oven was already keeping some food hot.) A quick transfer of operations to the Manse kitchen meant we were able to sit down to eat more-or-less on time. Thank you Nicky and Simon for the emergency use of your kitchen! Thanks also to Emily, Anaya and their cousin who moved elsewhere in the house to have their breakfast.

It is good to have men who do not normally attend church, not just come and join us on these occasions, but take a fully active part in them. If you know of anyone who would like to join us at 9.00am on the first Saturday each month, albeit occasionally, then please let me know. I will contact them along with the other thirty invitations I send out each month.

Thank you for all your support.

Rodney Floyd

Evangelism Team

Our aims for 2013 were four fold:

1. Work towards being 'Community'
2. Present the Gospel
3. To reach the non-churched
4. Co-ordinate events with other groups in the church

During 2012 we found that we had attempted to organise too many events which lead to the situation that we were not fully prepared in time for some events, therefore it was decided that we would organise fewer events during 2013. Also at the beginning of this year we felt that there seemed to be little "community spirit" among church members, ie the sense of belonging and wanting to be in each other's company and there was perhaps a lack of 'evangelical enthusiasm'. To this end we planned and hold three 'Togethershship' evenings during the year, April, July and December, with the aim of drawing members together, plus two other social / outreach events, ie Val Heath's Quiz Walk and the Quiz Evening, to which we encouraged members to bring their friends. These were arranged to alternate with other church events, ie Youth events, Totspot BBQ, Marathon etc.

'Togethershship' evenings were quite well attended with between 45 and 52 people at each event. The atmosphere was good and those attending enjoyed the evenings which allowed people to talk and get to know each other in a less formal way than the church service when there is not usually enough time! However, noticeably, we didn't reach all members, and many seem to remain 'on the fringe', but we did feel that the church did 'come together' on these occasions.

In addition we organised and held the following outreach events, both of which went well and an enjoyable time was had by those who came and participated. Several non church people came.

- Val's Quiz Walk & Cream Tea in June
- Quiz Evening at the Anthony Hall in September

Overall we felt there could have been a greater number of church members supporting these events and we will have to work harder at encouraging this.

Reaching out to people in the village, to our friends and family is not easy and most of us do not feel we are "evangelists" but these events do give an opportunity to invite them to a fun time when we can

'break the ice' and build relationships. Doing this in a corporate church environment enables us to share the load and responsibility.

Carols in the Street - fourteen of us met in the Beaconsfield Road area at 7.30 pm and sang carols in Roseberry Road and Beaconsfield Road. Those who came enjoyed the camaraderie of the evening and the singing was appreciated by many of the residents, one family of whom came out and joined with us. Others came out and thanked us, several were surprised that we were not collecting money. Simon had had one person ring in to the church office thanking us in advance for singing in their street! It was however disappointing that so few of our own church members actually came out to sing and give witness in this way.

Mad Hatters Tea Party - this event is planned for January 18th and should be an exciting fun event for all the family.

In addition to the above events there have been Youth events, Allsorts, Allsorts BBQ & Parties, Harvest Supper and the Marathon, plus monthly Fresh Horizon meetings. All helping to engage with the village community, and reaching people of different age groups and backgrounds.

Gerry Bessent

Home Groups

We currently have seven home groups, these meet weekly on different days and times. They bring together some 40 people for prayer, the study of God's Word, support and caring for each other and outreach. Each home group leader has given a report on their individual groups and I would just like to add my thanks to them for the hard work and time they put into their groups.

If you are not in a group at the moment and would like to join one please have a word with me and I will be pleased to place you in a group suitable for you.

Alan Cookson

The following reports give a brief outline of what individual home groups have achieved in 2013:

Our Home-group consists of seven people meeting in Aylesbury; two of our members attend Southcourt Baptist Church.

We are an older group who love to study God's Word in depth and have seen His blessing on us as we have opened His Word together. During 2013 we have been involved in prayer and caring for some of our group and we praise God for answered prayer as we have seen our brothers and sisters restored by God's hand.

We continue to give thanks to God for His goodness to us.

Alan Cookson

We have continued to meet on a monthly basis, alternating between a Bible-study session and an afternoon tea to which we invite friends and neighbours. As far as the Bible-study sessions are concerned, we thought about 'fasting for lent' and, rather than the traditional giving up of certain foods, we considered that it might be better to fast from bad attitudes such as unforgiveness, ill-temper, resentment, pride, etc. ... especially pride! Then, of course, we can 'feast' on forgiveness, peace, contentment and humility, etc.

'Thinking seriously about heaven' has been our topic for the latter part of the year and we expect to continue with that into the New Year.

Our thanks go to Colin and Keith for providing the transport for our two Aylesbury members.

Angela Saddington

Our numbers have increased to eight this year. We have followed some of Simon's sermons, using his notes, which have given us food for thought. We have also studied some more of the book of Acts and 1 Peter and these studies have caused some interesting discussions.

As a group we have supported each other in prayer and have been able to share our joys and our concerns. We have managed to meet together for a meal once or twice during the year, including meeting for fellowship when there is no home group, as well as joining in with the 'Togetherness' evenings.

During October and November we were very grateful to Cliff for taking responsibility for the group while we were abroad. We look forward to continuing to study and share together during the coming year and to meeting for social events with others who have links with the group.

Penni Spriggs

Over the year we have enjoyed meeting to pray, worship and read God's word together. We have consciously tried to develop our worship time so that we are more aware of whom our God is and what He has done for us and so can praise Him in greater depth.

We have read and discussed the book of Malachi, the character of King David and the beginning chapters of Acts. We are constantly surprised that people so long ago faced almost the same challenges as we do today! We have also spent time praying about specific situations and have been encouraged at how God has answered. We have supported each other as well as specifically praying for our families who do not know Christ. We are eagerly anticipating what God will do not only in answer to our prayers but in the wider body of the church.

Karen Dunnell

We have continued this year to focus on the word from the previous Sunday's Service, using Simon's notes. It has been good to reflect upon and discuss further the teaching given by him. On other evenings we have enjoyed reading from the Bible together and discussing what we have read.

In the autumn we had a big change, with our large group splitting into two smaller groups, in order to accommodate some extra people. This has been a big change for all of us and it will take a while for everyone to adjust to the new dynamics! We have had many great evenings of discussion, prayer and support for each other and I believe that we all find the group to be a help in our walk with the Lord.

Nicky Downing

We have grown very close this year supporting each other through a variety of difficulties. Some meetings spent in prayer and others in study with members growing in knowledge and spirituality. In June we lead evening worship each giving testimony to what knowing Jesus means to us. I thank God for the very special times we spend together.

Tina Gibbs

We continue to have two home groups in our home, a day time Tuesday group and an evening group which has moved from a Wednesday to a Thursday. In both groups we study God's word and find that our deep commitment and friendship with each other comes from doing this wonderful thing together.

This year in the Tuesday group we have studied the gospel of Mark and the book of 1 & 2 Samuel, although we are still in 2 Samuel. Some of the ladies overlap both groups and so attend two groups, although one of our older ladies has moved to the south coast to be near her daughter, but still joins us every week on Skype. With Skype our friend can partake in the study and the social times that we have together. We have all moved in our faith this year and grown in our understanding, and have grasped a little more of what it is to be In the Name of our Lord Jesus.

In Thursday group at the beginning of the year we finished studying Deuteronomy and are now coming to the end of a wonderful time studying the gospel of Luke. We all enjoy reading, discussing and chewing over God's word together and discovering each other's thoughts and learning together.

We often meet together socially and continue to celebrate birthdays and events together throughout the year. For our Christmas celebration this year the Tuesday group did not go out for a Christmas meal, we all brought Christmassy food, and our shared lunch turned into a shared day, Sylvia of course joining us on Skype...she eating her lunch and playing charades with us just the same.

Wednesday group had our usual evening nibbles and bits...but this time JB was denied his dressing up fiasco as our son had taken the 'costume' for his own celebrations...like Father like son....heh ho!

Sue Leach

We have had a good year together, and I believe that all of us have grown in the Lord. We have had times of studying God's word, with questions raised and pastoral needs met. We have always tried to apply God's word to our lives, and have had a particular focus on Simon's sermons when we felt it was right in the Lord to do so. Considering that this home group has mainly been a discipleship/nurture group, it has been great to see Kate and Kath contributing and sharing, and having great insights too. We have continued with evangelism where possible, although that has not always been easy to arrange, and have sensed God's presence in our worship, as well as having some 'words' from God for each other, from time to time.

Sadly we have not always been able to meet because of different schedules, and in recent months the group underwent certain changes to accommodate this.

Finally the group closed with Kate and Kath going into a new group under Jo Drury and Cathy Graham's leadership. This new group was needed to accommodate the numbers of persons interested in home groups, as well as creating space for Christianity Explored. Jo and Cathy's group has been going well.

Simon Downing

Pastoral Visiting

The team – Martin & Penni Spriggs, Jo Bartlett and Kath Dawkins – is happy to visit anyone in the fellowship who have been unwell, suffered bereavement, lost a partner, want to learn more about the church, or would simply like to chat and eat biscuits. We have made, and more importantly received, a number of visits in 2013, but are also keen to meet newcomers to the church. In order to facilitate this, we have left a note in the entrance hall for 'Welcomers' to give to second / third time attendees, helping them to make contact with us.

Martin Spriggs

Monthly Soup Lunches

We (between 3–6 ladies) meet once a month on a Friday for Christian fellowship. Our first lunch was in September. The ladies (all who have husbands that are unbelievers) support each other through chat and prayer. We have had five meetings to date and covered topics on 'Attitude **and Actions**' covering a range from Gods words - 1 Corinthians 10:31; 1 Thessalonians 5:16 to Psalm 37:8; '**Submission**' - 1 Peter 3:1-4; and '**Building Harmony**' -1 Peter 3:8.

Any ladies wishing to join us are very welcome.

Gill Brownell

Aston Clinton Baptist Church Annual Accounts 2013

2012 £	Budget Head	Actual £	Budget £
Receipts			
46,567	Church Offerings	51,739	47,000
8,969	Tax Recovered	10,340	9,000
0	Gift Aid on Small Donations	1,013	0
6,887	Donations	5,122	6,400
<u>119</u>	Interest	<u>77</u>	<u>80</u>
<u>62,542</u>	Total Income	<u>68,291</u>	<u>62,480</u>
Payments			
27,847	Pastor's Salary, NI & Pension	29,504	29,550
4,215	Pastoral Expenses (inc Manse)	4,037	4,460
105	Preachers	0	100
2,000	Payments to the Building Fund (2)	3,500	2,000
1,237	Church Cleaning	1,392	1,250
4,886	Church Premises Running Costs	4,775	4,770
11,196	Mission – Youth Cafe and Youth (4)	12,436	11,400
809	Mission – Adults, Soul Survivor and Allsorts (4)	584	950
3,044	Equipment and Miscellaneous (3)	2,593	3,000
<u>4,980</u>	Church Gifts to Other Causes (1)	<u>6,215</u>	<u>5,000</u>
<u>60,319</u>	Total Expenditure	<u>65,036</u>	<u>62,480</u>

2,223	Surplus Against Budget	3,255
<u>2,223</u>	Overall Surplus / (Deficit)	<u>3,255</u>
3,085	Individual Gifts to Other Causes	2,929

Reasons for the difference between actual and budget		
	Additional Offerings	4,739
	Additional Tax Recovered	1,340
	Gift Aid on Small Donations (GASDs)	1,013
	Lower Donations	-1,278
	Increased Youth Costs	-1,036
	Lower Pastoral & Mission Costs	789
	Increased allocation to Building Fund	-1,500
	Increased Church Gifts to Other Causes	-1,215
	All other variations	<u>403</u>
		<u>3,255</u>
Church Cash Balances		
		01/01/2013
		31/12/2013
	Church Account	10,218
	Building Fund (Note 2)	<u>6,370</u>
	Total	16,588
		18,780

Aston Clinton Baptist Church Annual Accounts 2013

Total	Gifts to Other Causes (Note 1)	Church	Personal	Total
1,411	Home Mission	1,365	8	1,373
870	Aylesbury Vale Youth for Christ	955	0	955
583	Iain Rennie Hospice	410	628	1,038
92	Spurgeon's Childrens' Homes	0	344	344
31	Communion Fund	0	32	32
<u>2,987</u>		<u>2,730</u>	<u>1,012</u>	<u>3,742</u>
1,322	BMS World Mission (inc Birthday)	1,100	75	1,175
727	Toybox	545	246	791
498	Children for Christ Romania	545	0	545
498	Hands of Mercy – Phillippines	545	0	545
<u>2,033</u>	Other Causes – DEC, Agri, Mexico Youth, etc	<u>750</u>	<u>1,596</u>	<u>2,346</u>
<u>5,078</u>		<u>3,485</u>	<u>1,917</u>	<u>5,402</u>
<u>8,065</u>	Total	<u>6,215</u>	<u>2,929</u>	<u>9,144</u>

Building Fund (Note 2)	
Building Fund – Income	
Brought Forward from 2012	6,370
Income – from Church Funds	3,500
	<u>9,870</u>
Building Fund – Expenditure	
Replacement Windows – Classrooms	4,284
Repairs to Manse Window	70
All other	<u>209</u>
	<u>4,563</u>
Building Fund – Carry Forward to 2014	<u>5,307</u>

Equipment & Miscellaneous (3)	
Fire Check	167
Repair & Replace Fire Extinguishers	485
Boiler Maintenance (2 boilers)	340
Toner / Printing etc	492
CCLI Licence	237
Piano Tune / Repair	50
Membership / Subscriptions	293
Paper Hand Towels	269
Website	0
Refreshments	136
Other	<u>124</u>
Total	<u>2,593</u>

Aston Clinton Baptist Church Annual Accounts 2013

Mission – Youth, Children, Cafe, Adults (4)		
Main Items		
10,288	Youth Leader – Pay and Expenses	11,737
2,535	AVYFC / Pulse Support for Cafe (see below)	2,501
76	Church Magazine / Christmas Leaflets	64
361	Soul Survivor	0
311	Allsorts / Allsorts Plus	133
1,697	Youth Group & Youth Cafe	375
72	CY Course / Explore / Groups	106
240	Urban Saints Youth Resource	240
61	Village Events & Christianity Explored	47
0	Christians Against Poverty (CAP)	340
130	Youth Church	100
0	All Other	0
15,771		15,643
2,353	Less Contrib'ns Rec'd to Fund AVYFC Worker	2,032
182	AVYFC / Pulse – Reserves Used	469
<u>1,231</u>	Less Grants Utilised	<u>122</u>
<u>12,005</u>	Net Expenditure	<u>13,020</u>
1,632	AVYFC/Pulse Worker Contributions c/f to 2014	1,163
1	Grants remaining in reserves	630

Statement of Assets & Liabilities as at 31 December 2013		
Assets		
10,218	Church Account	13,473
6,370	Building Fund (Note 2)	5,307
1,632	AVYFC/Pulse Youth Worker Fund (Note 4)	1,163
1,965	Other Funds	2,651
1,239,633	Church Buildings (insured value)	1,258,238
89,766	Church Contents (insured value)	91,113
<u>179,888</u>	Manse (insured value)	<u>182,028</u>
1,529,472		1,553,973
1,529,472	Pledge to future church members	1,553,973

Manse – Charity Number 273094		
2,115	Council Tax and Water Rates	2,142
250	Insurance	242
291	Maintenance and Gas Boiler	295
350	Lino/Carpet (2012), Window/Fence (2013)	94
<u>141</u>	Phone Rental	<u>141</u>
<u>3,147</u>	Deficit for the year	<u>2,914</u>

The manse is provided for the residence of the Minister of Aston Clinton Baptist Church who under the terms of his appointment is granted rent free tenure. All expenses of upkeep of the manse are paid by the church.

Accounts prepared by Cathy Graham, Church Treasurer

Aston Clinton Baptist Church Annual Accounts 2013

Report of the Independent Examiner to the Deacons and Members of Aston Clinton Baptist Church

In accordance with the provisions of Section 43 of the Charities Act 1993, I have examined the receipts and payments account and statement of assets and liabilities of the church on pages 19 – 21 relating to the year ended 31st December 2013.

I confirm that the accounts and statement accord with the accounting records of the church and that such record satisfy the requirements of the Act. I am not aware of any matter to which attention needs to be drawn in order to obtain a proper understanding of the accounts.

Signed
(Independent Examiner)

Date