

## What Other Churches Are Doing A Report to Encourage You

### Yalding Baptist Church



James Bushnell, the minister at Yalding Baptist Church has recently reported on his volunteer work with Kenward Trust. Established in 1968, the charity is dedicated to saving lives affected by alcohol and drugs, homelessness, and crime. It assists individuals in changing their lives and forging a new path free from addiction. The organization's efforts range from conducting educational sessions and interventions in schools to offering residential rehabilitation services. Additionally, it provides housing for individuals, enabling them to reintegrate into the community and pursue their recovery journey further.

Through his involvement with the charity, Yalding Baptist has seen a consistent flow of people attending the Church and getting involved. One person has begun playing the guitar in worship, and another has started helping serve the teas and coffees on Sunday mornings.

He is also initiating a counselling service which will help those in the community suffering from the effects of isolation and loneliness.

### Life Church – Horsham



Revd Pete Dibdin reports that through their activities in the community the Church has been able to begin a discipleship group for children. The Church also meets regularly for a meal in the local Phoenix Club with the ability for those in the congregation to invite friends and family. In addition to his role at the Church, Pete is also

employed part-time as the Development Co-ordinator for the Horsham Churches Together Group, which allows him to find numerous ways of encouraging local churches to meet and work together. On Good Friday this year, 300 people gathered in the town centre singing "Jesus is Lord", and another Outdoor Praise and Worship Service was also organised in the Town Centre recently.

During the run-up to this year's General Election, the churches gathered 6 MP candidates for a questions-and-answer session in the town centre. On Horsham's "Fun Day Sunday" event, the Church provided a stall and was able to talk with people and share the Good News with them.

## Good News, Brighton



Good News Brighton is a Christian Community based in the Moulsecoomb estate in Brighton. The group is passionate about loving the people around them and the place they live in. They desire to live out the Good News of Jesus in a relevant and accessible way.

They meet on a weekly basis and connect in friendship regularly, sharing their life journeys with each other. The Church learns together what it means to be Jesus'

followers, and how they can share God's wild & borderless love. The group aims to help generously and seek justice in their local area. In doing this, the Church wants to be a community that learns from, encourages and supports each other as they seek to be more like the person of Jesus.

The team of volunteers is led by Revd Neil Hilton and his wife Jess, who work alongside Sean and Fay Older.

The Moulsecombe Council Estate has high levels of deprivation and is in much need of spiritual hope. The Church Community is involved with various social action projects, which have brought interest from local residents in the Christian faith and subsequent conversions. The Church, therefore, runs discipleship groups which help those who have found faith to deepen their understanding. Neil also works as a pub chaplain, which means that he can speak and pray with people who would not feel able to enter a traditional church setting. Over the years he has been working in this capacity, he has built up trust with the locals and now leads a discussion group with them called "Pints of View".

The Good News Shed is a place where a group of elderly men can get together to socialise while working side by side on various projects, bringing friendship, community, and hope in difficult circumstances.

## Chiddingfold Baptist Church



Chiddingfold is a small village in south Surrey, where Revd Joao Bolzan is the minister. Over the last few years, the Church has held walks, breakfasts, and a Toddler Group, which have raised the Church's profile in the village and shown people that they care for the community. They have also taken part in prayer walks and delivered leaflets to doors,

which has given them opportunities to share the good news with local people.

In the last year, the Church has had 6 new members and 2 new regular attendees, which has been the cause for great celebration in their congregation.

### **Hawkinge Baptist Church**



Not to be confused with “Hawkhurst” Baptist Church, this Church, which meets in Hawkinge Community Centre, has continued its ministry to the local area. They desire to show love for both God and neighbours as Jesus taught and have celebrated, in recent years, the return of

old members as well as the addition of new ones.

The minister, Revd Ali Boddington, reports that the Church’s long-running children’s club is now oversubscribed and has had to introduce a waiting list, while a new Youth Club has been started for those who are growing too old for the children’s club.

At Easter this year, the Church knitted and sewed 750 bags to hold eggs and Bible verses. They hung the bags around Hawkinge so people could find them and remember the true meaning of Easter.

### **Pulborough Brooks Baptist Church**



## **Pulborough Brooks Baptist Church**

Revd Judith Ellis is the Minister at Pulborough Baptist Church. She reports that in the last year the Church has had 5 new members and 2 new attendees. One of these has been a lady who has been attending the Church’s wellbeing café, having not been out of her house for many years after the Covid pandemic.

The Church has been partnering with other local groups and has created a harvest fair stall, which allows them to share the Good News with local residents.

The Church’s Messy Church has been growing. Eight families attend regularly, and 35 families attend at least once throughout the year.

This increased contact with families meant that the Church had 39 children at their recent Christmas Service and now holds a family service when there is a 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in the month.

### Westvale Community Church, near Horley



Miranda Odysseos-Beaumont is the Minister-In-Training at Westvale Community Church. As the area awaits the completion of 1500 new homes, a prayer walk inspired the idea of setting up a new community of believers to serve the new residents.

The new church meets at a local school and is establishing roots in the area.

Initiatives so far have included a Jubilee Party, Carols and Christingle services, and event fun days. Many children between the ages of 2 and 12 attend the church's initiatives, and a children's group meets on Sundays.

Westvale Community Church is only in its early stages, and things are already looking very promising.

### Brabourne Baptist Church



Brabourne is a small village of 2000 people to the east of Ashford. In recent years, the Baptist Church has benefited from a partnership with the larger Willesborough Baptist Church, which is nearby. The partnership has allowed the Church to benefit from having input from the ministers at Willesborough

and help with Sunday morning worship and community events.

Brabourne regularly runs the Oasis Community Café, Art Group, Walking Group, and Men's Social Group. They also partner with the charity FareShare to help tackle food poverty in the area.

Recently, the Church put on a Community Day, which hundreds of people turned up for. All this activity in the village has raised the profile of the Church in the village and expressed their desire to share the love of God with others. The Church has also benefited from a new paint job, which has meant that the Church now looks decisively OPEN from the outside as people pass by.

### Halton Baptist Church, Hastings



Halton Baptist Church serves its immediate area of Ore Village in the north-east part of Hastings while also contributing to the wider ministry in the town. Since the arrival of Revd Simon Evans-White in 2021, the Church has started a Messy Church which happens monthly on a Saturday afternoon and attracts many local families. Through this the Church

has begun to grow, with new families and individuals beginning to attend.

The Church has also begun a Forrest Church, which takes place in some woodland owned by a Church Member. This has allowed people to gather in a different setting, which can be an easier entry point for those who struggle with entering the Church building.

Forrest Church includes activities, discussion, a bible thought, and prayer. The woods offer a good environment for children to play in and fresh air for all involved.

### Hawkshead Baptist Church, The Lake District



Hawkshead Baptist Chapel is a very small community with a big reach. The Church was run for 30 years by Revd Andrew and Revd Kath Dodd, and since their retirement, Revd Matt Hirst has taken up the role accompanied by his wife and daughter.

As Minister Matt brings a Christian presence to the area. He works with the local school and teaches and plays sports alongside people in the community. This allows him to share his faith and lead people towards Jesus. Sunday services vary in attendance as Hawkshead is a small area. Still, with the Lake District being a prime holiday spot, the chapel can function like a retreat centre for locals and travellers alike. When we visited in July, over 30 people from different parts of the UK and Europe were in attendance.

The Church has an ancient outside baptistry that is still occasionally used, and there is also a small "Hermits Shed," which is great as a quiet spot to read, pray, and seek God.

Through Matt and the ministry of the congregation, this small community is continuing to hear the Good News of Jesus.

## Blaby Baptist Church



10 years ago, Blaby Baptist Church in Leicestershire was a small and struggling fellowship. At the same time, a lady called Pauline Willis had reached retirement and felt that God might be calling her to lead a Church. Through discussion with the Association's Regional Team and Blaby Baptist Church, it was decided that she would become their Lay Pastor.

Pauline worked with the Church to become more outward-focused and engage more with the

community around them. Over time, the Church building began to be used by local groups such as a Toddler Group and Uniform Organisations, which allowed the congregation to meet new people and serve them.

In a relatively short time, the Church has gone from about 20 to up to 70 attendees on Sunday morning. Alongside the Sunday Services, the Church also runs times of fellowship, a Women's Own group, Bible studies, Home Groups, a weekly Friendship group, Alpha Courses, a monthly Messy Church, and Sunday School at the services and other events.

The Church has also built up a worship music group over time, and now the fellowship is really thriving. All the above initiatives built up over time and didn't happen all at once. Still, Blaby is a story of how God's Spirit can work powerfully among us when we step out to engage with our community.