

ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023

Hamilton
Baptist

23 Kemp Street,
Hamilton, ML3 6QL



'Passion for **Jesus**,
Passion for Mission,
Passion for Worship,
Passion for People'

2 ASSOCIATE PASTOR'S WELCOME

3 ELDERS' REPORT

5 SEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT

7 Q&A WITH AMY GUNNING

8 WORSHIP TEAM

9 GROWTH GROUPS

10 SENIOR CITIZENS

11 OUTREACH EVENTS TEAM

12 MESSY CHURCH

13 SUNDAY SCHOOL/CRÈCHE

14 BIBLE CLASS

15 YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

16 YOUNG ADULTS

17 MISSION SUPPORT TEAM

19 CHRISTIANITY EXPLORED/WARM WELCOME

20 BOYS' BRIGADE

21 GIRLS' BRIGADE

22 Q&A WITH SUZANNE LOGIE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ASSOCIATE PASTOR'S WELCOME

Welcome to our first Annual Report.

In a church the size of Hamilton Baptist it can be difficult to find out what's going on in and around the church. This report aims to give you a glimpse of what goes on across the church. You will find information, reports, praise points and prayer points from a number of people and ministries.

I hope this report produces two things for you. Firstly, I hope it encourages you. I hope you're encouraged by the stories and reports you will read. You will find a wealth of people faithfully serving across our church carrying out many functions to glorify the Lord Jesus. Secondly, I hope this drives you to prayer. There are many prayer points within this report and I would ask you to come back to them over the next year and make use of them.

Victoria and I count it our privilege to serve with you at Hamilton Baptist Church. As we approach our seventh year in Hamilton, we have known God's goodness and faithfulness to us, especially in these last years of vacancy. It is our joy to see so many people using their gifts to serve the Lord and make Him known.

This year's Annual Report focuses on our vision "A Passion for Jesus that leads to: Passion for Mission, Passion for Worship and Passion for People." I hope that you will see these passions before you as you read.

Let me leave with you the desire of my heart for our church this year, our verse of the year:

1 Thessalonians 5:11

"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."

Grace and peace,
Jonathan



ELDERS' REPORT

PASTORAL CARE

Over the last year we, Nathan Boyle, Kenny Naylor and Jonathan Davie, have met every 3-4 weeks. We meet for prayer, to look at pastoral needs within the fellowship and plan for the months ahead. Below we've listed some of the encouragements we've found in the last year, some things we've been working on and some prayer points.

PRAISE POINTS

- **The variety of Wednesday night speakers.**

In the last year, we've had more than 8 different members of the church lead our devotions on Wednesday nights. It's been great to hear from so many in the church, using and growing their gifts. We are keen to keep developing this, offering teaching opportunities to those looking to explore their gifts.

- **The number of folks serving across the fellowship.**

It's a joy for us to see so many people using their gifts and talents to serve the Lord in our fellowship. We love the servant-heartedness with which our people serve. We see the words of Ephesians 6:7 being lived out "Serve wholeheartedly as if you were serving the Lord, not people."

- **The encouraging impact of studying John's Gospel.**

We have loved our journey through John's gospel and it has been a joy for the three of us to see this book impact lives. We are greatly thankful for the brothers who have come to teach us from outside the church for their contributions have made for a rich study.

- **The team of deacons that serve our fellowship so widely.**

Our diaconate has a wide range of gifts and talents, serving across many areas of the church. Their work is often tireless and we are hugely thankful for their partnership and commitment to this church.

- **Nigel Heath**

We have been hugely appreciative of Nigel's input in this last year. His pastoral wisdom and insight has been invaluable to us and we are greatly thankful to the Lord for his time as interim moderator.

- **The call of Craig Dyer**

Lastly, we are incredibly thankful to the Lord for the clear call of Rev Craig Dyer. We have been really stretched as an eldership of three in the last year and we're overjoyed that such a gifted and wise brother will be coming to help lead this fellowship.



ELDERS' REPORT

PASTORAL CARE

LOOKING AHEAD

- **Pastoral Care Changes**

Our biblical conviction is that we want each of our members to be engaged and valued in the life of the church. In the last year we have been taking significant time to reflect on our pastoral care structures. We have been seeking the Lord in this and have not made any quick decisions. In the coming weeks, you will hear from us regarding some changes we would like to make regarding care, so that we might best serve our fellowship.

- **Sunday Evenings**

In the last year we have re-established evening services, though not yet on a weekly basis. We're encouraged by the attendance at monthly evening communion services. We have tried something different with our 'Gospel Shaped Worship' series in recent months. This has been a good course that gives us a good basis for reflection for evening services going forward. Evening services are high on the agenda for our early conversations as Craig would take up post.

PRAYER POINTS

- **The integration of newcomers**

This past year has seen many new folks come through our doors. There have been different reasons people have joined. Please pray for us and our deacons as we would seek to integrate newcomers, especially as we would explore baptism and membership with individuals.

- **Adding to our eldership**

This is an important point for prayer. The three of us have been really stretched in this last year. We recognise that to serve the church well we could do with a wider eldership. Pray that the Lord would be raising up brothers from amongst us and that we might see our team widened with capable men.

- **For endurance and strength as we seek to shepherd the fellowship**

This has been a tiring year! The three of us feel that. There have been real joys and some real challenges in this last year. We aim "to present everyone fully mature in Christ." Colossians 1:28. Please do continue to pray for our fellowship, that we might grow together, maturing together and serve together well.

There are many more things we could highlight. Many encouraging stories and joyful times where we have seen God at work amongst us. Please do speak to us if you have any questions for us. We want to be approachable and open with the whole fellowship and we hope this report gives a little insight into our work.



SEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT

Report from
Nigel Heath

Craig Dyer



At the start of 2022, we relaunched our Search Committee (SC) alongside our newly appointed Interim Moderator, Nigel Heath.

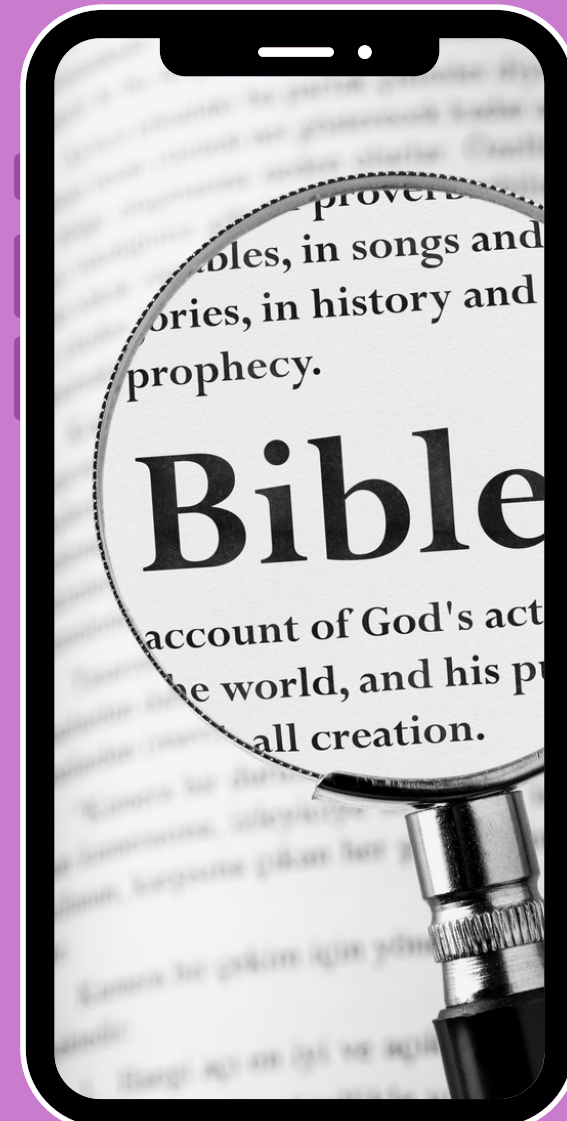
A church profile, job description, view of our ministries, and flow chart based on precedent were used to guide the SC. The SC were much in prayer and actively encouraged the church to pray throughout the exploratory process. The SC agreed that only one person at a time should be considered.

During the search for a Senior Pastor (SP), preachers were invited for pulpit supply. Members of the SC noted feedback from the church. Early in the process, three men were shortlisted with a view to inviting one of them to speak at the invitation of the SC and meet with the SC for interview.

Early in 2022, with the strongest support received for Craig Dyer, he was approached to see if he would be willing to explore the possibility with HBC that God might be calling him to be the next SP. At this point, Craig, with characteristic humility and deference, asked the SC to explore every option first in order to seek God's Will for HBC.

Having prayerfully considered, the SC agreed to approach Craig Dyer again, feeling God's leading throughout. Craig agreed to engage with the exploratory process. First, he met with the elders, and then agreed to speak at the invitation of the SC and meet with the committee for interview.

Continued.



SEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT

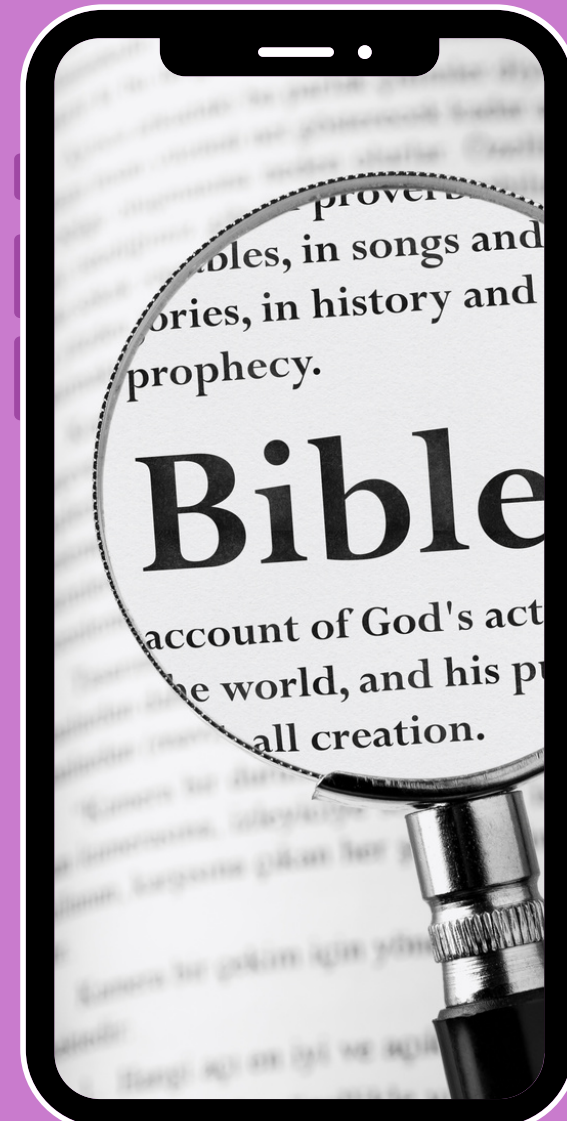
Craig Dyer



The further the SC explored Craig's suitability as SP for HBC the more evident it became that he should be considered by the Church. His values are Christ-centred and preaching Word-centred. When asked about theological views, Craig proved to be congruent and consistent in his beliefs, profession, and ways of being. In chemistry we found him to be warm and gracious; in competence with a proven track record; in continuity, developing through reading, podcasts and conferences; in experience and capacity, having already served as a senior pastor and now handling the demands of a senior appointment with CEM. When asked about what gifts, skills and experience have enriched his ministry, Craig replied, "I have no spectacular gifts, but I believe the Lord has given me a deep, steady confidence in His Word and a love for His people. Over the years I have seen the Lord at work by His Spirit, through His Word in His church, changing lives, not least my own."

As the SC and church continued in prayer alongside Craig and Margaret, the overwhelming support and God's leading was clear and we decided to call Craig as Senior Pastor of HBC.

Craig has given three months' notice to Christianity Explored Ministries (CEM) and anticipates taking up his appointment at HBC sometime during September this year.



Q&A

With our Youth & Families Worker



Tell us a little about yourself:

Hey - my name's Amy! My husband Andrew and I have been members of HBC for about 8 years now. We have a wee boy called Jude and another little lad on the way. I've been working as a British Sign Language/English interpreter since 2015, but felt God's calling into Youth and Children's ministry which is why I'm now here, doing what I'm doing.

You started your role within the last year - what's been happening?:

The last year has been the best kind of chaos! I'm very much a 'learn by doing' kind of person. So the majority of the past year has been spent on the ground with our wonderful Youth and Children's teams. It has been an incredibly privileged position to be in as I've got to work with, and learn from, people who have been serving in this capacity for years, as well as start up brand new teams.

How have you seen God work in the life of HBC?

God is faithful. Youth and children's ministries are forever evolving. We have made a good few changes this year across these ministries, which has demanded a lot of grace and patience from those serving as we work together to discern the best way forward. And through all the ups and downs we've seen God's hand in it all. I am also incredibly thankful for the people who are more than willing to get stuck in when we ask for 'odd jobs' to be covered. The bakers and those who are willing to prepare craft materials, we appreciate how you serve and very much count you as part of our youth and children's team!

How can we pray for you?

Each of our ministries have team leaders who I get to work really closely with to ensure teams are being as supported as best they can be, however there are a few gaps. These are positions I would love to see filled before heading off on maternity leave in August. Please pray for hearts to be stirred and for skills and giftings to be identified within our congregation (not an easy job when we have a membership of approx 225 people!).

On a personal level, please pray for the safe arrival of baby number 2 and for our wee family as we transition to a family of four.

WORSHIP TEAM



Report from
Andrew Gunning
and Ally Gray

WHO WE ARE

At HBC we are so blessed and encouraged by the number of people who are both gifted and willing to serve in the Worship Team. Our worship, or praise team, comprises of over 40 people in various roles including service leaders, vocalists, musicians, sound technicians, powerpoint controllers, and live stream controllers. A lot of this team are also actively serving in other ministries in the life of HBC.

THE ESSENCE OF WORSHIP

While the core focus of our ministry is the musical worship on a Sunday, we know and believe that worship is an act of devotion directed toward God. Worship is not about emotion, but a whole-life effort to bring glory to God in all we do. While the sung worship on a Sunday is only a small part of our everyday worship in how we express our faith in our lives, our worship on a Sunday is such an important part of our faith and an important time when we glorify our great God together.

Worship started with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Before the fall, they worshipped God by living according to His will, showing their appreciation and honour, and spending time with God as they walked in the garden with Him. Their worship was evident in their obedience to God and by carrying out His commands. We love that our musical worship is a part of our lives of worship as we seek to praise our creator, God, living according to His will.

OUR VISION

The vision in HBC states that we want to grow in our passion for Jesus, leading to a passion for worship, people, and mission. Our hope is that the worship team helps our congregation to focus their eyes on Jesus on a Sunday and inspires them to take that worship into the week ahead as we grow in our passion for worship.

As a team, we're grounded by 6 key elements:

1. Worship is about focusing on God, not ourselves (Deut 6:5; 2 Cor 3:18)
2. Worship is a whole life response to Him (Ps 51:17; 1 Cor 10:31; Col 3:17)
3. Worship should be grounded in truth (John 4:24)
4. Worship should be an expression of our unity and diversity (1 Cor 12:7)
5. Worship should allow us to express our God-given creativity (Exodus 35:35)
6. While we draw on a rich tradition of Christian worship, we seek to be culturally relevant (1 Cor 9:20-23)

How you can pray for this ministry

1. Pray that we continue to seek God's heart in all we do.
2. That we ourselves will worship as we seek to lead others to do so.
3. That the enemy will not lure us into pride or distraction.
4. That the sung word will set the table for the spoken word.
5. That God will continue to place new songs on the hearts of people around the world, whilst we also draw on the rich heritage of songs from years past.
6. That God will continue to provide people to serve as part of this team.

Thanks for all of your
prayers and
encouragement over the
years – Ally Gray and
Andrew Gunning

GROWTH GROUPS



Report from
Hugh McClelland

WHAT, WHO, WHY?

- What are Growth Groups? Essentially, they are home bible studies that take place every second Wednesday evening during school term. We also have 1 of our 9 groups meeting in the church.
- These groups are for everyone in the Church, members and adherents alike, who want to study God's word together in small groups, in a safe, secure and more intimate environment.
- We enjoy fellowship with one another, and the opportunity to build up and be built up by one another in our faith. We look to deepen our knowledge of God's word as it's written for us in the scriptures and how that pans out for us in our daily lives. We also have the opportunity to give and receive pastoral care as we listen and talk to one another. Many of the groups operate a WhatsApp group chat which makes keeping in touch easier.
- The average number who attend each group is around fourteen, but this can be very variable week by week, with some groups regularly having upwards of 15 and some with five or six. The geographical areas covered are; Strathaven, Larkhall, Motherwell, Bothwell, Blantyre, Earnock, Silvertonhill and central Hamilton.



PRAISE POINTS

- Let us give thanks for the opportunity these groups give us to challenge, encourage and strengthen one another. Growth Groups help us be accountable together in our faithfulness and obedience to Him.
- We can praise the Lord for the great teaching we have had over this last year or so, as we have taken an in-depth look at the Gospel of John in both, Sunday mornings and at the Growth Groups.
- We're thankful for the nurturing relationships that have been and continue to be made and developed. John 15:12 'love one another as I have loved you'.
- For the way we have been encouraged as we have observed through the Bible, the perfect plan that the Lord has unfolded for us down through history.



POINTS FOR PRAYER

- Pray that the Lord will bless and enable the Growth Group leaders, the hosts who provide the venues and the question writers, to take us forward in Him, as a church.
- Pray that we would continue to draw closer as a fellowship as we share these times together.
- Pray that the Lord would really speak to us as a church through the Sunday sermons and the subsequent discussions we have at the Growth Groups, as we seek to further our spiritual growth.

SENIOR CITIZENS



Report by
Jack Aitken

TEAM

J & L Aitken
Leam Stangoe
Margaret Neill
Helen Mutale

Our meetings are held every Monday, from October to April.

We have approximately fifty people attending every week. These folks come from our own fellowship, from a wide range of other local fellowships as well as folk who have no church connection. In this past session, we have had 27 different speakers, organisations and singers who have ministered to the group who meet so faithfully. Our singing is so infectious and our speakers, so inspiring. This work could not continue without our faithful Committee and volunteers.

We have 14 volunteers who set up and clear the hall, who operate the kitchen and serve the food and provide powerpoint and music. All of these people are vital and form a happy, working team. These meetings were started by a local Church of Scotland minister and were kept alive by other churches in the town. Then arrived Rev Dines who assumed the responsibility in 1960. Subsequently the leadership passed to a list of dedicated men from our fellowship; Tom Barrie, Jim Naismith, Alex Sinclair, David Barrie, Robert Allan then on to me. I hope and pray that, by God's grace, I shall be able to maintain the standards these great men of God set for us. While we enjoy having fellowship with fifty folk each week, we still have room for more so please keep your Mondays free from October 16th 2023 until April 15th 2024. There is no lower age limit to these meetings so, if you're free, you're welcome.



OUTREACH EVENTS

Throughout the year, the team have been organising special outreach events that allow the church fellowship to become involved, but most importantly to have opportunities to invite family and friends along. These events have varied in appeal, to a variety of age groups. Some of these include: Breakfast with Santa, Christmas Coffee Shop and Car Wash, Cafe for parents as the children attended a Light and Christmas Party, Hogmanay Party, World Cup football evening, Christmas Dinners at Hamilton Golf Club and Church Ceilidh at Hogmanay. Our most recent event was the Coronation Celebration for the crowning of King Charles III.

We have scheduled additional events in 2023 to engage with our friends, family, and the local community.

Report from Bruce Biggart



TEAM

Bruce Biggart
Morag Naylor
Rachel Wadsworth
Craig Smith
Graham Barrie
Lynn Stewart



PRAISE POINTS

- Breakfast with Santa had 50 children and we were able to distribute books and activity packs related to the Christmas story.
- The café allowed the parents to meet and fellowship informally while their children attended the Light and Christmas parties.
- The men and women's Christmas dinners gave an opportunity for many from the church fellowship to bring their friends to these two events and be challenged by the gospel.
- The Ceilidh was another chance for the fellowship to meet together along, with anyone they had invited, to share in our Hogmanay party.

PRAYER POINTS

- That we use every opportunity to share the Gospel.
- That these opportunities and events will see people's lives changed as we share and serve in our community.

MESSY CHURCH



Report from Laura Kennedy

WHAT IS MESSY CHURCH?

Hamilton Baptist Messy Church began in February 2018 out of a desire to reach families in our surrounding area, and to provide an opportunity for church families to invite friends and neighbours to a church event.

We host a 2-hour event one Saturday per month which is free to attend, and includes a programme of food, stories, songs, crafts, games, activities and fun. The focus of each event is a Bible story or theme, and the activities and stories will all be centred around that theme.

We normally have 80-100 people attending Messy Church each month and use most of the church rooms/halls for various activities.

The Objectives of Messy Church are:

- To give people a warm welcome to a church building – for many this is their first time in a church, or the first in a long time.
- To meet practical needs – a free meal, a relaxed and safe environment, an opportunity to spend time as a family, or to chat to a friendly face.
- To introduce people to Jesus – we might plant a seed, or water it a little, and our prayer is that people would see Jesus through the way we serve and the sharing of God's word in a simple way.

POINTS OF THANKSGIVING

- This year over 100 different children and adults have attended a Messy Church event.
- We thank God for the hundreds of families that came to Messy Church over the last 5 years and the connections that have been made- some leading to families now attending HBC or other churches.
- We give thanks for the committed team of over 30 people of all ages who make Messy Church happen each month – it's rewarding work and a great opportunity to serve alongside each other.
- We are so grateful for our 'behind the scenes' team members who set up tables and chairs, and prepare lunch for us, and cut out crafts in advance.

POINTS FOR PRAYER

- Please pray that the team will make the most of every opportunity to share the Gospel with the people we meet at Messy Church.
- Please pray for God to work through this ministry, that people would see Jesus through the conversations, the connections, the activities.
- Please pray for team unity and stamina as we serve together and encourage each other.



SUNDAY SCHOOL



Report from
Amy Gunning



Sunday School is a place where our children can learn biblical truths, and be nurtured by teachers and helpers who display the love of Jesus. It's for all kids aged 3 up to P7. This year we made the decision to go through the bible systematically from Genesis to Revelation. In theory this means that kids who started this year with us will have gone through the entire bible twice in their time at Sunday school.

PRAISE POINTS

- We're so blessed at Hamilton Baptist to have loads of kids join us on a Sunday morning. Some Sundays we see up to 45 kids, with more set to join us this year. Which is both wild and wonderful!
- We often have families from Messy Church joining us at Sunday school. This is a real testament to the work of the Messy Church team, and is also a clear example of God's faithfulness across our children's ministries.

POINTS FOR PRAYER

- Our prayer for the kids is that they come to know Jesus as their own saviour.
- This year we have faced a few challenges as we've tried to implement new material. For the year ahead, please pray for discernment as we look at the curriculum and how to move forward with this.
- We're looking to expand our team. Please pray that those within our church with a passion for working with children, who are skilled in teaching, and are willing and able to share their faith with our kids, are moved to get involved in this ministry.

CRÈCHE



Report from
Lynn Stewart

HBC Crèche caters for children 0 – 3 years old. We have 21 children on the register, 12 of these children attend regularly. There are 23 volunteers who work on a 6-week rota. A couple of parents / guardians choose to stay in creche during the Sunday Morning Service with their children, this is personal choice. Crèche provision is 51 weeks of the year, Christmas Sunday each year there are toys laid out for parents who wish to take their children out of the Christmas Family Service. The Crèche is facilitated in the committee room.



BIBLE CLASS



Report from
Amy Gunning

TEAM

Amy Gunning
G & G Barrie
Hannah Fulton
John Kennedy
Leo Yokota
Ryan Kee

Bible Class does exactly what it says on the tin, it is a place for our S1-S3 teens to come and learn from the Bible. We meet during a Sunday morning service in the church flat.

PRAISE POINTS

- This time last year we went from a team of 1, to a team of 6 faithful leaders who meet with this group week in week out.

POINTS FOR PRAYER

- The material we are using just now aligns with the Sunday School curriculum, and we are working our way through the Bible chronologically. Our prayer is that this way of working helps our teens to understand the big picture of the Bible and slot well known Sunday School stories into place in God's amazing plan.
- One of the longer term aims we have at Bible Class, is preparing our teens to join Sunday morning services. This ministry essentially acts as a bridge between Sunday school and Sunday morning services. Pray for our team as we look towards practical ways to equip our teens to integrate into our Sunday services.
- Our group of teens this year is small but faithful! Pray that the time they have in Bible Class is used wisely to educate, equip and build relationships that will enable them to walk boldly in their faith as they grow.

YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

Report from
Naomi Kee



TEAM

N & R Kee

Amy Gunning

M & S Edmondson

Hannah Fulton

Mark Thomson

Kenny Naylor

A & L Meek

Youth Fellowship exists to give S1-S6 youth in Hamilton Baptist Church an opportunity to hear and respond to the Gospel. Through discipleship, Bible studies, and a time of fellowship, we meet weekly to equip our young people to read and understand God's word for themselves, walk through their faith together and grow in their relationship with Jesus. We pray that through this, these wonderful teenagers will come to know Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

PRAISE POINTS

- Praise God for committed, godly leaders who give their time to love our young people each week, spending time with them and pouring into their lives. We are so thankful for our team!
- Having started a new material this year (Youth for Christ) we have had excellent conversations around the Bible together. We've tackled topics such as Spiritual Habits, Growing Deeper in Faith, The Parables Jesus Told, Easter and a Closer Look at David.
- We are still reminded of the joy and blessings our YF Weekend Away was in 2022 and look forward to another weekend in June together.

POINTS FOR PRAYER

- Our young people live and learn in unprecedented times, where standing boldly for Jesus takes great courage and faith. Please pray for our teenagers who are committed to Christ, that they may be salt and light where He leads them, that their faith and views would be protected and respected, and that through their witness the souls of their friends may be saved.
- Please continue to pray for good relationships to be built amongst our teams and youth. Building these friendships take time, energy and commitment from both sides. We as leaders pray the seeds that are sown today would bear much fruit in their lives, but it's also a real privilege how much we learn from our young people too.
- Our numbers can vary between weeks, and though we are so thankful for those who come faithfully, we would love to boldly pray that YF grows in number each week and it becomes a weekly commitment to those who attend.

Thank you for your ongoing prayers. Please come and talk to those who are involved. We love when our church family show an interest in this ministry and are always encouraged to hear how you pray for us!



YOUNG ADULTS



Report from
Amy Gunning

TEAM

Amy Gunning
Andrew Gunning
Kenny Naylor
Morag Naylor

Our Young Adults group is for anyone aged 18-25. This is the first year this group has met formally. We usually meet around twice a month; once for a social, and once for a book study. The book we've been working through this year is called 'Confronting Christianity' by Rebecca McLaughlin. It has guided us through some really challenging questions and has opened up wonderful discussion around what it's like living as a young person in today's secular culture. We've also had some visitors from our church family attend the odd study to offer a different perspective, and share their wisdom with us.

PRAISE POINTS

- We're thankful for the material that we've been using. McLaughlin pulls no punches when answering the tough questions. She is culturally sensitive while always putting the word of God at the forefront of her discussions.
- A few years ago at our youth weekend away we posed the question "are you ready to go and live your lives for God?" And the answer was a resounding no. As disheartening as that was to hear at the time, it was also an incredible opportunity to walk alongside this group. We are so thankful to God for His faithfulness to them. We're thankful for their engagement, and willingness to get involved in difficult conversations.
- We have had the privilege of being able to witness the grace and compassion with which this group tackle incredibly heavy conversations. Although Andrew and I "lead" young adults, we learn so much from those who attend. It is a privilege to walk through life shoulder to shoulder with this lot!



POINTS FOR PRAYER

When discussing what this group would like to do next term, there was a strong desire for more study. Please pray for this group as we look into what the year ahead looks like and prayerfully consider what materials/format we should be using. Although there is a desire to meet and to study, we know that for a lot of this group, their faith is somewhat of a question mark. We pray that through these studies God reveals Himself to those who attend. Our prayer is that they come to know Jesus as their own personal saviour and see lives changed through the work of the Holy Spirit. Our young adults will be joining us this year for our youth/young adults weekend away. Pray that it will be a valuable time of learning, worship, fellowship and relationship building.

MISSION SUPPORT TEAM

'Go and make disciples of all nations' Matthew 28:19

THERESA & AKI EBRAHIM-ADEM

Our long-serving Missions Partner Theresa has been led to leave the mission field in Ethiopia.

Theresa has taught at Bingham Academy for 18 years. Theresa, Aki, Eliana and Feben will return to Scotland in early July.

The family's greatest desire is to be together and for several reasons including visas and teaching job availability, this is not possible in Scotland for now. Following a period of searching, discerning, doors opening and closing, Theresa, along with her family, has accepted a full-time, salaried position at a British International School in China, starting in August.

There will be an opportunity to hear from Theresa when she is home in July.

Please do be praying for this precious family as they seek to follow the Lord's leading and transition away from Ethiopia. Pray for them as they leave their home, and for all the arrangements that need to be made before this new season in life begins.

HAZEL & SAKAE YOKOTA

Sakae started pastoring MUBC in April 2008 and we give God thanks for the past 15 years. One of the big joys for me (Hazel) is seeing children being born and growing up in a loving church family. Covid curtailed many things, but we have been so encouraged to see some online groups form, and we continue to have an online option for services when people can't come. We were delighted to welcome a new couple and family into membership in February. Between 20-30 adults and 8-10 children come each Sunday.

Sakae has been taking a lead role in providing support and guidance for two missionaries on behalf of our Baptist Church Association. He visited Bhaktapur, Nepal for a week in October. He stayed with the pastor of Chautari Community Church and enjoyed getting to know the pastor's family and church members, growing in his understanding of how we can support them better.

In June, God willing, Sakae will be visiting a Japanese missionary in Thailand to understand his situation and support him better.

Hazel continues to enjoy teaching English to children and adults, aged 4-88, and her commitments allow her to visit Kai, living at his grandmother's, most weekends. She's thoroughly enjoying her lessons on the accordion which started at the end of 2021 and has been able to play in church events with other people on different instruments.

Visiting Scotland in the summer of 22 was overwhelmingly special. Spending time with family and friends was very precious and we are very grateful for that time, which included a few special days with our son Leo and his girlfriend Rebekah camping on Skye.

All being well, Hazel and Kai plan to be in Scotland in the summer. We look forward to seeing many of you then.



MISSION SUPPORT TEAM

'Go and make disciples of all nations' Matthew 28:19

SHORT TERM MISSION - WITH GLO

On 7th August 2023, Rebekah Robertson will be heading out to Skien, Norway on a GLO short-term mission trip. Ahead of her trip, we will make some prayer points available to you so we can support Rebekah when she is away and we will hear about her trip when she returns. If you're interested in exploring short-term mission opportunities like Rebekah, please contact our Missionary Support Team. You can email Jonathan at jonathan.davie@hamiltonbaptist.org.uk for more information. You will also see information regarding this on our Bulletin Boards around the church and on our App.

TEARFUND EARTHQUAKE APPEAL

A total of £2255 was gifted to the appeal for the devastating earthquake that struck both Turkey and Syria where more than 35,000 people lost their lives. £350 of gift Aid was reclaimed for a total of £2605 being sent to Tearfund. We thank you all for your generosity

YWAM ORLANDO

Nine years ago, Meghan Gregory, (who is the daughter of Ewan & Gail Stewart) began working with YWAM Orlando. At the beginning of 2023 she returned to Glasgow leading a team of young people aged 17-30 on a two-month missions trip, to serve local Baptist churches and surrounding communities.

Meghan shares with us here, how they found God at work in Scotland:

"When I was asked to lead a 2 month-long outreach to Scotland, I was initially apprehensive. What does outreach look like in Scotland, my home? I'd been a missionary with 'Youth With A Mission' based in Orlando for 9 years, but missions seemed more daunting in my own country. How would Scottish people react to the Gospel? Would they be closed off? Would they care?

The answer shocked me. I found a very different Scotland than the one I left 9 years ago: people were open spiritually, searching for meaning, hungry for prayer and above all, receptive to the gospel.

Me and my American team spent Jan and Feb doing evangelism on the streets of Glasgow, volunteering at food banks in Motherwell, serving my home church HBC, teaching English at Dennistoun Baptist and partnering with other ministries. We spent a lot of time out on the streets, sharing the gospel and offering prayer. So many people wanted to be prayed for! And every time we did, God's presence could be felt. We had countless conversations with people struggling in life and God always gave us the words to encourage them.

We returned to Orlando with too many stories like this to count. Our team wasn't anything special – a group of mixed ages, each at different places in our walk with God, but all eager to share His love and power with people. So don't believe the lie that Scotland is too far gone. People in Scotland are looking for God, they are open to the Gospel and they want prayer. It just takes us stepping out of our comfort zone, willing to be uncomfortable – because God is using simple obedience to change people's story."



CHRISTIANITY EXPLORED & WARM WELCOME



Report from
Sam Brown

CHRISTIANITY EXPLORED

We as a church registered a course with CE, that ran from 7th Feb 23 for 7 weeks.

We met every Tuesday night, in the main sanctuary from 7.30-9pm. We used the media system to relay the course via DVD onto the big screen.

We had a group of 4 leaders, covering all aspects of the course, along with a team providing hospitality. A warm meal was provided before the start of every session. This proved to be a good way of getting to know one another.

We advertised through the website, church app, as well invitation cards and personal contact. Response was very good; we had regular attendees over the 7 weeks, 7 in total. Of those that attended, some had no church attachment, but came along with church friends. Those that attended the course commented afterwards, how they enjoyed the informal setting and the friendliness of the small group. We continue to give thanks to God for those that attended and pray that they may go on seeking after Him. We look forward as a team, to the next opportunity to present a CE course. Please continue to pray that God would draw people to Himself through this medium.

WARM WELCOME

We opened our doors at HBC on Jan 6th 23, as one of many participants within our community, that were providing a warm place of meeting. We acted on a local government initiative, whereby active agencies would open their doors, to those in the community, that might be struggling to stay warm within their own home due to the rising cost of heating. We as a team met each Friday between 13.30 and 16.00 to provide shelter and warmth in our church hall. During this time free hot drinks and biscuits were available.

We were registered on SLC website as a local provider, and advertised, both through our church website/social media and via a large banner outside the church. The response we received was limited, with only a handful of people attending over the duration. As a result, we closed at the start of April, as we approached spring. Nevertheless, we felt that we had provided a worthwhile facility, and would look again to revisit this going into the winter months. We thank God for those that came forward from the congregation, who were willing to reach out to the community in this way.



BOYS' BRIGADE

12th Hamilton Division

THE BOYS' BRIGADE IS FOR BOYS AGED 5 – 18
WE MEET EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT
ANCHOR BOYS P1 – P3
JUNIOR SECTION P4 – P6
COMPANY/SENIOR SECTION P7 – S6

WE HAVE A TOTAL OF 36 BOYS:
ANCHOR BOYS – 15
JUNIOR SECTION – 13
COMPANY/SENIOR SECTION – 8
95% OF THE BOYS DON'T HAVE A CHURCH
CONNECTION

The object of the Boys' Brigade is the advancement of Christ's kingdom among boys, and the promotion of habits of obedience, reverence, discipline, self-respect, and all that tends towards a true Christian manliness. At the Boys' Brigade we care for and challenge young people for life through a programme of informal education underpinned by the Christian faith.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The highlights of this session saw some Battalion Competitions re-start after covid:
- Junior Section took part in the Bible Knowledge (awaiting results)
- Company/Senior Section took part in the Ten-Pin-Bowling where we came in 3rd.
- Company/Senior Section took part in the Bible Media Competition and displayed their entry performance at Awards Night in May here at HBC. (awaiting results)
- The Company/Seniors also enjoyed the Battalion Fun Night.
 - Once again, it was great to be able to join with our sister organisation, the Girls' Brigade for our annual Christmas Concert.
 - All sections enjoyed looking at different passages of the Bible, games, drill, PT, and the company section also did some First Aid.
 - This session saw 2 boys gain the Presidents' Badge (2nd highest award) and 1 boy gain the Queen's Badge (highest award). Another highlight of this session was seeing 2 members getting Baptised. Christopher Kincaid (senior boy) and Tom Denholm (officer).

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for all boys and their parents and pray especially for those who have no church background. For the parents who attend special BB events that they might come to know Jesus
- Leadership Fatigue – Pray that they might find both spiritual and physical strength in their commitment to the company.
- Leadership Succession – Pray for the provision of new leaders, especially following the retirement of Tom Denholm this year, as without new leaders the company cannot function effectively.



Report by
Sandra Penny



GIRLS' BRIGADE

1st Hamilton Girls' Brigade



Report by Sandra Biggart



Girls' Brigade is an international Christian youth organisation for girls and we have a local group in our church called "1st Hamilton Girls' Brigade". The motto of Girls' Brigade is "Seek, serve and follow Christ". We welcome all school age girls from P1 to S6. Our main aim is to introduce the girls to Jesus. We have a mixed programme of activities and enjoy having fun and learning new things together. The structure of the programme hasn't changed over the years. The girls still work for an award each year by covering four topics – spiritual, physical, educational and service. The way we deliver it has changed a lot! We had 48 girls registered to attend this year. Of these girls 5 attend our church regularly with their families and 8 come along sometimes or have connections with other churches.

WE ARE THANKFUL FOR:

- Our leaders, Linda Moore, Ann-Louise Cockburn, Emily Biggart, Heather McLellan, Janine Patterson, Fiona McLellan and Sandra Biggart.
- The mini mission field that God has brought to us with a weekly opportunity to teach the girls from the Bible and share Jesus with them.
- The opportunities that we have to share with parents and extended families as we interact with them, build relationships with them and as they attend our special events.
- The opportunity to join with the boys in the Boys' Brigade for our Christmas Carol Concert and see the church filled with their family and friends.
- The joy of seeing our church so full of families and friends again at our Awards Night in May.



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- The seeds that have been sown in the lives of the girls who have attended and still attend Girls' Brigade to bear fruit and for them to come to know Jesus.
- More opportunities to connect with the families of the girls.
- Ways to engage more to demonstrate that our group are very much part of the church family at HBC and not just making use of the building.
- Rest and refreshment for our leaders and renewed vision and energy for our new session in September.



Tell us a little about yourself:

My name is Suzanne and I have 3 little boys and 1 wonderful husband! I've lived in Hamilton for almost 13 years, which is also how long I've been married to Daryl. You might notice I have an accent and that's because I'm originally from the north-east coast of Scotland, in a little fishing village called Gardenstown. I was brought up in a strict brethren household and was baptised as a child in the family bathroom! I was saved as a girl of 9 at Faskally Christian Youth Camp (where we've had our church weekend's away before). When I was 21 I became a member of the local open brethren church and was baptised in believer's baptism....so you might say I've covered all angles! Funnily enough I met Daryl 2 weeks later. Daryl and I came to HBC in 2014 and have been members since 2015. My biggest goal in life is to guide my children by example and show them what is actually important in life. This is quite the challenge but I find it's also a great way of staying accountable in my faith.

What's been happening?

After a successful interview, I was employed by HBC in March 2023 as the Church Administrator and I can honestly say, I've been excited since the day I found out the job was mine. I'm very passionate about HBC and caring for our church. I feel so incredibly privileged to be able to serve God by serving His people and call it my job!

I've been very busy from the day I began and the work has not slowed yet. The system employed by HBC for our administration needs is absolutely fantastic and I'm sure I've only scratched the surface of what it can do. We are so fortunate to also have access to our Church Center App! This is an area which I will be looking to develop further as it's such a great way of staying informed with what's happening at HBC.

My main aims in the role are to:

- Alleviate pressure from our Leadership so that they might focus on where God is leading them. This also extends to helping our many ministries so that they can focus on what they do best!
- Improve communication between HBC and its people so that we all feel involved and informed.
- Develop systems so that information is easily available, all in one secure location.

How can we pray for you?

My prayer would be that I will be able to serve my Lord well by serving you to the best of my abilities whilst balancing my God given responsibilities as a wife and mother. Pray that I have the strength and sustenance I need as well as the wisdom to know when I need to relax!

Q&A

With our

Church Administrator



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