



# Annual Reports 2023 - 2024

# Heysham Free Methodist Church

## Treasurer's Report on the Accounts for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023

We have faced some challenges in 2023 due to the increased cost of living, which has had an impact on the income together with increased costs in our expenditure. More people have committed to giving online, however the weekly offering in church fluctuates considerably.

### Income

The overall income of £114,515.00 was similar to last year although higher than the proposed 2023 budget. The general offering of £45,820.00 was lower than last year, however the Gift Aid portion was higher at £43,519.00 and together with the Gift Aid refund figure of £18,383.00 amounted to £61,902.00. The other income (income given separately for specific purposes) was £15,777.00.

### Expenditure

The budget of £97,000.00 was based on the predicted income together with an increase of inflationary costs. This resulted in an expenditure against the budget of £85,128.00 with an additional expenditure of Restricted Funds (money given separately for specific purposes) of £13,755.00 giving an overall expenditure of £98,883.00.

At the end of the year, this resulted in the income exceeding the expenditure by £15,632.00 and a reserves balance of £26,256.37.

**Morecambe & Heysham Free Methodist Church**  
**Income & Expenditure Account**  
**For the year ended 31 December 2023**

	2023	2022
<b>INCOME</b>		
General Offerings	45,820	46,006
Gift Aid Offerings	43,519	41,031
Gift Aid (Refund)	18,383	15,245
	107,721	102,282
<b>Other Income</b>		
Acts 2 Fund	536	516
Harvest	1,139	1,658
Love Christmas	390	-
Ukraine	-	360
Gift Day Fund	3,400	9,498
Ladies Dinner	450	222
Tear Fund	879	-
	6,794	12,254
<b>Funds from Heart Church for their share of expenses:</b>		
Faithlife	100	101
CCLI	700	650
ThirtyOne Eight	75	-
Training	-	388
Child protection	-	297
Insurance	700	625
Dan's Tax & NI	4,319	5,505
Dan's Pension	3,089	1,965
Dan's Death in service policy	-	757
	8,983	10,288
Heart Church share of expenses netted off expenditure	(8,983)	(10,288)
<b>Total Operating Income</b>	<b>114,515</b>	<b>114,535</b>

## HFMC Income and Expenditure: Page 2

### EXPENDITURE

#### Church

Water	333	278	
Electricity	2,108	2,122	
Fire/Gas Safety Testing	1,159	1,101	
Gas	4,127	4,392	
Gardening	1,283	939	
Telephone & Broadband	877	750	
Cleaning	3,174	2,786	
General Maintenance	1,386	3,489	
Window Cleaning	212	200	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
		<b>14,661</b>	<b>16,056</b>

#### Manse

Rates	1,910	1,833	
Telephone	757	701	
Maintenance	280	1,712	
Water	792	677	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
		<b>3,738</b>	<b>4,924</b>

#### Pastor

Pension	3,268	3,132	
Net Salary	23,901	22,145	
Death in service policy	721	1,112	

#### Assistant Pastor

Pension	Note 1	-	963
Net Salary		-	7,544
Death in service policy		-	363

#### Total Tax and National Insurance

Note 2	<b>3,477</b>	<b>10,289</b>	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
		<b>31,367</b>	<b>45,548</b>

#### Groups

Creche	11	-	
Little Fish	320	285	
Sunday School	711	649	
HFM Youth/ Teens	159		
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
		<b>1,201</b>	<b>934</b>

**HFMC Income and Expenditure: Page 3****Expenditure (continued)**

<b>Other Expenses</b>			
Assistant Pastor Study:	-		199
Assistant Pastor Travel:	-		131
Child Protection (CCPAS):	259		406
Community/Fellowship Events:	2,355		2,455
Conference:	4,728		4,716
Licenses:	807	-	231
External Mission Allocation (15%):	12,045		10,695
Insurance:	2,748		2,587
Pastoral & Contingency:	533		460
Printing & Stationery:	501		272
Publicity:	115		416
Sundry Expenses:	2,149		2,108
Pastor Sabbatical	613		-
Training	-		1,724
Gocardless Churchsuite	318		318
Evangelical Alliance	126		126
Discretionary funding of Heart Church	5,625		4,875
Iris Payroll	193		172
Mailchimp	206		165
Independent examination fees	840		570
		<b>34,162</b>	<b>32,165</b>
<b>Restricted Funds</b>			
Acts 2 Fund:	778		860
Gift Day Fund	2,993		7,731
Harvest:	1,139		1,660
Heart Church	7,466		3,351
Love Christmas:	500		-
Revitalisation Trust	-		750
Tear Fund	879		-
Ukraine Fund	-		360
		<b>13,755</b>	<b>14,712</b>
<b>Total operating expenditure</b>		<b>98,883</b>	<b>114,339</b>
<b>Operating surplus/(deficit)</b>		<b>15,632</b>	<b>196</b>

**Notes:**

1. Assistant Pastor's wages now fully paid via Heart Church.
2. Tax & National insurance expense is lower this year due to claiming the Employment Allowance part way through the year.

**Independent Examiners' Report to the Members of  
Morecambe & Heysham Free Methodist Church**

I report on the income and expenditure account of the charity for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023

**Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)) and that an independent examination is required.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under Section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanation from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statements below.

**Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (a) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
  - (i) to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
  - (ii) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act;
- (b) have not been met; or
- (b) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

J V Beckett  
Taylor, Robertson & Willett Limited  
Accountants  
95 King Street  
Lancaster  
Lancashire  
LA1 1RH

16 April 2024

**TITHE ALLOCATION 2023**

c/f from 2022	£2,805.00
Allocation for 2023	£13,055.00
<b>Total available in 2023</b>	<b>£15,860.00</b>

**Donation:**

**Total**

Niscu	12%	£1,620.00
Stand By Me	12%	£1,620.00
West End Impact	15%	£2,040.00
Lancaster & Morecambe District Churches Debt Centre	15%	£2,040.00
Helen Jensen	12%	£1,620.00
Christian Concern	8%	£1,080.00
Freedom Church	8%	£1,080.00
Open Doors	8%	£1,080.00
		£0.00
		£0.00

<b>Total:</b>		<b>£12,180.00</b>
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<b>Surplus</b>	<b>£3,680.00</b>
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**Allan Barnes**  
**Treasurer**

### Lay Delegate Summary Report 2024

The annual Lay Delegate report is structured around eight characteristics in the life of the Free Methodist Church which we believe make up a healthy Church. These are approved by Conference and can be found in the Free Methodist Church UK and Ireland Handbook.

- 1) A Healthy Church Worships in Spirit and Truth - Nothing can fully heal our souls, emotions and relationships more thoroughly than true worship of God.
- 2) A Healthy Church Prays Without Ceasing - Prayer takes us beyond ourselves and emphasises our dependence on God.
- 3) A Healthy Church Constantly Reaches the Lost for Christ - Statistics show that over 75% of those who become Christians do so because of the testimony, deeds and encouragement of someone they trust.
- 4) A Healthy Church is an Enfolding Community that Produces Fully Devoted Disciples - We want everyone to feel that they belong and know that they have a place. We value small groups within the church as an effective environment for the discipleship and care of all believers.
- 5) A Healthy Church Grows through Multiplication - Within the church, we should regularly see the reproduction of disciples, leaders, groups and congregations.
- 6) A Healthy Church Ministers to the Poor and Disenfranchised - People who feel disconnected with society because of their condition, ethnicity or status need to both hear and see the good news of God's grace.

- 7) A Healthy Church Engages in our World Missionary Movement - Every local church is encouraged to participate in our world missionary movement by praying, supporting, or going.
- 8) A Healthy Church Organises around its Mission - We are committed to placing mission ahead of method. When a church understands its mission, making decisions about structure and function become clearer.

We believe God has called us together at Heysham FM to be a passionate and compassionate family of believers who reach out into our community with the love of Jesus. Our Church Vision Statement is:  
“Helping People Find and Follow Jesus”

As we take time to reflect on the Goodness of God and His Faithfulness to us this year we want to thank Him for the way He has worked in and through the lives of every believer here at the Church. Everyone has had a part to play in helping others on their journey toward Faith in Jesus Christ.

It has been a fruitful year here at Heysham FM and it’s good to reflect on many of the amazing ministries both here and in the communities that God has placed us.

We have journeyed through several sermon series, one of which was called “Fruitfulness on the Frontline” which has encouraged and inspired us for everyday mission wherever God has placed us. We have been blessed with testimonies each Sunday from people in our Church family about their frontlines. Other themes have included, for Christmas “Jesus - Hope foretold” and a series on “The joy of living in Christ” and our current series “The King & His Kingdom”. At Christmas we held a service of reflection for those struggling with issues such as loss, pain or loneliness. It reminds me of a recent quote from Pastor Mark “Compassion is the birthplace of Evangelism”.

Our Weekly Church Outreach Events continue to thrive. Monday Community Coffee morning effectively reaches out each week, together with regular Monday night Alpha Courses. Four Growth Groups meet at church and in homes through the week. Our young people have a growth group and fellowship together each Sunday evening. Our thriving Parent, Baby and Toddler Group called “Little Fish” meet on Friday morning during term time. The Ladies Netball Team called “Heysham Harriers” meet during the season every Wednesday evening and always share a Gospel message. They are part of the Netball Sports Reach League.

This year we had the privilege of welcoming a team from 'Teen Challenge' A Christian Organisation that operates nationally to support and offer preventative help and support to young people who have developed life controlling problems, especially drug and alcohol addictions. They shared their testimonies of how their faith in Jesus had turned their lives around.

We continue to support and pray for Heart Church in Morecambe as it celebrates its two years in ministry in the heart of Morecambe. It continues to be our privilege to be in partnership with them and see their work grow.

Together with some of the men from Heart Church, men from Heysham joined them to attend the men's XCEL Conference at Life Church Bradford. This was a time of Worship, Hearing from God and Encouraging each other.

Being in Church on Sunday continues to be a time of real Blessing, both in outreach and helping to spur each other on in our Faith. The Sunday School and Crèche teams, the Prayer Group, Stewards, Catering, Tech Team, Worship Group, those who counsel and listen and those who work with the Youth each Sunday evening. We are so thankful for everyone and all the unique gifting and the things that happen on the administration and maintenance side. It is good to be reminded at the end of our working Church year just how much we need each other and how Blessed we are to serve God together in our community.

There are so many other ministries blossoming and growing in the Church and uniquely reaching out in seen and unseen ways. We are grateful for technology.

The Heysham WhatsApp group helps people stay connected online. The prayer meetings continue to lead us close to God and help us to see Him at work. The cafe area provides a sanctuary and place for building friendships. We recently held an all-age board games night that was well attended. An Outreach Group is meeting regularly to plan events to reach our community eg we are having a family fun day in June. Salt mine Theatre Company brought an Easter Outreach Presentation to us called 'The Liberator'.

The Leadership Team meets fortnightly for prayer and to seek Gods Vision for His Church. We have all benefitted from the Church Vision Meetings we have had together this year.

Niscu (Northern Inter-Schools Christian Union) has been to share about their work in the schools. We held a special 'Youth Sunday' when the young people helped to lead the Sunday evening service. We have started Sunday evening meetings at 6pm at church in the cafe area and every second Sunday we are going through the 'Talking Jesus Course' and all are welcome.

We have held a CAP Money Coaching Course which covers budgeting, debt etc.

We have enjoyed Sunday monthly picnic lunches together, at Easter an egg hunt, games and picnic, carol singing in the community at Christmas. Our annual Ladies Christmas dinner was a fruitful outreach. We joined with Heart Church to provide Christmas bags for those in our community and also a number have generously provided groceries in the basket at the back of church for the work of West End Impact, one of our mission's partners.

We continue to support local and worldwide missions. Some we have supported for many years and others have been able to come more recently and share about the countries God is calling them to go to. We are privileged to be able to join together here at church in June for an Inter Church Prayer Meeting for the work of Open Doors, a mission supporting persecuted Christians around the world.

Our Pastor Mark was able to take his Sabbatical this year. A time away from his ministry in the Church to enable recreation, replenishment, and personal development. This is said by Conference to be 'So necessary for the re-energising of ministry' And we do thank God for Pastor Marks faithful ministry to us over the last year.

In closing, we can afford to be excited about the prospect of employing someone to help our Pastor in the ministry work. We are all praying as we seek to employ a 'Families & Young People's Worker'. Primarily to work in the key groups of Children's, Youth and Families in our church family. And to actively reach out to them in the wider community of Heysham & Morecambe.

I am sure I have not covered all our amazing ministries that are happening in the Church family and the wider community but thank you to you all. God sees every one of those acts of kindness and He Loves You! As Bishop Keith Cowart said at this year's annual Conference "We are chosen and set apart by a God who loves us and has demonstrated that love in His Son Jesus".

Yours In Christ

Sandra Parker Lay Delegate HFM

## **Prayer Coordinator Report for ASM 2024**

*Jesus said: "My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations..." (Mark 11:17)*

*Isaiah also wrote: "...I will ..give them joy in my house of prayer." (Isaiah 56: 7)*

As Prayer Coordinator for 3 years, it has been a joy and a privilege to serve the Lord at Heysham FM in this role. Firstly, I am passionate about the **LORD JESUS** and secondly, I am passionate about seeking **HIM** in prayer.

**The Bible of course has a great deal to say about prayer.**

It is our lifeline to God and must be a dialogue of listening to Him before speaking. The acronym **P.R.A.Y.** Can be helpful. (Praise, Repent, Ask, Yield), as can the acronym **A.C.T.S.** (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication).

Although we can all pray at home, may I encourage us all to come together corporately as a church to pray and seek the Lord, if we possibly can? At present, there are two prayer meetings where the whole church can gather corporately to pray:

**Sunday mornings between 9.30 am and 10 am.** A maximum of 8 people gather together in the Crèche room to pray for the Holy Spirit to move among us. We pray for the Preacher, the Worship Team, the Teachers and Children of the Sunday School and Crèche, the Welcome Stewards, the Sound and Data Team, the Prayer Ministry Team, the Youth, the Refreshments Team, as well as for other local churches etc.etc. Indeed, we pray for **everyone** who comes through the doors, for unbelievers to be converted and for believers to be built up.

**Tuesday mornings between 10 am and 11 am** in the café area. A rota of 6 people take it in turns to “lead” the hour (under the “leading” of the Holy Spirit). We begin with some sung worship to give the **LORD JESUS** His rightful place among us, followed by many people praising and thanking the Lord for who He is and for what He has done in our lives. The “leader” will bring some verses from the Bible to inform our subsequent prayers and will go on to give some pointers for prayer, without it being a list. The Holy Spirit invariably puts things on people’s hearts to pray, including church matters, brothers and sisters in special need, as well as national and international concerns and issues. Once a month on average we pray for one of our **Mission Partners**. Recently, we have also prayed for the Growth Groups, the Youth, Little Fish and the Monday Coffee morning.

**The Prayer Ministry Team** consists of 7 people who are available to pray after the Sunday service either in the sanctuary or in the social area. May I make a special plea for the sanctuary to be kept quiet for prayer and reflection after the service, to be fair to the people coming forward for prayer? Thank you.

Hopefully, the first Tuesday in September there will be a prayer meeting at 7 pm, to pray for all those newly elected into positions of responsibility at the ASM.

**Kathy Chaplain (Prayer Coordinator)**

#### **REPORT FROM THE MISSION SECRETARY**

MATHEW 28:19 Therefore Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Mathew 5:36 says I needed clothes, and you clothed me, I was sick, and you looked after me, I was in prison, and you visited me.

We are privileged to belong to a church that believes in mission work and 15% of our donations go into mission work. Our Mission Partners are West End Impact, Christians Against Poverty (CAP), NISCU (Northern Interschool Christian Union) Christian Concern, Open Doors, Freedom Church, Sports Outreach, and Stand by Me. Proceeds from our harvest giving on the 8<sup>th</sup> of October 2023 were donated to Tearfund. A donation was given to the Christian Institute last year to support their work.

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of January 2024, Catherine Leech from Josiah Ventures Europe came and gave us a talk on the work she does in Europe among the youth and encouraged those who would like to support her to do so freely.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2024, we had a Missions Sunday and Holly Wood from NISCU was present to give us a talk on the work they do.

This coming Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2024, James Barrie from Open Doors enlightens us on their work.

Thanks for your financial support to the church, that enables us to support our Mission Partners.

**Akpene Adugu**

### **Music Report 2024**

First of all, I just want to thank God for His faithfulness to us here at Heysham FM. We as a music team have been blessed to lead our Church family in worship each week. I thank God for each individual that takes part singing and playing each week.

During this last year some of the music team were able to attend a short conference with teaching from Chris Bowater. I think we all found it helpful in different ways. Helping us to reflect on worshipping with whatever song has been chosen.

Unfortunately, due to work shift patterns we have missed having Simeon around each week but we are always very grateful for when he can join us in playing and worshipping God.

Its great too to have Lyn Milburn and Becky Wood who are willing to stand in playing the keyboard when I'm away. It is such a help having the continuity of the keys each week. We appreciate that support so much, it makes me feel less like I have abandoned our worship group, to know we have people playing keys when I'm on holiday.

So this is a thank you to our singers: Ayshea Borwick, Phil Burns, Bethany Fitch-Riding and Katie Jones.

Also a thank you to our musicians: Simeon Johnstone, Janet McEwen, John McEwen, Lyn Milburn and Becky Wood

And please don't forget our wonderful Data/Sound Team which we rely on each week to get us sorted with sound and projecting song lyrics. I'm very grateful for all they do, thank you.

I hope you will take the time to thank and encourage these folk as they serve God and our Church each week.

God Bless,

**Jacqui Johnstone**

### Sunday School Report September 2023-2024

We are so thankful and blessed to learn the truths of the Bible with our amazing children and young people. We continue to use the "Go Teach" material. We have covered the ten commandments which has been encouraging and challenging! Maybe you could ask the children what the sign language is for one of the commandments? Numbers fluctuate

from week to week. Good to see the children and young people at the summer party in June, good time had by all.

We were Blessed with the prize giving service in July, which the children took part in. So, encouraging to see them singing and doing actions to some of the songs. We all "went on a journey" together to explore the birth of Jesus at our Nativity Service. The children and young people were amazing.

We had an encouragement evening meal together followed by a meeting in April for our Sunday School leaders and helpers. We welcomed Edward and Millie who have come on board along with Rachael to help in Sunday school. We prayed for more young families to come along and worship with us. God is good He has answered our prayers!

A big thank you to all our faithful leaders and helpers who give their time to bless our children and young people.

Please pray with us and for us and especially that the children and young people will come to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus.  
Joan Cragg on behalf of the Sunday School Team.

### Creche Report

Creche continues to work well. We have an amazing and committed team who teach and care for our wonderful pre-school children on a Sunday morning during the service. The team create a safe and warm environment that includes a Bible story time, singing, a snack, and plenty of playing! This enables parents to enjoy the service without interruptions – although we will fetch them if it is really necessary!

Recently, we have had up to 6 children in creche although numbers of children using the creche varies from week to week. We also now have a TV in the creche room that can be used for songs and for a link to our services during the summer when the Creche team take a break.

We want this space to be filled with God's love and joy and have an atmosphere of fun and laughter. Our aim is for the children to know at a young age that God loves them, as we believe this is where the first bricks in the foundation of a child's faith are built.

We believe that God has given parents the primary responsibility for teaching their children what it means to follow Jesus. But we also believe that it takes a church to raise a Christian, so we seek to support parents in the role God has given to them.

Although it would have been great to have had a leader over the past 12 months, I am grateful that the team have pulled together so well. Our team consists of Rhi, Ewelina, Beryl, Sara, Marie, Katrena, Jenny, and Beth. We are also thankful to have Ros joining the team in June, so we are grateful that the team is growing. Please pray that God will

call someone to lead our wonderful Creche Team and if you are that person, please come and have a chat. A big thank you to the team and to all who encourage them.

God bless you

Pastor Mark (on behalf of the Creche Team)

#### Youth Report

Our youth are going from strength to strength, one of our young girls has given her life to the Lord so we have provided her with some books etc to help support her.

We have been exploring our own relationships, what they mean and the ultimate relationship we should be seeking, and looking at the authorities in our lives and who is The One and only above all! We are set to grow again with a promising 3 more young people before we finish for the summer too.

We have been very blessed this year in that most of our young people have committed to going to camp including myself, we would very much appreciate pray for while they are away spending time with other young people in their walks with the Lord also.

God bless Caro Sim

#### AGM Report 2024 – Little Fish

Little Fish has continued to grow over the past 12 months. Since starting back in September our core group of mums/dads and grandparents has grown and we now receive on average 25 adults and 30 children each week. We have seen relationships between those in the group grow especially between those children who are all heading off to school in September.

For many at our group this is the only interaction with a church family that they experience, so we have been encouraged to see some start to attend church events. We have also run our own miniparties at Christmas and Easter that have been well attended. We will organise a summer / leaver's party at the end of July and gift those heading off to school with a Bible. As a team we meet before each session to pray for the mums, many with particular prayer requests that the mums/dads/grandparents share with us during the sessions. We have seen the confidence growing within the group to share with us and open up more freely about the challenges they are facing.

The team has grown to cope with the greater numbers that we now cater to, but there is a need for another person to help in the kitchen on a fortnightly basis.

#### Prayer Points:

- This time of year always has a bittersweet element as we wave goodbye to children as they head off to school. Pray for those starting school in September and for the salvation of their parents who won't be coming to group any more.

- Pray for the team as they devote their Fridays to supporting mums/dads/grandparents.
- Pray for those who we are in regular contact with. Pray we can show them the love of Jesus through our care and our conversations.
- Pray for wisdom as we move forward to grow the relationships that form at Little Fish once they leave our group

Rhi Wale

Andrew & Caro's Wednesday Evening Growth Group

All is going well; we are now a group of 10! We are extremely blessed with how everyone is in this group, very honest conversations and sharing where personal prayer is needed. We are currently doing a study on the book of Revelation; this we do on alternate weeks and the weeks in between are fellowship and prayer. This is very flexible as if someone is needing input, prayer etc then that's what we focus on.

God bless  
Caro

### **Thursday Afternoon Growth Group**

We are a small group of diverse people who meet each week at the church. We start with a time of worship and then spend some time discussing the scripture on which the Sunday sermon has been preached. As we do this we explore what impact that word has for our lives and how it can transform us.

We share prayer requests and undertake to pray for each other during the coming week. People comment on how they feel safe in the group and how good it is to be able to talk freely knowing that what is said will remain confidential.

Ours is a fun group with lots of laughter alongside some deep discussion. Our time of fellowship allows us to get to know each other well and make good friends.

I thank God for how important this group is to each one of us.  
Carol Wood

### **Report on Thursday Evening Growth group – 2023/2024.**

The group meets on a Thursday evening on a twice monthly basis. We are still mainly meeting at church as this has proved most convenient given the numbers in the group and seems to work very satisfactorily.

There are currently seventeen people belonging to the group though usually there are somewhat fewer meeting in practice, typically about ten to twelve. We start from 7.15 with tea/coffee and biscuits and a chat. Then we usually have a hymn accompanied on the piano by Tim Wood (thanks Tim!) and then follow this with a prayer and bible study usually based on a New Testament book. Last year we also did a series on the Apostles Creed. These studies are very interactive with lots of discussion and with the aim of exploring the practical implications for our Christian life. We finish usually around 8.45 to 9.00. In the main I (Nigel) lead the studies, but Tim Wood has recently led several which is great.

At Christmas and at the end of the summer programme we have a more social meet up at someone's home (usually at Pauline & Ed's – many thanks to you both) which is very enjoyable and helps to foster our sense of belonging.

The opportunity that all the House-groups provide to explore our faith through discussion and reflection as well as building a stronger sense of community and relationship is invaluable and I would encourage everyone in the church to join a group.

Nigel Purcell