

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & VISION SUNDAY 15/11/2020

Looking back with thanks for the past year, Looking forward with faith for the future



We exist to love God & love people (Matt 22:35-40, Mk 12:28-34, & Lk 10:27)

Our mission is to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to Aberystwyth, Wales and the World, helping and enabling people to be His followers (Matt 28:18-20)

A People who

- ... are Christ-Centred**
- ... are Bible-shaped**
- ... are Family**
- ... are Vibrant**
- ... demonstrate Integrity**
- ... extend Grace**
- ... Connect**

ELIM CHURCH
ABERYSTWYTH**PASTOR'S REPORT (JOEL MAYLOR-PRIDMORE)**

This past year has brought challenges on a global scale that I could never have imagined this time last year. History will talk of 2020 as the year that the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic impacted the world but we believe that even in the midst of this, God has been, is and will continue to move; fulfilling His purposes in the earth and working in all things for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28).

Reflecting upon the past twelve months is somewhat surreal. At our last AGM, none of us expected the disruption to 'normal' life that we are experiencing such that I would be writing this year's report having not hosted a service in our building for over seven months!

It is amazing what The Lord has done in our church family this year. We have found fantastic and creative ways to continue meeting together online, we have deepened our relationships and our care for one another and we have strengthened our resolve to move forward and continue loving God and loving people.

I believe that what I felt God say to us at the turn of the calendar year rings true. I sensed He was saying 2020 would be a year to draw nearer to Him, learning to hear His voice more clearly and to go higher with Him, learning to see things from His perspective. In a way I believe that the pandemic has given greater opportunity and need for us to do so and has caused us to seek His presence, voice and perspective in ways we haven't done before.

Our journey through the past twelve months in terms of our Sunday Celebration sermons has echoed this.

Just over eight years ago this church took the faith step of employing me, as a relatively young leader, on a full-time basis as lead Pastor. Although there was a commitment from our Elim Regional Leader to share the responsibility for my salary for the first few years, this was still a major challenge financially and I want to honour and thank the leadership team at that time for their step of faith.

The years that followed saw some significant cause for excitement and celebration for us as a church, but also some major challenges, especially in my personal and family life. I look back now amazed at how you as a church family navigated those years and supported me as Pastor - God knows the gratitude I hold in my heart.

One thing that continued to be a challenge for us as a church family, has been that every year since the financial support from Elim was phased out (having lasted longer than originally expected), we have recorded a financial deficit. How incredible it is then to report that of all years, this year of lockdown and disruption is the first year of financial independence where we report a small surplus! This is truly a God-story and cause to give Him glory! As we give glory to God for this breakthrough, I want to equally give thanks to you all. It is only your faithful giving and generosity that has made this turnaround practically possible. I also want to thank our finance officer, Graison John, for his integrity and faith-filled management of our finances.

As we give thanks for this today, let us not make the mistake of being complacent or settling for breaking even. Let us continue to be led by the Holy Spirit in our giving and see our finances go from strength to strength in the coming years so we can continue to reach Aberystwyth, Wales and the world with the Good News of Jesus. To be clear - I do believe in tithing as a healthy financial principle and have always experienced the faithful provision of God in applying this. This is true of how we manage our church fellowship finances too... we will to continue to give generously each year to individuals and outreach projects that are extending the Kingdom of God and as we do, God always meets our needs.

Thank you church family for embracing my own new family situation and for loving and supporting Louise and our family as we have settled into life together over this past year.

Thank you to everyone who contributes to the life our church family and all of our activities and ministries. This has been a year like none other before and you have served remarkably - both before and since our in-person meetings were halted. Many of you have contributed to or are specifically named in this report, but many are not - that does not mean that you are not appreciated and valued. Please know that your service is valuable - both here and in eternity. God sees every single thing you sow into His Kingdom.

"For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God." (Romans 8:14)

ELIM CHURCH
ABERYSTWYTH

During this year, Alistair Thompson agreed to take on the responsibility for our 'Love the House' team and initiatives, including management of building maintenance and development. Chris Stewart has carried this for a number of years and we are so grateful for all he has done in this, alongside his many other ministry roles. Alistair has already done a huge amount of tremendous work on the building and I know he will appreciate all the support and encouragement we can offer!

I am delighted that this year saw the launch of 'Ignite' - a brand new ministry for young adults and university students during educational term times. This was pioneered by a great team of young leaders and credit goes to them for continuing to keep things going even under Covid restrictions. Please see their report below.

For many years we have had a Sunday evening house group and bible study. This has been a fantastic place of fellowship and encouragement for so many of our church family and there has been much fruit from this. After a short period of transitioning to our new Connect Four format, this group came to a close during this year. It is important to say that sometimes when things come to an end it is not because they aren't good in themselves, it is simply time for something new as is the case here. Thank you to all who have invested in and been a part of this group and most especially to Engobo and Franklyn for hosting and leading in recent years.

Special thanks to Franklyn also for his leadership and servant-hearted ministry in overseeing the visual tech team and the cleaning rota in recent years. These have not been in place since the lockdown began in March, and during this year, Franklyn has decided to release these responsibilities. We are grateful to you for your selfless service in these roles.

Another individual who has faithfully served in a valuable role for several years until this past year is Sharin Samuel. Thank you so very much Sharin for serving in various areas - not least in updating our website and faithfully uploading our sermons and news sheets week after week. We really appreciate all you have given in this way.

One thing I would like everyone to consider this year is becoming a church member if you haven't already. If you have it will mean you signed a membership application agreement, which will have been affirmed by the Session Team, and then were welcomed into membership during a Sunday service. You do not have to be a member of Elim Aberystwyth to be an active and valued part of the church family, but it really does help us practically if you are. It helps us with funding bids, reporting accurate numbers and enables you to have a say and vote on church matters where necessary. It is not a legal agreement, it is a simple commitment to the church family and if you are unsure whether you are a member yet, please don't be embarrassed to ask. Please speak to me if you would like more information.

The nature of this year's report is obviously heavily shaped and impacted by the global situation - our ministries, activities and meetings have all had to adapt to the fact that we have been unable to meet physically. I have loved seeing how we have pulled together and remained steadfast in our faith and in our fellowship. The bible passage I used on last year's report as we looked toward 2020 was "Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds" (Heb 10:23-24) - you have certainly done this. Thank you!

I have sought to be comprehensive in reviewing this year but I will have inevitably missed some things. If there's anything that you feel should be included then please forgive me.

PRAYER

There are several ways to engage in corporate prayer in our church and we want to be a gathering of people who pray continually as individuals and collectively.

Our 'Tuesday Praise and Pray' meetings have continued every Tuesday morning throughout this year, having been online since April, with faithful members gathering each week to seek God together. Everyone is welcome to join us for these via the Zoom link on our Facebook page or via email by request.

We have set some special times aside to pray and fast this year - notably through our annual 'NOvember' and January 'New Year Revolution' initiatives. Thank you for supporting and being a part of these.

"For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God." (Romans 8:14)

ELIM CHURCH ABERYSTWYTH

Our children's ministry hosted a number of prayer meetings through the year to pray for our children, local schools and our children's ministries. Please take the opportunity to join in with these when you see them advertised.

We have also hosted some creative and interactive 24 hour prayer initiatives and although these have not been possible in person since the building has been closed, we intend to do more of these in future.

FAMILY SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Several special occasions that were due to take place this year had to be postponed or cancelled due to Covid regulations. Thankfully, just the week before the initial lockdown at the end of March, we were able to celebrate the dedications of Ed and Lucy Dumbrill's daughter, Elodie. It was a fantastic occasion and a privilege to be involved. Please continue to pray God's blessing for Elodie.

CONNECT FOUR GROUPS

This year has seen the first full annual journey of our Connect Four Groups - even continuing online since the first national lockdown in March. These midweek small groups work on a four weekly cycle each month - Family, Worship, Truth and Community.



The leaders of these groups have shown great commitment, consistency and creativity and I am grateful to you all for helping your groups adapt to Zoom meetings!

There are now four groups that all meet on Wednesdays at various times. The leaders are Edore and Vera Akpokodje, Alan and Barbara Penney, Jon. and Sharon King and Louise and myself. Thanks also to David and Jackie Fardouly for launching the daytime group before handing over the leadership to Alan and Barbara.

We have connected socially, in worship, in studying Scripture and in seeking to reach our communities. Running 'The Bible Course' in our 'Truth' meetings has proven to be a particular highlight.

If you are not yet in a group then I cannot emphasise strongly enough that we see being in these groups as vital to being an active part of church life. It is the primary place where we can ensure you receive regular pastoral care and is the best context for discipleship. As we move forward, I plan for anyone involved in any area of ministry within our services and ministries to also be plugged into one of these groups. If this applies to you and you are not yet in a group, please contact me to talk it through as a matter of urgency.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Leadership Team exists to provide prayer-fuelled spiritual oversight and vision for the church; seeking the Lord together and discussing where we feel He is leading us as a church. We usually meet on a monthly basis, as well as quarterly with the rest of the Session Team. I am extremely grateful for the accountability and support of the individuals serving alongside myself in this team, Sharon King, David Fardouly, Jon. King who all also serve as elders, having been voted into this role in March 2018.

Over the months following the March lockdown, we have been meeting via Zoom for a short time of discussion and prayer on a weekly basis.

SESSION TEAM

The Session Team is a vital group who meet quarterly providing practical and financial guidance, accountability and resources to support the vision of the church.

Franklyn Emeseh stepped down from this team earlier this year. Franklyn has led, served in and coordinated a number of ministries in the life of Elim over several years and we would like to place on record our gratitude for his contribution during his year serving as part of the Session Team.

We were delighted to welcome one new member to the team in March, namely Edore Akpokodje. Edore serves in a number of our ministries and has brought great value to the team already - despite having not yet been able to attend any 'in-person' meetings!

"For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God." (Romans 8:14)

ELIM CHURCH ABERYSTWYTH

The remainder of the team is unchanged, comprising of the Leadership Team as above as well as Chris Stewart, Marion Densham, Graison John (Finance Officer) and Sue Jemmott.

Thank you to you all as a church for supporting the Leadership and Session Teams. Please do pray for us regularly as we seek to lead with integrity and faith.

SUNDAY CELEBRATIONS

During the first six months to March, our services continued to be a place of vibrant worship and fellowship. During the following six months, following the initial lockdown, we have done our best to ensure that 'online' meetings have been engaging and interactive.

It has been a steep learning curve and I'm sure a brief flick through the YouTube channel will reveal how much we had to adapt and develop things to the best of our ability through the weeks and months. There is still a very long way to go and that learning curve is not shallowing! Thank you for your patience and support so far - please keep bearing with us

Most churches that moved meetings online seemed to make the decision to pre-record services, but I sensed that for our church it was right that we continue to do our best to keep our meetings together live - with as much interaction as we could enable.

Thank you for tuning in, it truly means such a lot. Also for every single comment you have written in the live-stream chats - its hard to describe the difference they make when you are talking into a camera or computer screen!

To all those who have contributed to the services in any way - contributing to worship songs, sending in prayer videos, sending in your comments and photos and adding to our welcome montage amongst other things - we are so grateful. Keep contributing!

Special thanks to David Gregory for helping in those initial stages to establish our YouTube channel and in helping me learn how to use Facebook live. Your help in this has been invaluable as well as your work in redesigning, hosting and updating our website.

It feels a long time ago now but I want to thank all who served to make our in-person Sunday Celebrations this year a place where people experienced the love and goodness of God. Our stewards, musicians, those serving in children's and youth ministries, those serving refreshments, those who cleaned the building ready for Sunday, those who served as audio and visual technicians and to those I'm forgetting to mention... Thank you.

Through October to February, our Sunday sermons topics included the four areas of our Connect Four Groups, included a mini series called 'Why So Fast?' and individual sermons from Izaak Garb, David Fardouly, Sharon King and Jon. King.

One highlight post March was being able to involve everyone in our music team in a collaborative version of 'Build My Life' recorded in our homes. It was a great team effort and was a real labour of love to bring together and will serve as a special memory for us as a church family for years to come. Thank you Chris Stewart for your work compiling the video.

In February we began a systematic expository journey through John's Epistles, tied in with our response to the opportunity to draw closer to and go higher with God. The inherent themes of being called to walk and live in the light and love of God gave us a strong foundation as we found ourselves journeying through lockdown and restrictions. We concluded with 3 John at the end of June.

The theme for the remainder of our teaching this year was entitled 'Holy Spirit is for Life, Not Just for Pentecost' covering a wealth of subjects relating to what it means to be people who are led, empowered, fruitful and united in the Holy Spirit. We had one guest speaker in July as a part of this series, Maldwyn Jones, who brought a great challenge and teaching on the theme of baptism in the Spirit.

Our audio sermons and the corresponding slides are available on our website if you would like to remind yourself, or catch up with any of our past teaching and preaching. This year, for the first time, many of them are also now available to watch via our YouTube channel.

ELIM CHURCH ABERYSTWYTH

COMMUNICATIONS & MEDIA

We launched a new website this year thanks to the creativity, hard work and generous time given by David Gregory. This has given a much needed update and provided a very helpful base for online communication which has been more vital this year than ever before.

The weekly news remained a key means of our communication for the first half of the year, but has not been possible or necessary since in-person meetings ceased. The blog has been essentially replaced by a 'Monday Muse' published on YouTube and Facebook and weekly updates and information have been shared online and during Sunday livestream services.

Our church Facebook page (Aberystwyth Elim) has been a vital form of communication for those who are members, enabling us to communicate quickly and easily with many people. Please do join the page if you are on Facebook.

Our office-based internet and landline were terminated early in the year as we moved over to using a mobile phone and mobile internet dongle as they were more cost effective and practical. We do now, however, need fast broadband installed in the main hall so we can stream services live from church over the internet. This is going to increase costs again but is essential as we move forward.

MISSION SUPPORT

Each year we invest a portion of our income in international, national and local individuals or projects that are seeking to share the Gospel or working for the Kingdom.

Last year we supported workers for UCCF working to support the University Christian Union, Christians Against Poverty, Bex Ridgway in Colombia and Sarah Dorman in Ethiopia.

MUSIC TEAM

We have a number of 'worship leaders' and a strong team of musicians who usually rehearse together each week and give dedicated service to the church. We use resources and take inspiration from a wide variety of churches, movements and songwriters, always seeking those songs that best express where we are as church. We love to encourage freedom in our worship and love nothing more than seeing and hearing the people of Elim Aberystwyth expressing their heartfelt praise and worship to The Lord.

It has been particularly difficult for our team this year to adapt to not being able to play and lead together with there being no in-person meetings. Despite this, we have sought to contribute where possible and were able to involve the entire team in a collaborative version of 'Build My Life' recorded in our homes. We were also able to include a number of worship leaders and singers in a number of other songs recorded from home.

We greatly miss leading our church family in worship and hope we can do so again soon in whatever way is possible.

WIDER MINISTRY

I am privileged to continue as a Core Leader of Elim's national worship initiative, Elim Sound. This requires some time away from local church ministry involved in events, meetings and training.

I am involved in the regional team for New Wine Cymru. This involves hosting and attending a number of meetings and growing and developing relationships across the network in our area. This is a thriving network and connecting our involvement is both an opportunity to serve the wider Kingdom and be enriched and encouraged ourselves.

In recent months I have also been asked to join in with the Elim Wales Regional Team to represent Mid-Wales and also to be part of local hub meetings of the Evangelical Alliance in Wales.

Thank you for releasing and supporting me as a church in these roles.

NB. I would like to finish by noting that I have somehow successfully managed to write the whole first section of this report without using the word 'unprecedented' - oh! Oops! Now I've done it!

ELIM CHURCH
ABERYSTWYTH

ADDITIONAL REPORTS

ROOTED / ECF YOUTH CLUB / YOUTH (REYER ZWIGGELAAR)

Youth (at Elim) has been fairly stable over the past year, despite the overall situation and we moved online. Before March, we continued with Sunday morning Rooted sessions running every other week (although towards the end of the year weekly) and the more socially orientated ECF Youth Club on Friday late afternoon. During March we moved both Rooted and Youth Club online, and both on a weekly basis (and we moved both sessions to the late afternoon), which has been appreciated by youth. Both Rooted and ECF Youth Club have an emphasis on building relationship with the Father and each other (including leaders).

We have a very large youth group, although the online aspects have reduced attendance for some. We have seen our youth growing in their faith. During the year we encouraged some of the older youth to contribute to sessions, and they did this very well.

The Rooted year has been split into several parts:

- Before Christmas we covered "Jesus in the OT".
- For the nativity service the youth developed their second "Christmas song" including some rapping, which they performed on the day.
- At the start of 2020 we covered links between Christmas and the Cross and what Jesus sacrificed and what we gained.
- After Easter, we looked at "How to Serve God", which looked at examples from the Bible and how those were linked to today.
- Before the Summer break, we looked at "Difficult Aspects for Christians in Everyday Life", and the youth came up with a range of specific topics which were covered in subsequent weeks.

Friday night youth tended to revolve around hot chocolate, pizza, garlic bread, games ((Alternative-) Uno, Jungle Speed, table-tennis, etc.), the occasional movie, creative sessions, cooking/baking stuff, and building relationships. When the weather was nice we spend time outside as well. In March we went fully online and had appropriate fun/games session (clearly not Jungle Speed, etc. or pizzas any more). Over the summer we continued being social, but these sessions were on Sunday for August.

We planned to go to Limitless One in Cardiff on the 15th of Feb, but bad weather prevented us from going. In addition, all major youth events over the summer were cancelled or went online.

The Sixth Form (including Year 11) Cell group has been continuing, with youth from a range of churches meeting every other week, and sometimes also attended by friends. This was continued up to lock-down, but after that reduced.

With Zach/Nathanael leaving Aberystwyth, the existing team (Chris, Dan, Joel, Meritza and Rachel) is looking for additional volunteers.

Please continue to pray for our youth and their development in Christ, for the "adults" in building relationships with them and each other, for safety in what we do, and foremost that we may all grow closer in God.



Screenshot from "How to Serve God" taken from a Zoom call.

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ELIM CHURCH ABERYSTWYTH

PLANTED AND SEEDLINGS CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES (CHRIS STEWART)

Seedlings is for children who are in Reception & school years 1-3; Planted is for children in school years 4-6. Until March we met during the Sunday service in the small hall downstairs at Elim Aberystwyth and as the first lockdown was implemented, we moved to meeting on-line via Zoom after the main church service YouTube stream.

It has been an amazing blessing to see church continue in a new way over the last seven months, we have learnt so much in terms of what it is to be a group and how we can serve God and be witnesses in our localities when our understanding of normal changes.

Over the last 12 months we have moved all our paperwork (except rotas) to our online GDPR compliant data management software; Churchsuite.

We have 13 Planted and seedlings children registered on this platform and are in contact with more who don't attend our weekly meetings.



This year we have looked at a range of topics:

Sept - Dec we were following a four week pattern where each week reflected the connect4 format: 1st week of the month focussing on prayer and praise, 2nd Week looking at learning from the bible from a series which looked at people who encountered Jesus, 3rd Week looking at how we can be good ambassadors for Jesus in our community (At school), 4th week would be a time for us to come together as family and spend time together playing games or eating together.

We also prepared for our Mega Nativity which we performed in church on the 8th of December.

Jan - March we looked at how we are influenced by the things around us, such as: friends, family, music, TV, games. And presented our first ever online all age celebration including the almost feature length telling of the story of Daniel.

April - July we studied a series called: Fruitfulness on the frontline and started the series we are currently working our way through - encountering God in the Psalms.

Activities on a Sunday will generally include drama, prayer, bible study, memory verses, singing and games with crafts and more hands-on activities posted to our Facebook group that the children and their parents can engage with throughout the week.

All our volunteers have a DBS check to meet with our safeguarding policy which has recently been updated, and we are looking to have a retraining session for all volunteers in the near future.

If you wish to be involved, do talk to the leaders.

ELIM CHURCH ABERYSTWYTH

IGNITE (GABBIE LYIMO)

Ignite was a success during its first full year. We aimed to create a safe place every fortnight for young adults to pray, worship and to make a space, primarily for students, to meet and explore their own gifts and talents. A team of four (Kenneth Tomy, Izaak Garb, Nathanael Idundun and myself) made running and organising things less stressful.

The year was great in regard to the variety of evenings which included chilled out discussions, a movie night, open worship ('let God move') kind of evenings - we aimed to ensure there was a range of different experiences for everyone across the year.

When COVID caused social gatherings to make an abrupt halt, we moved things online, with the Illuminate Initiative, and this weekly engagement online, meant that Ignite kept going.

Hopefully moving forward within the current restrictions, Ignite will still be able to deliver a valuable experience. We have a new team who are excited to continue Ignite and we're looking to do things online such as a bible studies and social activities.

CRÈCHE (VERA AKPOKODJE)

FROM NOVEMBER 2019 - MARCH 2020

The creche is run every Sunday for three weeks and the last week would normally be parent led. We do a lot of interesting activities with the children with the objective of helping them to know God more as well as have fun. Teachers discuss Sunday school topics and we would normally come up with a quarterly rota which would include weekly Sunday school titles and teachers, stating who is to lead and who is to support.

The leading teacher has the responsibility of coming up with ideas on how to run the Sunday school for the day with the objective of impacting and helping the children know God more as they play and have fun. The teacher also has to plan activities that children would understand. Teachers choose from a range of activities which include: Reading bible stories, singing, dancing, arts and craft, colouring, painting, watching movie clips among many other things.

Communication:

We had a WhatsApp group which is open for teachers to discuss and agree on any matter, we use it for logistics and we also use it as an avenue to remind ourselves of whose turn it is to lead. We also take feedback through the WhatsApp group, we post group activities and allow for feedback from teachers.

On December, 2019, the children for the first time were able to present two songs at the Church Christmas carol, it was really lovely to see them do so.

We have also covered topics like Lost sheep, Love of God, etc.

Challenges: Shortage of Teachers

Sometime in October, 2019, one of the teachers (Barbara Stone) stepped a bit back to enable her take care of her sick granddaughter. And then in the New Year, Jackie also stepped back from teaching Sunday school, these two have been very committed to the children over the years, and we really appreciate their sacrifice of love. Thus, we were short of teachers and it was difficult to continue with our weekly Sunday school.

The Church graciously started training a new set of teachers to join the creche, but we did not get to do much till Covid 19 started and the Church had to go on lockdown.

LOVE THE HOUSE (ALISTAIR THOMPSON)

The 'Love the House' team coordinate and respond to needs of the church building and its maintenance.

The main work on the building this year has been to repair the rendering on the back wall and to repaint the wall and the window frames. Many thanks to all who helped. It was great to meet up with people doing the work in this strange year when we haven't been meeting as normal. Also, it was good to chat to some of the many people who walk past the back of our building.

If you notice any jobs that need doing around the church do feel free to let us know.

ELIM CHURCH ABERYSTWYTH

STEWARDSHIP (MARION DENSHAM)

From last autumn up to Sunday 15 March we had a great team of stewards, including 3 loyal students, Hannah, Nathanael and Ivan, in term time. We welcomed Eirian to the team last November, and Alan and Barbara were just about to come on board in March. My thanks and appreciation to all who worked hard to complete the 'backroom' tasks and then gave a friendly welcome to all as a first point of contact. Thank you also by just being there at the back, observant during the services, ready for any incident or eventuality that might arise. This came to an abrupt halt on 15 March.

When eventually we do return to our building, stewarding will be completely different. No more handshakes or hugs and face masks will hide much of our smiles. Steward training will be given, and strict guidelines adhered to. I don't want anyone to feel obliged to steward in the short term. But we trust in our miracle working God for an eventual end to these measures.

On a happier note, it has been a real joy and blessing to see the ever increasing numbers of people, and recently children, who, in various ways and languages, have given us an online welcome. Thank you everyone and thanks to Joel and Louise for initiating this.

AUDIO TECHNICAL TEAM (CHRIS STEWART)

The Audio technical team exists as part of the worship band when we were meeting at South Road, to ensure the worship was as high a quality as possible and to record the talks so they could be made available on our website. The team's activities were running smoothly for this period in the church building.

It seems like such a long time ago that we sanitised our microphones and turned off the Elim technical corner on the 15th of March. Since then, although the audio team for Sunday mornings has been streamlined into the Maylor-Pridmore family, It has been amazing to see so many people getting to grips with recording themselves and contributing to the church's online content.

Moving forward, in line with governmental advice, the aim will be to broadcast from the church building. This provides many technical opportunities and challenges and most likely a chance to reinvest, revitalise and reimagine how we can best use our equipment to honour our God.

If you want to learn more about how you can help moving forward or If you feel that technology is hindering your interaction with the church, do get in contact.

U-KNIGHT (BRIAN AND NICKY GARROD)

U-Knight had a very good year to begin with, with plenty of regulars and occasional new faces. We would average probably 10-15 people. One thing that we had really wanted to do was put up posters around Aber to advertise the event, which would have brought new players in, I'm sure. Maybe we could have put some up in the local churches or on notice boards all over the place. I do believe that we should keep on running U-Knight because for many it has been a time to get to know each other and make friends. Quite a lot of our attendees were students that have now moved on to other things, but I have hope that the freshers this year will be great additions. I am content with the way U=Knight is being run at the moment, and I am excited to see the way it develops when we open back up again.

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS / GDPR (JON. KING)

In January this year, the Elim Christian Fellowship Aberystwyth Data Protection Policy was adopted. For a copy of this policy, please email info@elimaberystwyth.com. The privacy notice is available online and can be found here: <http://elimaberystwyth.com/media/1148/dp01-ecf-privacy-notice-edn-003-pdf.pdf>

The church also started to use ChurchSuite to process and handle church family personal details. We will be looking to communicate through this software for all correspondence so we would please ask that if not done so already, to sign up by completing this form found here on the website: <http://www.elimaberystwyth.com/churchsuite/>. Once you have registered, you will get a confirmation email and then a little while later, you should get an email from the church inviting you to create a ChurchSuite login. This will mean you can make changes to the information we hold and how we may contact you. It will also enable

ELIM CHURCH ABERYSTWYTH

you to look up contact details of other members of our church family (according to what information they have allowed to be shared).

SAFEGUARDING (JON. AND SHARON KING)

If you have any safeguarding issues, please contact safeguarding@elimaberyswyth.com

The current Safeguarding team consists of:

Sharon King - Safeguarding Coordinator

Jon. King -Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator & Lead Recruiter

Chris Stewart - Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator and Deputy Recruiter

The team exists to protect children, vulnerable adults and our workers.

The safeguarding policy is now available online for anyone to read. It now has an additional appendix which outlines the children's online policy. It can be found here: <http://elimaberyswyth.com/media/1203/elim-aber-safeguarding-policy-2020.pdf>

We are always keen to have new people who would like to serve within our children/youth ministries. There is a specific recruitment process which we adhere to. **No one should be *regularly* working with the children or youth without having first undergone this process.**

The criteria for approval to work with children/youth are:

- being an active member of the Church for a minimum of 3 months
- the completion of an internal application form
- the acquiring of 2 separate references
- an informal interview with 2 members of the Leadership and/or Safeguarding Team
- completion of a declaration to allow a police check (DBS) to be carried out
- completion of a DBS form (on-line) and presentation of appropriate ID to the recruiters
- final decision confirmed by Leadership, once DBS cleared by the Safeguarding Team
- Everyone working with children (or vulnerable adults) to undergo training every two years.

*****TRAINING: Training is a crucial part of our safeguarding and is still long overdue*****

SUNDAY MORNING COFFEE (VIA ZOOM®)

This initiative was started to enable us to catch up before the service as we used to do, pre-COVID. If you would like to catch-up with others before the online service on Sunday morning, then please join us virtually through Zoom for morning coffee. For those who wish to pray for the service and the Sunday activities for our younger members, we meet 10 minutes earlier (09:50am) in the same space to give the day to God.

Great to see other spontaneous coffee catchups being advertised on Facebook.



“For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.” (Romans 8:14)

ELIM CHURCH ABERYSTWYTH

FINANCE REPORT (GRAISON JOHN)

REVIEW OF THE YEAR (ROUNDED FIGURES)

At the end of the year, Church recorded a net **surplus of £534** (2019: deficit of £11,427). This is the first time recent years that we have managed to finish the year in surplus after recruiting a full time minister. Thank you so very much for supporting the church with your gifts and tithes.

The total income for the year, including the giving's towards the designated projects (Restricted funds) increased to £50,384 (2019: £39,735), an increase by 27%. *(Restricted funds are designated funds for specific projects like Mission fund, Love the house fund etc. All collections and expenses made towards these specific projects are allocated to 'Restricted funds')*.

Covid-19 pandemic has changed our lives as we were forced to make several difficult decisions which includes not being able to meet on Sundays in the church building. We all have been impacted by this but thanks to Pastor and Louise for the online service which has helped us to remain connected and an opportunity to reconnect with those who were moved away from Aberystwyth. Online service along with the facility to give online has contributed to the increase in Income particularly by lump sums gifts from friends and families.

The total expenditure for the year has decreased slightly by 3% to £49,850 (2019: £51,162).

On adding the bank balance brought forward at the beginning of the year, the balance carried forward on 30th September 2020, after allowing for amounts owed to and by the church is **£12,162** (2019: £11,628).

INCOME SUMMARY

The main source of Church's income is from **voluntary** giving's (tithe's and offerings) by the members and friends of the church. We are extremely grateful to them whose faithful support has generated 98% of the total income for the church.

This year, to match our expenses, we had a huge challenge to increase our income by £12,500. This income increased by 25% to £49,126 (2019: £39,193), reflecting a sincere commitment shown by the members and friends of the church. We do not take your faithfulness and generosity for granted.

Our general offering increased 71% to £22,365 (2019: £13,068) as well as the Gift Aid offering increased by 5% to £21,266 (2019: £20,301). The amount of TAX recovered during the year was £5,495 (2019: £5,824). We were not eligible for any COVID-19 related job support funding from the government.

We are grateful that you are able to adapt to the new ways of giving online. For more details on different ways of giving please visit <http://elimaberystwyth.com/about-us/giving/>

EXPENDITURE SUMMARY

The total expenditure for the year has decreased slightly by 3% to £49,850 (2019: £51,162).

The General church expenditure decreased by 2% to £45,800 (2019: £46,838).

The Ministry Expenditure decreased by 3% to £36,059 (2019: £37,340) largely due to the current situation of not being able to gather in church building. In Ministry Expenditure, other than remuneration paid to our pastor, includes, the money being spent on the ministry areas. However, the general running costs (church overhead) has increased by 17% to £5,319 (2019: £4,551), largely due to the installation of Fire alarm system which has costed £2,573.

As part of Elim, the church pays 10% of its total offering to the Elim Movement. The total amount paid to Elim Movement for this year amounted to £3,822 (2019: £4,382).

ELIM CHURCH
ABERYSTWYTH

As well as paying 10% of income to the Elim Movement, the church session has agreed to give a further 10% of its income to local, regional, national and international organisations or individuals involved in advancing the Kingdom of God (Missions Payment). £4,500 (2019: £3,000) of this money allocated for year ending 30th September 2020 has been provided in accounts to be paid in next year.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Considering we are getting back to normal, in order to maintain our accounts at the current level, the church needs to increase its voluntary giving income by around **£6,000** per year. This is before considering the significant sums that may be necessary to invest in specific ministry developments and building works as we move forward. In order to achieve this target, we would especially encourage commitments to tithe, a challenge that has been taken on in earnest during the previous years.

One important area that must remain in our thinking is **Gift Aid**. This year we received over £5,495 (2019: £5,824) in returned tax. This figure proves an essential part of the income to our accounts. It is good to see the increase in Gift Aid income during the year. However, if there is any member who is a UK tax payer and do not Gift Aid your tithes then we encourage you to Gift Aid your giving. ***If you are a UK taxpayer then you can increase your giving by 25% simply by filling in a Gift Aid declaration form.*** Please contact Alistair Thompson or myself for more details. Let me take this opportunity to thank Alistair for over-seeing the Gift aid. We really appreciate your help!

There is a cash balance of **£12,162** (2019: £11,628) carried forward at 30th September 2020.

Accounts for the year ended 30th September 2020							
		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	TOTAL Funds 2020	TOTAL Funds 2019	Change "-" Adverse "+" Favorable	
INCOME							
CHURCH INCOME	General	22.365		22.365	13.068	9.297	71%
	Gift Aid	21.266		21.266	20.301	965	5%
	Rebate	5.495		5.495	5.824	-329	-6%
	Elim Grants	1.000		1.000	0	1.000	
MISSIONS INCOME			100	100	124	-24	-19%
OTHER INCOME		157		157	417	-260	-62%
TOTAL INCOME		50.283	100	50.384	39.735	10.649	27%
EXPENDITURE							
MINISTRY EXPENDITURE		36.059		36.059	37.340	1.281	3%
MISSIONS PAYMENTS		4.050		4.050	4.324	274	6%
YOUTH ACTIVITIES		197		197	192	-5	-3%
CHURCH OVERHEADS		5.319		5.319	4.551	-768	-17%
MONTHLY RETURN - HQ		3.822		3.822	4.382	560	13%
MANAGEMENT EXPENDITURE		403		403	373	-30	-8%
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		49.850	0	49.850	51.162	1.312	3%
SURPLUS / (- DEFICIT)		FOR THE YEAR		534	-11.427	11.961	
ADD OPENING NET BANK/CASH BALANCES B/F				11.628	23.055		
CLOSING NET BANK/CASH BALANCES C/F				12.162	11.628		