



Grove Free Evangelical Church

'Building a community of people who live out God's purposes'

Annual Reports

2013-2014

www.gfec.org.uk

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Elders

*'Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up'.
Galatians 6:9*

As usual, it's been a busy year in church life with different people coming and going, changes in leadership and a new meeting location at Old Mill Hall. It's so easy to forget all that's happened and I'm grateful for this opportunity to remind us of our journey together last year.

We relocated from the CE School in North Drive to Old Mill Hall on Sunday 14th April. This move enabled us to be positioned more centrally in the locality and also offered improved space and facilities for us to use. The Elders are very grateful to the Deacons for ensuring a smooth transition to our new venue.

In January, Chris Margetts shared his decision to step down from the Eldership. I would like to thank Chris for his Christian service and leadership during his time as an Elder. In July, Ian Reynolds was appointed as an Elder for an initial period of one year after which his position will be reviewed. Ian & Andy Hooker have shared in the teaching with me and others have stepped in at other times. I'd like to express my gratitude to all those involved in leading, playing, singing, 'PowerPointing' and 'PA-ing' at these services.

We have once again sought to provide a balanced diet of practical and relevant teaching for everyone. In our Sunday morning services we have covered several series including 'New beginnings for the people of God', 'Big questions from the Psalms', 'How can I find meaning in life? (Ecclesiastes)', 'Getting to know God better' and a series on Discipleship entitled 'Follow my Leader'.

At Christmas, we sought to engage with the community as we sang Carols in the area and the Bay Tree pub with the help of some of the locals. The Christmas Services were well attended with many new faces present.

During the year we held an Alpha Course at Cornerstone which was well attended. I'm grateful to Stephanie, Barbie and Yvonne for their help and support in this faith venture.

On Sunday 2nd March we held a Church 'Away Day' at Clanfield when the theme was 'Reshaping the future of GFEC'. Due to an accident, I was unable to attend and Ian kindly covered an additional session with Andy Hooker leading the worship and one of the morning sessions. Attendees were invited to discuss current and possible future GFEC ministries/activities and vision for the future. These comments were captured and the Elders have started to discuss how GFEC can incorporate some of these suggestions.

As Elders, we have met several times with the Deacons to pray over and discuss items in church life and we are grateful to them for their encouragement and support.

We continue to partner with other churches, exemplified by our involvement in many local ministries including Cornerstone, Street Pastors, W & G Foodbank, Prayer Spaces etc. I continue to meet with other local Ministers in Grove and also the W & G Partnership for times of fellowship.

Pastoral care of the church family presents many challenges. Each of us has a privilege and a responsibility to take this ministry seriously – *'as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers'* (Gal 6:10). The Pastoral Awareness Team (PAT) aims to respond more effectively to the needs of people in the fellowship, whether practical, financial or in prayer. I am grateful in particular to Gerald & Erika, Ray & Fiona, Ken and Margaret Barber who have devoted their time and energy in arranging appropriate support to those in need.

We have seen some new people joining us, but we continue in our desire to reach out into the community with the good news of Jesus Christ. We are therefore planning a 'door-to-door' visitation programme in June to connect with people in Grove to advise them of 'Seeker Courses' that we run and the various service/activities at GFEC.

Prayer continues to be a key feature of life at GFEC. This past year we have started using Old Mill Hall for the monthly prayer meetings. In giving the opportunity for different people to lead, we have experienced imaginative and innovative times of praise and prayer. The 'Building Vision' Prayer Breakfasts have also been a source of real encouragement as we continue to seek God's will for a building on the new development and building our vision for what God wants to do among us and the community during our time at OMH. The quarterly church members' meetings are also now held at Old Mill Hall.

None of the varied ministries at GFEC would exist if it weren't for the selfless dedication of people voluntarily giving of their time and energy to serve God. We thank Him for each of you and trust that you will be fulfilled and also fruitful in your particular sphere of service. Some ministries are more public, others take place in the background. All are important as we seek to *'build a community of people who live out God's purposes'*.

As I draw to a close, I want to especially thank you for your expressions of love, loyalty and support to Julie and myself during the past year. In addition, Debbie has continued to make a valuable contribution to the church and personally to me in her role as GFEC's Administrator.

We look forward with faith and hope in our hearts that God will continue to guide and direct us as we move ahead. Doubtless, there will be both rewarding and challenging times ahead, but as we seek to serve the Lord together, *'Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up' (Gal 6:9)*.

Paul John

Deacons

The Deacons continue to support the work, vision and leadership of the Elders, and remain responsible for oversight of the finances, administration, accommodation, equipment, health and safety, all practical aspects required for Sunday and other services and events, seeking through these ways to serve the needs of folk within the fellowship.

This year has seen Fiona joining the team and both Russell and Debbie leaving. With Russell and Anita leaving our fellowship, Gerald and Erika have taken up the mantle of arranging Communion whilst Ray Massie has become very much involved in setting up the hall. After many years as the Financial Officer, Michael Elliott passed on all aspects of finance to the Treasurer. He has not been stinting in helping out when assistance and advice has been required. The Deacons would like to express their appreciation for everything done in the name of the LORD by these folk whilst fellowshiping at GFEC.

The main highlight of the year has been the relocation from North Drive Primary School to Old Mill Hall which has been successful and well received. We are certain that we are welcome as the Grove Parish Council has permitted us to have our own notice board and have agreed to improve the audio-visual capabilities of the hall. Although the refurbishments have not been quite as timely as hoped, they are progressing and promise to be a massive boon to the practical arrangements we undergo each week. To cap this, we have been able to provide an improved coffee service to our attendees.

Another highlight has been that the Church Web Site went live and has been in use since April. There is a dedicated team working behind the scenes to ensure that the site is kept up to date. Please feel free to use the site, and, if you find any errors, or feel that you have a good idea to improve it, contact one of the web site team (or one of the Deacons).

A number of people have received both practical and financial assistance during the year, and we continue to remember them in our prayers.

There has been a technical issue regarding the payment of one of our missionaries. This took quite a while to resolve but the Treasurer believes this to be resolved.

As Deacons we aim to serve the Lord and His church, particularly the group of people that come together as GFEC. Please continue to pray that the Lord will give us the necessary wisdom, insight and skills to perform our duties well for His glory.

Adrian Kerr, Ken Hayward and Fiona Massie

The Mission at East Challow

During the past year, GFEC has continued to extend its outreach beyond Grove, to strengthen, support and encourage the struggling church at The Mission in East Challow.

Family services have been held on the second Sunday afternoon of each month at 4pm. There have been several teaching programmes during the year, with talks given by Paul, Ian and Andy:

- *“A new way to live”*, as we looked at the thought-provoking teaching of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.
- *“The parables of Jesus – life changing stories”*, as we looked at some of the parables of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke.
- *“Christianity today – learning from the life of Daniel”*, as we looked at the exciting life of Daniel and how we also can live as Christians in a secular society.

Sunday services have been led by Abi, Barbie and Andy, which have been encouraging as we enjoyed Christian fellowship with each other and with God. A particular highlight of the family services has been the children participating with puppet shows, sketches and dramatic readings that communicate the Christian theme of each service. During the summer of 2013, we enjoyed times of fellowship as we held a cream tea, a church walk and a BBQ, activities we hope to repeat during the summer of 2014. There have been a number of visitors from the village, as well as the attendance of some children and young people. It was particularly encouraging to listen to Amelia and Georgina (who come with their grandmother Jenny) sing a duet at the Christmas Carol Service.

Sunday services are advertised in the monthly *“Challow News”* publication, as well as using A5 publicity programmes that are professionally printed and delivered to houses in East and West Challow. Thank you to those who give of their time to deliver these.

Thank you to Geoff for repairing the noticeboard, so that we can now advertise events and services, as well as putting up Christian posters. Thank you also to Andrew for designing, constructing and maintaining the Challow Mission web-site, to further promote and inform about The Mission and its activities, which can be viewed at www.challowmission.org.uk

We want to thank the many members of GFEC who have enthusiastically and diligently supported the work at The Mission, through encouragement and active participation. The strengthening and development of the church in East Challow is still very much in its infancy and GFEC continues to step out in faith as we seek God's blessing and direction. Please pray for The Mission, that it will be "salt and light" to the people of East and West Challow and the surrounding area.

Andy & Debbie Hooker

Worship Group Report

The music group ministers to the church both through regular Sunday services and those extra services marking special dates in the church calendar.

Following a recent music group meeting we agreed some immediate changes to the way we organize ourselves and how we meet and rehearse. We hope and pray these changes will help us become a better music group, and in this regard we value your prayer and encouragement.

Many thanks as always to our service leaders for their faithfulness and diligence and for their creativity and bravery too, being prepared to try unfamiliar new songs sometimes.

Thanks too are due to all our musicians and singers, and particularly to our sound crew.

Brian Thomas

Sunday Club

We continue in Sunday Club to teach the Bible and its relevance to the lives of our primary-school aged children faithfully each week. We aim to do this in a creative way incorporating games, drama, videos, craft, singing, to name but a few. We pray together, when appropriate.

Apart from occasional visitors, there are still two regular children plus two irregular attenders. The future of Sunday Club appears uncertain at present, as due to a change in circumstances for one family, and another child moving up to youth group soon, there may not be any children regularly attending. Please pray for those in church leadership as they consider the future of Sunday Club.

Grateful thanks to Denise and Lynn who continue to teach on a regular basis, despite difficult circumstances.

Debbie Hooker

Youth Group

Sunday Mornings – The Grid

This year has seen major changes. Firstly, as mentioned briefly in last year's Annual Report, Noel and Elaine felt guided by God to move permanently to a new Church in Oxford. Secondly, Abi has joined a Leadership Course with Soul Survivor which meant her moving to Watford. Finally, Naomi Power has replaced Abi and now has responsibility with me for teaching on Sunday mornings.

We started the year continuing using The Way youth material, but since the autumn we have been using Scripture Union's The Grid. This contains resources to open up and explore God's Word in a relevant way for

young people. It has a balanced approach in that the studies are designed to cover the whole of the Bible in a varied, but structured program.

We do not have a huge class as most weeks comprise Hannah plus one teacher, but we all really enjoy our time together as we are able to tailor the lessons specifically for one to one teaching. Christopher has joined us from time to time as rugby/injuries have allowed and Jack has also paid us a couple of visits.

It is a real pleasure and privilege to teach in this group and watch them grow and develop in their faith. In September the group will change as Rebecca joins us from Sunday Club.

Friday evening – Chill Out

We continue to meet at our house on the third Friday of the month when possible. We play games and share nibbles – often chocolate and often some lovely home-made offerings from Hannah (and Debbie). We had our usual BBQ last summer which was very well attended and we managed to persuade Lucy (who helps at Holiday Bible Club) to join us.

There is always a lot of laughter and good-natured competitiveness. Several of the older young people have outgrown Chill Out but Andrew Chandler and Hannah are regulars and we look forward to Rebecca joining us in September.

Our prayer for the future is that the Lord may bring us into contact with more youth so that these groups may grow in numbers.

Julie John

Oasis Housegroup

We used to be known as Simon's house group but changed the name to Oasis as the group belongs to all the members. That was fine until Simon pointed that it stood for – Old And Still In Service. That was acceptable to most of us but since Teresa D and Fiona K have joined us, we've got to find another phrase using the letters from OASIS. Any suggestions gratefully received. As one of the other groups is nomadic – Safari – we hope we can offer refreshing water, in the name of the Lord of course, to those dusty, perhaps weary, travellers; even foot washing could be a possibility provided you wash them before you come.

We've settled together very nicely and genuinely enjoy each other's company as we learn together both in scripture and through life's shared problems. It is lovely to be able to laugh together and, occasionally, weep together as the Lord leads us. We changed the evening to Wednesday to fit in with different needs and that seems to work well but we do remain flexible if necessary.

Our Bible studies over the last few months have been based on the book – Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes – by Kenneth E Bailey. We can highly recommend it; it rather shakes us out of our Sunday school simplicity. Now we look forward to summer and have to plan how we can share that together. I guess food will figure somewhere.

Ian Reynolds

Gerald and Erika's Housegroup

For 2013/2014 we had a varied programme of Bible Studies in Titus, Philemon, Jonah, the significance of wind in the Bible, The Doctrine of the cross and the Doctrine of the Church. The various studies were shared by the members of our Group. Communion and praise evenings provided an opportunity for quiet contemplation and invoked an awareness of God's presence.

Anita organised and lead a Prayer and Praise walk at Crab Hill otherwise our outdoor activities were rather curtailed this year.

In October 2013 letters and small Christmas gifts were written, wrapped and sent to the missionaries we support.

Other activities: we watched a DVD on the life of William Carey, Janet Irvin visited to tell of her latest exploits in Bangladesh also Helen Harwood gave us a very helpful rundown of the work of CMS (Church Missionary Society) where she works. Stephanie and Charlotte visited our group prior to travelling to India as part of a Baptist Missionary Society trip and we had the opportunity to pray for them.

From October we transferred all our meetings to June Dyer's home. At the end of August Russell and Anita left the group and the Church however we were pleased to welcome Amanda back into House Group now her family commitments are less demanding. Sadly Owen Wright a valued member of our House Group passed into glory during the year he was a lovely man.

The monthly joint House Group meetings together with the four quarterly Church Meetings have reduced the number of times our group meet in the year by approximately a third. We were responsible for the joint House Group in July.

It was in many ways a more contemplative year. House Groups are an important part of our church structure but we need to be more aware of the opportunities there are to engage in the work of evangelism. We still have some way to go in communicating that amazing love and forgiveness that Jesus offers to all who believe.

Gerald & Erika

Safari Housegroup

Safari Housegroup continues to be a mobile Housegroup, as our name suggests! It has been lovely to see our group grow with the addition of Katrina and Monique, especially as we had been wondering last year what direction our 'small' group would take.

Over the past year we have followed the Sunday morning themes on a number of occasions, including the series on Ecclesiastes, with the aim of helping us to put the teaching into practice during the week. Barbie felt led to share a book that she had found challenging with us, called 'Freedom in Christ'. It is fair to say we all found it challenging, in more ways than one! However, it was good to work through the study together and we have since moved on to learning about 'Meeting God'; this focused our attentions on the relationship between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and what that means to us.

I believe that God has really brought us together as a group over the past year. It has been wonderful to share in the ups and downs of each other's lives, and to be there with prayer, support and tea! Of course, a Safari report wouldn't be complete without the mention of a meal at Cosmo's or a BBQ and games evening! Thank you, as always, to those who open their homes to us (and those who consequently have to vacate the room for us!)

Naomi Power

Ladies Housegroup

Denise, Lynn, Glenys and Rachel and I continue to meet on Wednesday evenings to study the Word of God and apply it to our lives in a practical way. We started the year looking at Colossians using the LifeBuilder Study book as a base for our time together. Since September we have been exploring the person and work of the Holy Spirit as we seek to open our lives to more of His influence and power so that we may be better equipped to help our families, our church and our daily contacts.

We met with the Safari House Group last summer for a very enjoyable BBQ at Andrew and Helen's and we have also had some social time together as a group. We enjoy one another's company wherever we are and have become close through sharing and praying together.

We all agree that God very definitely meets with us personally and as a group. He has graciously used us and His Word to encourage and build one another up. It has been amazing to hear God speaking through the prayers for one another and we would all say that we go away having been refreshed and strengthened to face the world again.

Julie John

Youth Housegroup

It has been a very encouraging year as the youth have continued to support this ministry twice monthly and taken on leadership roles with Bible study and event organising. We have averaged about 6 which is pretty impressive as some have been taken away to University and gap year activities. Abi has been able to join us via Skype on many occasions which has been such a blessing.

During the Easter holidays we had a Sunday roast together and it was a big reunion for those who had been away. 11 of us enjoyed feasting and fellowship as we caught up with news and then played games.

We have been studying Moses and the Exodus by youth request and 'Learning to trust God' through it. Many have risen to the challenge of leading the study and some great discussions with good involvement had by all. It is always good to apply the lesson and bring it into our prayer time. The youth are great at sharing and praying about each other's life events.

Some weeks when numbers are less we have had DVDs 'The Left Behind' series when we were finishing Revelation studies, 'The Moment After' and recently 'Father of Lights' about God visibly working in lives.

We are planning a Passover communion soon as we have been studying about it. We are now at the point where the Hebrews have crossed the Red Sea....all very exciting.

In the better weather we gather round the fire pit and in August the youth organised themselves for 2 weeks at Soul Survivor which they are doing again this year.

We regularly have Sam, Bryony, Mike, Andy, Alice, Esther, Josh and Abi.

Adrian and Katrina Kerr

CoffeePlus

Praise God for another year of encouragement with very good speakers, Bible studies and DVDs helping us grow in our faith. Difficult situations have drawn us closer to God and each other. Sarah Tippet continues to extend her role as co-leader, bringing wisdom, technical experience and much care.

A ministry of CoffeePlus is to encourage others in their Christian work; reflecting on a project in Kenya last August Fiona Massie wrote 'Thank you for your continued interest and prayers. I consider the CoffeePlus group co-workers!'

It has been pleasing to welcome Margaret Bowra to the group. Teresa has come more regularly and found support through a period of health difficulties.

We have been blessed by the following speakers:

June Dyer; Kenya visit

Paul John; 'Fruit of the Spirit love, joy, peace and patience', 'Bereavement and grief'

Beth Kneale; 'Update on Pilgrims' Friend Society'

Fiona Massie; 'Update on Hosanna Love Ministries Kenya' x 2

Lizzie Myers; 'New Life Homes in Kenya'

Mandy Patterson; 'Porn on the Internet'

Pauline Selhi; video recording by Gerald Belcher of her talk on Haggai 'Getting into the Psalms'

Barbara Smith; 'Growing Health'

Bernice White; 'The Good Shepherd knows His Sheep', 'Pilgrim Progress' John Bunyan and 'Screwtape Letters' C S Lewis

Margaret Willemsen 'Update on Romania'

DVD's we have watched:

'Breaking the Sound Barrier' the story of Sue Thomas,

'When Things Seem Impossible' New Tribes Mission

'The Judge is Standing at the Door' James led by Margaret Willemsen.

'Battles Christians Face' part 1 'Image' led by Margaret Willemsen

There have been sessions of 'Prayer and Share' for: 'Sunday Club', 'Funday Club' and 'Holiday Club' with Debbie Hooker, 'Deacons' with Ken Hayward 'and 'Families'.

A CD we have appreciated, 'Hope of an Inheritance', Carol Dadswell KYB.

On other mornings we have had Share a book x 2, Share a scripture, Fellowship and prayer, What's in my memory box? Greta Becket and Martha Glover x 2, 'Focus on Christmas' and 'Focus on Easter' with Communion led by Ian Reynolds.

At the end of each half term we have a shared meal. Special events, a meal at Asian Cuisine at Swindon, a lunch at Cornerstone for Bernice's 80th birthday, a meal at the Lamb & Flag for Bryony Lumsdale's 18th birthday and a birthday cake for Abi Kerr's 18th birthday.

Many members have special responsibilities; June Dyer, Bernice White and Margaret Willemsen lead the mornings, Sarah Tippet our prayer time; June Dyer and Jenny Steadman open house in August; Greta Beckett, pastoral care, flowers and cards. Thank you to Jenny Steadman for being responsible for birthday cards for group members and missionary families. Lilian Taylor has now taken this on. Ill health meant I was not able to function for the last two months. The support and care of the group has been very special to me and helped in my recovery. Again we see God's faithfulness in many situations

Lesley Baker

Monday Evening Prayer Group

“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.” James 5 v 16

This Monday evening prayer meeting was started as a group to pray for the Alpha Course over seven years ago. It has continued until now because it meets a need, and there are those committed to it, and available on a Monday evening at half past seven. The format consists of a reading from God’s word, a short time of focussing on God and praising Him, and then a longer time praying for various subjects until nine o’clock.

The group moves around four or five different homes according to the subjects for prayer, the outreach of the Church, (all the evangelism of the Church including Cornerstone), the growth of the Church, (its leaders, members, services etc.), our nation, (its leaders, society, churches etc. & for revival), and missions and the suffering Church (we pray especially for the missionaries whom our church supports). We normally concentrate mainly on the subject for the week but also pray for current needs or emergencies in the Church. We have been roughly about four or five in number in a meeting. The total number of all who have taken part in the year is twelve. Some people have moved out responding to new commitments, and some have had to cope with ill health and have had to drop out, but others have been added to the group. There have been many answers to prayer for people’s health. The preaching and teaching of God’s word continues to be blessed and courses too. The move to Old Mill Hall has been accomplished. Some new faces have been welcomed in the congregation and also some in the leadership team. New home groups have sprung up. Some laws endangering freedom of speech have been rendered more favourable for the sharing of the gospel. East Challow Mission is being renewed. People from our church have gone for specialised training or on mission trips to Africa and India. The Brixey’s change of field, the Hookers’ work permits, NETS accreditation and new Namibian faculty members, Carlos and Nancy’s new discipleship programmes and struggles with health, transport and accommodation have been subjects of prayer. We have been cheered in God’s presence and strengthened by many wonderful times of prayer. John 14 v 14, 15 v 7, 8, Hebrews 11 v 6.

We purpose to continue. Come and join us if you can.

Maurice Glover

Prayer Chain

Thank you to all who support the prayer chain, by praying and sending requests, especially those who remember to send a ‘praise’ message as God has answered prayer (not always in the expected way!). Once more the prayer chain has been well used, this comment, sent to me from Fiona Massie when Sara was in hospital, expresses so well the feelings of so many; ‘The prayer chain means a lot to me. I send up arrows of prayer, but feel I can concentrate on the practical, while others back up in prayer. The Bible says ‘the prayers of a righteous man/woman availed much’ and I can confirm this from experience! I also enjoy the peace that comes in time of trouble, no doubt because of prayer’.

I notice that last year we were supporting the Brixey family, in Thailand, by praying for James who was applying to university, for UK residency and funding. All answered, James has settled well at Warwick university, which has proved just the right place in so many ways. One of the many answers during this year.

During the last six months I have much appreciated the regular prayer updates from Abi Kerr as she has participated in ‘Soul 61’. They have brought a real freshness, openness and have given us so much to bring before God, both praise and prayer.

Thank you to Sarah Tippet who deputises and Margaret who has assisted especially during the last few weeks.

Lesley Baker

Friday Funday Club

Friday Funday Club meets once a month during term time (currently on the second Friday of the month) from 4.30 to 6.30 pm and is aimed at children aged 5-11 and their parents (younger children are welcome too). It includes table top games, crafts, activities, a delicious two course meal and usually ends with singing. In the summer we met in July in Grove Park, which included a picnic tea and various fun games.

The last year has been an exciting one with some interesting developments. In 2013 we started a 'God spot' or, as I prefer to think of it, 'time together' – where we hear about God in an interesting and informal way altogether. The craft usually fits in with the theme. The speakers have been Paul, Ian, Gerald and I. Topics ranged from new beginnings to the burning bush. A locally made film was shown recently too.

In January 2014 we moved from our previous venue of Cornerstone and started using the Old Mill Hall. We have used the Dixon Suite and Patrick Little Hall (Main Hall). The larger hall does give us much more room for run around games, which is great. Attendance has varied (including helpers) from over 50 to around 30. It seems as if attendance is down when the weather is nicer!

The club attracts an almost equal division 50/50 of church families (from ours and other local churches) and non-church families. Parents are required to stay and so we have had a chance to get to know local parents too.

Our current regular team of helpers includes: Debbie, Hannah and Rebecca Hooker, Gerald and Erika Belcher, Paul John, Ian and Janet Reynolds, Bernice White and Andrew and I, plus yummy food from Katrina Kerr (sometimes assisted by Abi Kerr).

I will end this section with a word from a local mum who appreciates what we do at Friday Funday Club *"We love Funday Club, lovely caring atmosphere. All my 4 children enjoy going, so it appeals to all ages. Mine especially enjoy the music and craft."* Sara.

Holiday Bible Club 2013

Last Year's Holiday Bible Club was a massive success and was called 'The Adventure Cruise'. The free one-week club was aimed at school years 1 – 6 and was held at North Drive School from Monday 29 July - Friday 2 August. It ran 10.00 to 12.00 with a longer time (until 1.00/2.00) on the Friday for a picnic together in the school grounds. The registration and refreshments team provided delicious refreshments each day and amazing cakes and drinks for the picnic on the Friday.

The children were organised into teams with sea-themes and enjoyed learning about the Bible, scoring points and cruising on the high seas. They were occupied playing games, doing craft, singing action songs, watching drama, listening to Bible stories and doing junk modelling. The children enjoyed talking together and watching the acting skills of Abi and Bryony as they sailed around a variety of islands and explored Biblical themes. Their characters, Captain Fishpie and First-Mate-Monday, were certainly a hit with the children and the scenery and props looked amazing.

There was a wide variety of activities and it was very rewarding to sit with the children during the talking time after the story and hear even quite young children beginning to explore faith. We enjoyed some incredible crafts organised by Jean McVeigh and her friend Chris. Fiona Massie undertook a brilliant memory verse 'spot' each day, which led to a competition on the final day, to which parents were invited. So many people did so much I can't try to mention all the names of the church members who took part, along with a couple of young people from outside church, because I am bound to forget someone!

The 2013 Light Party and Christmas Party

2013 saw GFEC celebrate 31st October in grand style with a 'Light Party' (an alternative to Halloween). This free party was held at Old Mill Hall in the Patrick Little Hall (Main Hall). A lot of planning and effort went into the party and we had team games around tables with a vegetable theme. The vegetables were all racing to the light and some delightful artwork enabled us all to get into the theme and know our team. After games and a DVD plus some drama, the children enjoyed singing led by Barbie and then tucked into delicious food provided by Katrina and an army of helpers. The highlight (for me) was an amazing cake which was lit with fireworks. I am not sure of attendance but we had a lot of people, I am estimating around 50 plus with helpers, parents and children.

Our free Christmas party was held in the Old Mill Hall, in the Dixon Suite on the same night as the Carol Service so those who wished to stay on for Carols could. We wanted to follow up any local contacts we had made through the Holiday Bible Club and the Light Party. If I remember rightly over 20 people were there and it was brilliant. We had lovely food and crafts plus games and the feeling from many people was that it was a great idea and a very welcome addition to the children's Christmas.

Thank you

It is very hard to single out anyone because so many people do so much, but there is one figure who has been a total support and encouragement throughout all this children's work and has helped to make it happen. That person is Debbie Hooker. Debbie, with support from her daughters (Hannah and Rebecca) has provided ideas, inspiration, practical guidance and lots of plain old fashioned hard work.

Having said this, of course, it is all a team effort and whether it is cooking yummy meals, washing up, making drinks, providing art work or props, playing games, organising group activities, speaking to the whole group or talking with individual mums and dads, it is all vital work and I am so thankful to all who have helped so much, and for those in the church who have faithfully prayed for our work.

Helen Harwood

Missionary Action Group (MAG)

MAG exists to support and promote the church's links with missionaries working overseas.

GFEC's mission support

We continued to support the following missionaries in prayer, and financially:

Adrian and Antonia Brixey (Thailand) Contact: Bernice White

Josh and Cathy Hooker (Namibia) Contact: Andy & Debbie Hooker

Carlos and Nancy Bernal (Colombia) Contact: Amanda Thomas

Brixey family: The Brixeyes returned from Thailand on Home Assignment in July 2013. They visited the church on Dec 1st to share about their work, and we were given an opportunity to meet them at an Open House at Gerald and Erika's. This was a very helpful visit. Their work with OMF comes to an end in June, after which they will begin a new work with European Christian Mission

Josh and Cathy Hooker, who work with Crosslinks, returned from Namibia for three months for furlough and deputation visits. They had to split their furlough, and plan to visit GFEC later this year when they return to the UK.

Carlos and Nancy Bernal's work has a new focus, centring on evangelistic Bible studies. Finding an efficient way of getting their financial support to them was achieved thanks to liaison between Adrian Kerr and Phil Brown. The Bernals have faced a number of challenges, especially in the area of health, and we praise God for bringing them through a very difficult time.

Other mission interests

Kenya Contacts: Ray & Fiona Massie
Romania Contacts: John & Margaret Willemsen
Viva (Projects worldwide: HQ in Oxford)
Prayer for the Persecuted Church (Prayer day in November)

Kenya: We were treated to an African-style church service, led by Fiona, with contributions from those with first-hand experience of the New Life Homes and the various other projects known to the church.

Romania: The Shoe-box packing Sunday took place at the Methodist Church this year, and this arrangement worked well.

Viva: GFEC dedicated a Sunday morning service to praying for Children at Risk in June. We also had a visit from Andy Dipper, CEO of Viva, in November.

MAG also led 2 of the joint Housegroup prayer meetings to pray for mission.

We would like to thank you all for your support for mission over the past year. Special thanks to Maurice for organising a monthly prayer time for mission in his home.

Gerald Belcher, Bernice White, Amanda Thomas, Ray and Fiona Massie

Cornerstone Christian Centre

The past year has seen a number of changes in the Board and the Management of the Cornerstone. The Board appointed two new part time cooks at the beginning of January after Katrina Kerr left – Liz from St Johns and Stephanie (who worked in the Cornerstone several years ago). Sarah Shewring (who worships at Wantage Baptist Church) replaced Mary in April as Manager.

Although we change, our God never changes and it is the desire of all that through the Cornerstone others will come to the knowledge of Jesus as Lord and Saviour. It is still “The Mission Station” of Grove as a gateway, a beacon and oasis.

Throughout the year we have seen a number of new faces as both customers and volunteers. It has been a privilege for me and others to help as regular volunteers, but the Cornerstone is always looking for, and needing, more. There are 5 or 6 two hour vacant slots each week. A full complement of volunteers would mean that time could be spent with the many lonely folk who come into the Cornerstone, not just to have coffee, tea or a meal but are in need of “a chat”. Quite often those who serve in the restaurant are too busy serving food to be able to “serve the Lord” in listening and comforting.

As usual GFEC have once more played a major part in supplying finance, supporting as volunteers and praying at the Prayer Breakfasts.

There are two new games afternoons a week – Rummikub on a Tuesday and Scrabble on a Thursday. All are warmly invited to visit either or both games afternoons – we shall be very pleased to see you.

As each New Year is a challenge, I would encourage everyone to support the Cornerstone - through prayer, volunteering, financially and as customers.

John Willemsen

Hope Unlimited Community Newsletter

During the year we produced 3 editions which were distributed to over 3,000 homes in the village plus local Dentist and Doctors' surgeries.

Articles have included 'How do you move church?', 'Home for Good', 'It was the best of times – it was the worst of times', 'CoffeePlus – but what's the Plus?' and 'Loneliness is twice as bad for your health as obesity'. We also included 'My story' contributions from Abi & Revd. Glyn Oliver.

We have received positive feedback about the quality and content of the publication. It continues to be a vital tool in raising the profile of our church in the community and engaging with the people of Grove.

I am very grateful to Debbie for her input, to those bundling the Newsletters and arranging distribution, to those of you who have contributed articles and of course, last but certainly not least, each of you who have walked the streets of Grove delivering these Newsletters.

Paul John

Open the Book

Our first year of involvement with 'Open the Book' project has proved very positive. Presenting incidents from the Bible to near on 80 children some of whom are given small parts in the story has been well received and has enabled us to share the Bible in a way they can enjoy and understand. The majority of the children appear to appreciate the weekly Tuesday visit from the 'Open the Book' team according to a simple survey taken by the teachers.

On a couple of occasions we have opened the Book in the Grove C of E Church when children and their parents have attended a short service. This was recently extended to Millbrook School.

One of the key ingredients is the costumes and props that support the readings - a lady from the C of E. Church (Margaret) who has both flair and imagination has conjured up a succession of amazing sets.

There have been approximately a dozen participants in total with Paul, Fiona Massie, Erika and myself representing GFEC.

From my point of view I have really enjoyed the experience and have even managed to get to play one or two costume parts. Goliath being tailor made. We don't all take part each Tuesday so our participation does not become a chore.

Three of us were invited to share with a class of older children how the peace we received from our Christian faith impacted on our lives. A memorable experience!

Our involvement in 'Open the Book' has meant we are recognised by the children outside of school and there is at least one funny story attached to these meetings. I won't go into detail here but if you want to know more come and have a word.

Finally I must mention Maggie Mellersh who was the instigator in bringing 'Open the Book' to Grove and coordinating who did what, where and when. She was excellent but sadly she is moving to Hertfordshire to be nearer her children we will miss her.

Gerald Belcher

Wantage and Grove Foodbank

As a church GFEC continues to support the Wantage and Grove Foodbank. We have regular collections, every two months, of food and cash donations. Our support is greatly appreciated and very necessary, as the need continues to grow. On average, the Foodbank gives out 20-30 food parcels per month. There were almost twice as many food parcels delivered in 2013 as there were 2012, a 100% increase in demand! In addition, the Foodbank gave out 100 special Christmas food parcels to needy families in Wantage and Grove.

Thank you to all who support the Foodbank. I know from meeting some of the recipients that this is a great witness to the love of our Lord and to the church in action meeting a practical need, caring for our community.

Debbie Hooker

Grove Airfield and other local house-building developments

Progress on the Airfield Development has again been slow, but eventually the long awaited Outline Application for 2,500 homes on the Airfield was approved by the Vale of White Horse District (VoWH) Council at a Planning Committee meeting at St Johns Church on 4th December.

I applied for and was given the opportunity along with other interested parties to make comments. I used my time to remind the Councillors that GFEC have a long standing vision for a Christian Centre on the development and that we looked forward to working with the VoWH in seeing this vision become a reality.

The developers, Persimmon Ltd and Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd are currently in the process of agreeing the Section 106 arrangements and negotiating with landowners. Current indications are that initial building of houses will commence in the spring of 2015.

However, other local developments are progressing more quickly. Following the approval of plans for 200 new homes at Stockham Farm (now known as the Letcombe Fields development), the developers, Dandara are now looking at options to develop an additional 100 new homes on land adjacent to the approved site. The primary site covering the initial 200 homes is currently being cleared in preparation to start building.

The proposed development of 133 homes at Monks Farm on land west of Old Station Road in Grove was considered by the VoWH Planning Committee. Despite objectors speaking against the development, this application was approved. An Outline Planning Application for a further 75 homes has also been submitted.

It is likely that we will see new residents in the Letcombe Fields and Monks Farm developments before the airfield. We therefore need to be prepared to engage with these new residents, some of whom may be Christians looking for a church, but certainly there will be others who may be interested in worshipping with us at GFEC.

Paul John

Wantage Nursing Home Worship Service Report

I lead a service once a month, usually on the first Wednesday of each month with the able help of the activities coordinators who print copies of hymn words and play a music CD to accompany the singing.

About six to ten residents, and sometimes more, attend. We sing several well-known hymns on a theme where possible, pray and read a short Scripture with a brief talk. A story is enjoyed. Visual aids are very helpful.

Challenges this year are mainly due to interruptions during the service, as we meet in one of the main sitting areas. Also the residents who come have varying degrees of dementia and consequently difficulty in concentrating. But the Lord who made them and loves them can reveal himself to them. That is my prayer as they come to the end of their earthly pilgrimage.

“...I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me ...” Matt 25:36.

Pauline Selhi

GROVE FREE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31
MARCH 2014**

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Page 5	Balance Sheet
Page 6 - 8	Notes to the Accounts

David Cooke & Co
Chartered Accountants
5 Briar Close
Banbury
Oxon. OX16 9DS

GROVE FREE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

TRUSTEES REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014

The trustees have pleasure in presenting their report and the Financial Statements of the Church for the year ended 31 March 2014.

Reference and Administrative Details

The Church is a Registered Charity no. 283079. The address is: Grove Free Evangelical Church, c/o 67 Mably Grove, Wantage, Oxon. OX12 9XW.

The charity trustees for the purpose of these accounts comprise the Elders and Deacons of the Church. The Elders and Deacons during the year were as follows:

Mr Paul John (Elder)	Mr Adrian Kerr (Deacon)
Dr Andy Hooker (Elder)	Mr Ken Hayward (Deacon)
Mr Chris Margetts (Elder)	Mrs Fiona Massie (Deacon)
(resigned 17/10/13)	(appointed 25/4/13)
Mr Russell Dyer (Deacon)	Mr Ian Reynolds (Elder)
(resigned 11/7/13)	(appointed 11/7/13)

Structure, Governance and Management

The Church is governed by its Constitution, which was last amended and issued to members in October 2008. The Elders and Deacons are elected by the Church Meeting, and are responsible for leadership of the church.

The Elders and Deacons meet regularly to effect proper control of all arrangements for the running of the church.

Objectives and Activities

The Church's aims are to spread the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and to edify the congregation through the preaching and teaching of the Word of God, and the circulation of good Christian literature. The Church's vision is to build a community of people who live out God's purposes.

Achievements and Performance

The Church's main work is carried out through its own Sunday services, mid-week Bible study and prayer meeting. Other meetings were convened for individual groups such as young teenagers, women, men and young adults.

GROVE FREE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

TRUSTEES REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014 (Cont.)

Public Benefit

In carrying out its activities in the year under review, the trustees have had regard to the public benefit guidance issued by the Charity Commission, and are satisfied that the activities mentioned above have all been for the public benefit.

Financial Review

Funds are used to pay the Pastor's and Administrator's salaries, to pay the rent for the buildings the Church uses for meetings, to support Missionary organisations, to provide literature and to fund various projects.

As shown in the Statement of Financial Activities on page 4, there was a net deficit of resources of just over £2,700 spread across the funds. Overall, the state of affairs of the Church is considered to be satisfactory.

The Church has a policy of retaining a Reserve of at least £15,000, and this sum is shown in a separate Reserve Fund

On behalf of the Elders & Deacons

Trustee

Trustee

Date: _____

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF GROVE FREE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

I report on the accounts of the Church for the year ended 31 March 2014, which are set out on pages 4 to 8.

Respective responsibilities of directors and independent examiner

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

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under section 145 of the Act);
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145 (5) (b) of the 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 explanations 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 statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

David Cooke MA (Oxon) FCA FCIE
David Cooke and Co.
Chartered Accountants
5 Briar Close
Banbury, Oxon.

OX16 9DS

Date: _____

GROVE FREE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014**

	<u>Note</u>	Unrestricted <u>Funds</u> <u>£</u>	Restricted <u>Funds</u> <u>£</u>	2014 <u>Total</u> <u>£</u>	2013 <u>Total</u> <u>£</u>
Incoming Resources					
Voluntary income		57,169	9,867	67,036	68,851
Investment income		279	7	286	508
Total incoming resources		<u>57,448</u>	<u>9,874</u>	<u>67,322</u>	<u>69,359</u>
Resources expended					
Cost of Generating Funds	2	500	-	500	255
Charitable Activities	3	60,431	8,960	69,391	68,625
Governance Costs	5	140	-	140	150
Total Resources Expended		<u>61,071</u>	<u>8,960</u>	<u>70,031</u>	<u>69,030</u>
Net Movement of Resources		<u>(3,623)</u>	914	<u>(2,709)</u>	329
Transfers between Funds		-	-	-	-
		<u>(3,623)</u>	914	<u>(2,709)</u>	329
Total Funds brought forward		64,657	7,988	72,645	72,316
Total Funds carried forward		<u>61,034</u>	<u>8,902</u>	<u>69,936</u>	<u>72,645</u>

The notes on pages 6 to 8 form part of these financial statements.

GROVE FREE EVANGELICAL CHURCH**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2014**

	<u>Note</u>	Unrestricted <u>Funds</u> <u>£</u>	Restricted <u>Funds</u> <u>£</u>	2014 Total £	2013 <u>Total</u> <u>£</u>
FIXED ASSETS	7	1,026	-	1,026	1,368
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtor - Tax repayment due		7,453	-	7,453	8,626
Cash at Bank & in hand		52,705	8,902	61,607	66,165
		<u>60,158</u>	<u>8,902</u>	69,060	<u>74,791</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		61,184	8,902	70,086	76,159
LESS: CREDITORS:					
Due within one year		(150)	-	(150)	(3,514)
NET ASSETS		<u>61,034</u>	<u>8,902</u>	69,936	<u>72,645</u>
Financed by:					
RESERVES					
Accumulated Income Fund	8	<u>61,034</u>	<u>8,902</u>	69,936	<u>72,645</u>

Approved on : _____ (date)

Treasurer_____
Elder

The notes on pages 6 to 8 form part of these financial statements.

GROVE FREE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014

1. Accounting Policies

The following accounting policies have been used consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the Church's Financial Statements.

(a) Accounting Convention.

The Financial Statements are prepared under the Historical Cost Convention, and in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting by Charities, published by the Charity Commission in March 2005.

(b) Income.

Donations represent cash received during the year, including tax repayments receivable. Charitable Activities Income comprises the sale of Christian books and other materials. Investment income comprises interest received from money in deposit accounts.

(c) Expenditure

The cost of generating funds are costs incurred in promoting the Church and its work. Charitable Activities Expenditure comprises all expenditure directly related to the Church's objects.

Governance costs are costs incurred in complying with constitutional and statutory requirements.

(d) Fixed Assets

Depreciation has been provided at the following annual rate on a reducing balance basis in order to write off fixed assets over their expected useful lives:

Equipment	25%
-----------	-----

Small items of equipment costing less than £500 are written off in the year of purchase.

2. Costs of Generating Funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2014 Total £	2013 Total £
Advertising & Publicity	500	-	500	255

GROVE FREE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014 (Cont.)

3. Charitable Activities	Unrestricted <u>Funds</u> <u>£</u>	Mission <u>Fund</u> <u>£</u>	2014 Total £	2013 Total £
Staff costs (note 6)	41,381	-	41,381	43,067
Visiting speakers' fees	275	-	275	215
Other Ministry & Missions (note 4)	10,416	8,960	19,376	14,360
Accommodation	5,429	-	5,429	6,488
Insurance	340	-	340	280
Administration expenses	415	-	415	668
Equipment	458	-	458	-
Miscellaneous expenses	1,375	-	1,375	3,316
Depreciation	342	-	342	231
	<hr/> 60,431 <hr/>	<hr/> 8,960 <hr/>	<hr/> 69,391 <hr/>	<hr/> 68,625 <hr/>
 4. Other Ministry and Missions				
Missions expenses	8,729	8,960	17,689	12,898
Outreach	1,124	-	1,124	628
House groups expenses	18	-	18	-
Fellowship Fund	17	-	17	361
Sunday Bible Club	27	-	27	147
Youth Group	426	-	426	45
CoffeePlus	75	-	75	281
	<hr/> 10,416 <hr/>	<hr/> 8,960 <hr/>	<hr/> 19,376 <hr/>	<hr/> 14,360 <hr/>
 5. Governance Costs				
Independent Examination	140	-	140	150
 6. Employee information				
Wages, salaries & social security costs	39,361	-	39,361	41,954
Pastor's expenses	1,270	-	1,270	953
Training costs	750	-	750	160
	<hr/> 41,381 <hr/>	<hr/> - <hr/>	<hr/> 41,381 <hr/>	<hr/> 43,067 <hr/>

The average number of persons employed during the year was 2 (2013: 2). No employee received remuneration in excess of £60,000 p.a. No trustee received any remuneration, apart from Mr John for his work as the pastor of the church.

GROVE FREE EVANGELICAL CHURCH**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014 (Cont.)**

7. Fixed Assets	<u>Equipment</u>	<u>Total</u>
Cost brought forward	2,317	2,317
Additions in the year	-	-
Cost carried forward	<u>2,317</u>	<u>2,317</u>
Depreciation brought forward	949	949
Charge for the year	342	342
Depreciation carried forward	<u>1,291</u>	<u>1,291</u>
Net book value, 31/03/14	<u>1,026</u>	<u>1,026</u>
Net book value, 31/03/13	<u>1,368</u>	<u>1,368</u>

8. Funds	<u>Brought forward</u>	<u>Incoming Resources</u>	<u>Resources Expended</u>	<u>Fund Transfers</u>	<u>Carried Forward</u>
<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>					
General Fund	47,609	57,448	(61,071)	-	43,986
Church Reserve Fund	15,000	-	-	-	15,000
	<u>62,609</u>	<u>57,448</u>	<u>(61,071)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>58,986</u>
<u>Restricted Funds</u>					
Designated Giving	1,382	9,866	(8,960)	-	2,288
Building Fund	1,815	8	-	-	1,823
Church Development Fund	6,839	-	-	-	6,839
	<u>10,036</u>	<u>9,874</u>	<u>(8,960)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,950</u>
<u>Total Funds</u>	<u>72,645</u>	<u>67,322</u>	<u>(70,031)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>69,936</u>