



Wymondham Baptist Church 2025 Annual Reports



Preface from our Pastor

God is the same today, as yesterday, as he will be tomorrow. God is outside of our time frames and he has seen the end from the beginning. This means that there are no surprises for God. So he is not shocked by what is in this report. In fact quite the opposite. He planned it and we have the privilege of being part of those plans.

So as you read these reports I hope you can see two things....

First - you can clearly see God's hand at work in all aspects of the life of WBC. There are so many encouraging things in these written accounts that they can only have been achieved by the power of God. Not least the exact starting date of the building project and the funds to complete the task set before us.

Secondly - I pray that you see these reports as not something to look back on but something that points forwards. These are not written to navel gaze at the past but to give us hope for the future. The annual reports are there to help build our faith and to remind us of where we have come from BUT more importantly to show us the future steps.

Enjoy reading and all praise to the Father, through the Son, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Blessings

Paul



Wymondham Baptist Church

Annual Reports 2025

Verse of the Year 2025:

“Commit to the Lord whatever you do and He will establish your plans” - Proverbs 16:3

Vision Verse -

“Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back, lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes.” - Isaiah 54:2

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Pastor

Our verse for the year 2025 was Proverbs 16:3 “Commit to the Lord whatever you do and He will establish your plans”

Note that it does not say make your plans and he will establish them! We are to seek him in all we do and ask him first! Then he will establish them. This we have been doing all the time. 2025 proved to be a significant year in the life of WBC.

We began the year with hope and excited hearts with regards to our vision. We had already had the prayerful thought that we would start the building project this year and had given the date of the 20th July to the church as being a time when we would break ground and begin the physical building works. At the start of 2025 we were well short of the funding needed and, though the external funding group continued to push doors and we also planned many fundraising events ourselves, we knew we faced an uphill journey.....BUT GOD.....we kept coming back to our verse commit to the Lord and though it seemed impossible God was with us.

The first quarter of the year we held our very own Life and Death course for the first time. Led by Christine Spencer and supported by Angela Metcalf. It was well received, with contributions from various experts from outside of WBC, including Rosedale funeral home and Fosters solicitors.

Sunday morning teachings throughout the first part of the year, with the exception of café church which ,was based on the film ET, were all focused on a series called The Beautiful Attitudes - a study of the beatitudes. Again, this was well received and a very welcome focus to help shape our thinking.

Towards the end of the first quarter, on March the 7th, we had taken in all bids for the tender of the building works. This was to give us a firm idea of costs and even though it was scary to see the figures on paper and it all becoming very real, whilst still being short of funds, we kept praying and working towards God’s goal.

We held a giving day on the 16th of March and it was amazing. WBC really did respond.



Personally, I was due to take part in the EBA ministers' conference in March but the night before I was due to go I was in hospital to discover I have a brain tumour. This led to me being off work for some time and the leadership of WBC responded very quickly and filled the gap with exceptional skill and competence. I cannot

tell you what a blessing that was and all praise to God our father for carrying us through as a church. I am also grateful for all the prayers from the fellowship.

I was due to start my sabbatical but for obvious reasons this was postponed.

The second quarter saw our church AGM chaired by Rev Bob Almond due to me being off sick.

Gill and Vera set up and coordinated our Maundy Thursday reflections and Victor Fromm led our Easter Sunday service.

We were visited by more funding groups to explore our project, and this was a focus for our prayers. We kept going with our own fundraising events as we looked to close the gap. We held a special church meeting in May to ask to proceed with the building project in spite of the shortfall, to take a leap of faith. The vote was a unanimous 'yes'.

Our Sunday morning worship services were led by various people during my period of sickness, with an unplanned series looking into personal heroes of the faith. Instigated by the leadership it was an excellent series and very uplifting to hear of people from both scripture and the world around us with explanations as to why each person thought they were a hero. I was able to phase my return to preaching and led a couple of sermons as part of it and it was good to get back to 'normal'.



The third quarter began with amazing news. God had closed the gap in the funding and we were able to break the ground on.....the 20th of July. All praise goes to God for this, with an acknowledgement to all the hard work, sacrificial giving and determination of those at WBC.

We were then able to appoint the building firm from the tender process and allocated Greystone and Masons to carry out the work. Though we were excited it was with a heavy heart we closed down Roots and all other regular activities at the end of July so that the building work could begin.

At the end of July I started part of my sabbatical. August services were led by the homegroups and were focused on a series 'in it together' looking at passages from the book of Romans.

The builders were delayed in starting the works and though this was very frustrating we knew that God had got this in His hands.

As the last quarter of the year came we pressed on. We continued our own preparation works including upgrading our IT. Sunday morning teaching was on a series called 'Back to Basics' going through the book of Ephesians. I was able to fully engage as I returned from sabbatical at the beginning of September.

Though many of our regular ministries were on hold because of the works we did hold things such as a worship walk organise by the ECO team and also other things such as our Tuesday morning prayer Power Hour as well as Home from Home. We also made sure that no matter what, we would still host Foodbank as far as possible.

Sunday morning worship services also began to see growth in numbers. There has been a steady trickle and this is really encouraging.

November saw our first men's event with a curry evening held in a local restaurant organised by Steve Gaskin. 17 men attended the night, which was excellent and something we wish to build on.

Our Christmas services were very well attended. We hosted our annual Rosedale Service of Remembrance for those who had been bereaved.

Our Carol service was held on a Saturday evening for the first time ever and the building was full! We were joined by our local MP and representatives from the town council. The Gospel was preached and the feedback was excellent.

Throughout the year I feel there can be no denying God's hand at work on the fellowship of WBC. Even in some of the tough trials the year brought, through the highs and the lows HE has been faithful.

I pray we never lose sight of the verse for that year, and we always commit to the Lord first and HE will establish our plans.

Blessings

Paul

Prayer Life at WBC

We have so very many answered prayers to thank God for in 2025, seeing His loving kindness and mercy poured out across church life. All-church prayer meetings for the building project saw some remarkable answers—God provided highly skilled people, committed helpers with servant hearts, and stunningly generous financial provision. We're also grateful for answered prayer regarding Paul's health and for the miraculous healings and help experienced by others. *"Blessed indeed is the people whose God is the Lord!"* (Psalm 115:15b).

The Tuesday Prayer Group meets throughout the year, with 4-10 people meeting weekly in the church, homes, or on Zoom. Leadership is shared, and topics are circulated so others can pray from home. The group balances outward-looking prayer (Wymondham, Norfolk, the nation, the world, BU and

mission partners) with prayer for WBC's people, leaders and ministries. We have a Tuesday Pray-ers *WhatsApp* group for fellowship prayer requests and a member now leads prayers at the third Sunday service. Once a month, there is an opportunity for people to receive prayer for healing, led by Gill Price in her pastoral role, and many have been greatly blessed by this ministry.

The Leadership Team plans regular prayer times throughout 2026 at Prayer Breakfasts and Away Days, leading by

example in making praying together a priority. Wymondham Churches Together also offers opportunities to pray with other churches, including the Good Friday *Walk of Witness* and the annual World Day of Prayer.

We continue to hold a vision for a regular all-church prayer meeting in the future.



Vera Cooke and Gill Price

Pastoral Care

During the past year, we have aimed to provide pastoral care to those within the fellowship and where appropriate to those in the community.

Vic Wright and I have been trying to co ordinate pastoral care, with the help of many others in the fellowship. We aim to provide help for those that need it and support to those that are caring for others.

Pastoral care as with everything else, may have been a little disjointed as we have not been able to do all the things we were doing as a result of the building works.

We continued to provide a listening ear and where appropriate practical support and prayer at Roots until it closed in the summer. I'd like to thank all those who show God's love and care to those that come to Roots.

For many in the church, the first point of contact for any pastoral needs will be their Homegroup leaders who can provide support within the group. These

leaders are supported by Vera and I through quarterly meetings together. But we are always there for any support they need at anytime.

Ruth Rallan continues to provide meals for those in the fellowship who have a temporary need. I know that Ruth would welcome more volunteers to join the rota to provide a meal when the need arises.



Shirley Marwood, assisted by her team continues to take communion into the homes of those who are unable to come to church on a Sunday. If you would like to receive communion at home please contact me and I will arrange a visit from the team.

Paul has started to provide more opportunities for prayer during Sunday services, particularly prayer for healing. It is lovely to see many people coming forward to receive from our God.

Vic and I want everyone to know that we are here for everyone, for prayer, help and support. Please let us know if you need any support, we cannot help if we don't know.

Finally I would like to thank all those involved in these ministries and all those who care for others within our fellowship.

Gill Price

Roots Community Café

Roots has gone from strength to strength even in very challenging times. It became clear at the start of the year that we had outgrown the space we had been using in terms of not particularly area but actual facilities and working practices. The current set up involved a lot of setting up and taking down, which takes a lot out of the volunteers, many of whom are over retirement age.

Each session has seen large numbers of people attending. It is estimated via Cathy doing a regular head count, that between 75 -100 people attend the session. With this in mind it was exciting to see that we were about to embark on the building project in the summer.

This however did, and indeed still does, provide its own issues. Not least of these was the need to fully close down Roots at the end of July. This had a major impact on lots of areas. The whole set up of Roots came about not least because of our understanding of the issue of loneliness.



The volunteers who give their all to this ministry found it very hard to come to terms with not being here for the community. They themselves took it on to organise regular get-togethers as they also understand

that this ministry is about loneliness and they are not immune themselves from its impact. Many of them live alone and enjoy the regular fellowship that helping out offers. Indeed, some deep friendships have been formed and we all just enjoy each other's company.

Before each session we get together to pray and also share stories. This led to the, now infamous, story of Alan and his knitted swimsuit. This might seem a trivial point, but it is all part of the ethos of this key ministry.

So, with this awareness of what it's like for us who still see each other at church and other gatherings, to know we were not going to be here for the public who themselves often say Roots is the only time they speak to other people, was extremely heart breaking.

So, we closed the doors with heavy hearts but with hope for the future. The challenges would now be two fold. Just how long Roots could sustain itself with no income being generated but still having to pay wages, appliance contracts etc. But also, how many of our volunteers would be willing or able to come back from a long pause.

The delay in the builders' starting did not fill us with hope.

It has also been challenging to keep bumping into people who are sad that we are not there for them.

For your prayers -

Though this is an end of year report for 2025 it is written in the first quarter of 2026 and it is obvious that the building is behind schedule - with this in mind our requests are the following -



Pray that we have enough money left after all the delays to re-stock and start, that we have enough volunteers to run well and that we can once again find the joy and excitement that we shared in the team and with our community after the stress of getting Roots back up and running.

We know that God will honour His ministry, He will bring the people back who need it most, we pray for His strength, endurance and stamina to get it over the finish line. That we can finish off the building project element well and start rebuilding this important ministry all for His glory!

Emma and the Roots Team

Thrive@Roots

Thrive is a teen cafe session run on Tuesday afternoons during term times. It is aimed at high schoolers from years 7 - 11. We have a very small base of volunteers who are consistent.

The sessions are very informal and based around the Roots model of offering a safe space and relaxed atmosphere. There are generally about a dozen teenagers who come on a regular basis.

We supply drinks and a snack menu which the youngsters can purchase and they often sit around tables chatting with each other or the volunteers, or they do their homework, play card games or table tennis. In recognition of the potential for technology poverty we have successfully applied and received some computers from the local council which are used by the young people to help them do their homework.

We also offer a pay it forward board for those who cannot afford to purchase anything and this is used on a very regular basis.

Though the cafe is relaxed we do share our faith with those who come along. At various points in the Christian calendar we will do some crafts, kindly organised by Ruth. These are a great way of engaging with the youngsters. Through the building of relationships we talk to the young people about all kinds of issues with a clear Christian perspective.

As in the youth report, we attended the well being sessions at Wymondham High School to promote what we do, but again despite lots of interest this sadly did not translate into a great increase in numbers. Again, we have also held back from any large scale promotions due to the building works. This is something we will look at once those are completed.

We would ask for prayer in the continuation of this ministry, for new helpers and more teens in attendance. We would also ask God to highlight to us how we should build on those relationships and what the next steps could be for the young people in learning more about faith.

Emma

Sunday Youth Church

Group: L252 - School years Reception-Year 6

The youth programme this year has benefitted from additional leaders, and we are grateful to Kate, Mathew, and Steve for joining Emma, Grace, Ramona, Ruth, and Tracy. We are also deeply grateful to all those who join us as 'plus one,' to ensure we are taking all steps toward ensuring the safety of the children.

Since September 2025 the youth leaders have referred to the group of children aged roughly age 4-11 as L252, based on the verse found in Luke 2:52: 'And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.'

At this age the children respond very well to stories, and the focus of our curriculum has been the New Testament. With Jesus at the centre of our lessons, we are focussing on his everlasting and unconditional love, and the forgiveness that extends to His followers when we fail.

We believe the verse's reference to fact that Jesus also was a child who lived amongst people, and had to learn while he grew up, is a fitting name for the part of our church who are just starting to build their knowledge of the Bible, and work out what that means for their own faith and daily walk with Christ.

Unpredictable numbers continue to be a challenge for our leaders. We prepare weekly and look forward to seeing the children, but the difference in dynamic depending on who is with us, and how big the group is, certainly affects the children's experience as well as the leaders' ability to engage the group. Please pray for grace and wisdom as we navigate this.

More importantly, this minor inconvenience for us is just a glimpse into these children's busy and sometimes complicated lives. Each of the children in our care has their own

story, and each of the children and leaders would benefit from your prayers. It is a privilege to spend a



short time with them each week, as we learn and are blessed by the moments of exploring God's word. We call on your prayers for Holy-spirit inspired wisdom at all times, energy when it's running low, a reassurance of safety in God's hands, and that the children, the leaders and the entire church would be blessed by the gift of watching children grow in faith.

Tracy, Ramona and Ruth

T412

T412 is our Sunday morning teaching sessions for school years 7 and above. The sessions are shared between Grace, Steve, Kate and Emma. The group is small and like all areas of Sunday School it can fluctuate so much in who is there, without any prior knowledge.

We use materials from One Story provided by Raise Up Faith ministries. The sessions involve video resources with discussions with thought provoking questions that are relatable to the youths' everyday lives.

The group can sometimes be difficult to engage due to its size and the ages. However, we do have times when it is clear that God is speaking and the young people are keen to know more about God.

We have one youngster who attends whilst her family worships elsewhere, this is both humbling that she chooses us, but also brings a responsibility upon us to provide the discipleship she is seeking.

It has been challenging since September, with a lack of space due to the building work, T412 has been meeting in the kitchen which is not ideal but they are all very accepting of the situation.

Mathew is now our Deacon for youth work and we look forward to having more input and encouragement this year as he acts as a link between the youth team and the leadership team, I look forward to Him writing next year's report!!

Please pray that we make sure the youth have a nice space to go into once we complete upgrading the site, that we don't run out of money or energy and that they get a space to worship God that is comfortable and honouring to Him.

Pray also for new families, but more importantly that we have the right leaders to meet the needs of those who come to WBC.

T412 team

Friday Night Youth

Our regular Friday night youth group continued to meet throughout the year. The group is led by Emma, Jason and myself. We have had the same bunch of young people for several years now. We have around 12 -14 young people join us. They are so at ease both with each other and us as leaders.

The group come together every other week from 6:30 - 8 pm. There is a large portion of the evening given over to free time in which the youngsters tend to either play table tennis or badminton or they congregate around the PA desk and play songs over the system. After about an hour they take turns to serve each other tuck. This is a rota they organise amongst themselves.

Once they have enjoyed the snacks, we gather together for a short Bible study and teaching. We cover various subjects and this year we have focused on a series looking at our character and then a series on looking into the tough questions of faith including why does God allow suffering? What should we do in our relationships ? Amongst other subjects.

The group has begun to dwindle as the older children start their studies for exams and eventually, of their own choosing and timeframes, they begin to drop off.

In the last term before the summer Emma, Ruth and I were invited to the high school as part of a wellbeing week alongside many other groups. In that session we gave away foods and asked the young people to fill out a quick feedback form. We were blessed with loads of positive feedback and interactive conversations. We informed all those who visited our stand about the groups we host including both Thrive and Friday night youth. Sadly despite very open conversations and genuine interest it did not lead to any new visitors.

The end of the summer saw the start of the building works and this had an impact on what we could and couldn't do. But the youngsters were very adaptable and embraced the changes.

At Christmas though, once again we held our celebrations as the youth group demanded we tried to do the same as we have in previous years. We were unable to do the usual Christmas dinner but instead we provided a boxing day buffet. This was enjoyed by all and the turn out was very good. Our thanks go to Ruth who came along to help.

Our greatest challenge going forward is going to be numbers of attendees and what we do about it. Do we try and do another big push for promotion or is it time for us to pray and ask God is it time we stopped.

We ask you join us in prayer as we seek wisdom and discernment.

Paul, on behalf of the Friday night youth team.

Secretary

2025 has been a year of amazing milestones, unexpected challenges, and God's great faithfulness. Through every high and low, the Holy Spirit has guided us, reminding us again that Jesus Christ alone is our firm foundation. As we've built our physical extension, He has also been building us as "living stones... into a spiritual house" (1 Peter 2:5). This report is full of gratitude - to God, and to the many people who have given their time, gifts, and love so generously this year.

Our thanks go to the Leadership Team who worked with great commitment throughout, especially during Paul's sudden illness. The team was united to willingly step in and step up to new areas of decision-making while supporting the whole fellowship through difficult times. Again we thank God for all the help and grace He gave us in working together, so that Paul could focus on recovery knowing that the team was up to the task. David Mayne of the Eastern Baptist Association gave us much-appreciated advice and good support during this time. We were delighted to re-elect Jason O'Dell as Deacon and to welcome Jan Hunt to the team at the April AGM.

We are grateful to Cathy Finch for all she does to support WBC in administration, finance, communications, and charity status compliance - her steady support has been invaluable. Our IT systems received a major

upgrade, helping teams work more securely and efficiently, with Anglia Computer Solutions now providing ongoing technical support.

A huge achievement this year has been the completion of our fundraising, enabling us to appoint builders and begin construction. We thank Grace Burke and Kate Kinsey for leading the fundraising effort, and to David Frith, John Western (Architect) and Keith Hilton (Deacon and Trustee) for their extensive work in preparing and guiding the project, all under the overall leadership of Paul Smith and the Trustees.

Despite the upheaval on site, Sunday worship has continued in the main hall and attendance averaged 70, with new people joining us and exploring membership. Our membership now stands at 61. Several activities paused during construction, yet our children's and youth team found creative ways to continue meeting - thank you, and what an achievement! Core ministries such as Foodbank, Home from Home, Tuesday Prayer Hour, and Singing for Fun continued thanks to dedicated helpers who made alternative meeting arrangements when necessary, including some of our homegroups that had met at church. Roots paused in July but the team has enjoyed staying connected socially.

Outreach has of necessity been more limited this year, but it has given us space to reflect on how God may use the new extension and to refresh our vision. Our links with Wymondham churches have remained strong through Churches Together.

Throughout 2025, I've seen countless acts of Christ-like service that keep our church family thriving. Thank you to every person who has contributed - often quietly, always faithfully. As we move into 2026, we do so knowing that the Lord is with us. The new extension will open doors for ministry, community partnerships, and outreach beyond our walls. May we step forward with God into all He has prepared.

Vera Cooke



Church Administrator

2025 has been a very different year as far as administration is concerned. During the early part of the year, things progressed much as they have in earlier years. Most weeks I spent Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday morning in the Church Office. Routine testing of the fire alarm took place each week and regular orders were placed with our Environmentally Friendly cleaning supplier and on Friday mornings the Notice Sheet was prepared and circulated and Bible passage readers sought for the Sunday worship.

In July when the building work was scheduled to start and the area of the build was sealed off I decided that I would quite often work at home rather than in the Church Office. Most weeks I have tried to be in the Office on Tuesday and Friday morning so that there has been a presence at the church to support the Foodbank on Fridays and cover other areas of work.

In the late summer we engaged Anglia Computer Services to support us with IT and this has enabled remote working to be more easily carried out. We have experienced some problems with the photocopier set up and indeed still do have some problems but hopefully these will settle down very soon.

In my role as Administrator I have prepared agendas, with Paul and Vera's input and taken minutes at the Leadership Team meetings.



Until July we had a rota for serving refreshments after our Sunday services. As we have been unable to serve refreshments this task has not been needed. However, looking forward to when the building work is completed I am looking for volunteers to go on this rota. If you are able to help, please let me know - if we don't get the help that is needed we won't be able to offer refreshments!!

I have also prepared the bi-monthly church magazine - The Rooted Life - your contributions to this magazine are always welcomed - it doesn't have to be

religious or very academic, but a sharing of your interests. So please get your thinking caps on and see what you can offer.

With my limited understanding of how the WBC website works, I have tried to keep it up to date, regularly posting the recorded sermon, notice sheet, magazine, calendar etc. etc. Please let me know if you notice something is out of date and I will endeavour to swiftly put it right.

Cathy

Safeguarding

Emma and Ramona continue to act as the designated church safeguarding officers, Jason O'Dell is the safeguarding trustee.

Please remember safeguarding is the responsibility of the whole church, if you have any concerns please speak to either Emma or Ramona.

Finance Team

During 2025 we have once again seen God at work with our finances. The budget agreed at our January 2025 church meeting indicated a big increase in giving needed to meet our budgeted expenditure. At the end of the year we were just over £6,000 short of meeting the budget. However, at the end of 2024 we had set aside some monies to cover the building work to the tower and a reserve to cover our unknown electrical costs and with these reserves in hand we were able to cover our costs. We are aware that many in the fellowship give very sacrificially and we thank you for this. Early in the year we held a Giving Day to support the Building Project. God again showed us His provision through your giving over £39,000.

During 2025 we have continued to tithe all that has been given by the fellowship. These tithes have been given to BMS, Falconer Trust, GEM and

Besom a local charity. The Leadership Team are currently considering who to give the tithe on the Building Fund Giving Day.

There have been a number of fund raising events in support of our Building Fund. These have helped us to share in social events as well as raise money and spend time with the local community. The funds raised through the work of the External Fund Raising team have been amazing - God has really shown how 'all things are possible with Him'.

At the end of 2025 our Reserve Fund stood at £15,500 and we continue to transfer funds into this reserve to cover any unknown future costs, in line with Charity Commission guidance.

Our difficulties with our electricity supplier were resolved towards the end of 2025 when just short of £21,000 was refunded to us. These unexpected funds are enabling us to carry out a variety of improvements to our church premises in 2026.

We continue to report monthly to the Leadership Team so that they can monitor spending and income. Our 2024 accounts were professionally reviewed and formal accounts prepared by a local accountant. Our 2025 accounts are currently with our accountant for checking and the preparation of the annual accounts as required by the Charity Commission. These full accounts will be available in due course to anyone who wishes to see them.



Mary Wright and Cathy Finch - Finance Team



Music in Worship

The Worship Group currently consists of Owen, Katie, Lara, Neil and Liz, who we are delighted has joined us. We are also pleased that Liz's son Josh is able to play drums for us from time to time.

Last year Neil stood down as leader of the worship group, and it now operates under shared leadership.

We now practise fortnightly on a Tuesday evening. In the past trying to practise together has been a real struggle, but we are definitely feeling the benefit of regular time together. We are grateful to Doug and the rest of the tech team for all their support. Doug comes along to our Tuesday night practices, which is really helpful.

We are adjusting to our new position since the church seating was turned around 90 degrees!

Our heart is simply to provide an environment within which people feel able to worship freely. We appreciate that not all songs will be to everyone's taste, but we hope that everyone feels that there is something that works for them. Worship goes far beyond singing songs - it is about expressing our love for Jesus in all sorts of ways. We hope that everyone feels able to do that.

Worship Team

Singing for Fun

It is a well known fact that singing is good for you. It offers both mental and physical health benefits. It acts as a natural stress-buster by lowering cortisol, releasing 'happy hormones' like endorphine and dopamine.

With this in mind we decided to start a singing group not necessarily for those who are very musical but 'just for fun' singers. We meet once a month and just have fun singing a variety of different songs. We are



a group of about 12 - 15, male and female and we enjoy singing the 'old' songs, songs from well known shows etc. etc. Christine chooses new songs each month for us to learn and have fun with.

Among our number are several people from outside WBC who join us and enjoy our time together. One of the ladies who comes along is always most grateful and reports that it lifts her spirits, singing, laughing and chatting together.

The format of the afternoon is a 'warm up' led by Alan, singing for about 30/40 minutes, 15/20 minutes tea break and then more singing. Christine is our musician and currently we meet offsite in Hethersett.

There is always room for more to join us, so if you fancy an afternoon of fun singing (no audition required), come and join us - We meet on the first Monday of the month at 65 New Road, Hethersett. When the building work is finished we will meet at the church. For more information speak to Christine or Cathy.

Cathy Finch and Christine Frith

Buildings, Garden and Maintenance

Buildings

Much time during 2025 was spent on the planning of the work needed to bring the existing church buildings to a better standard. The main church, lounge, and school rooms formed part of those discussions. Much of this work would be undertaken by church members.

It was planned that these improvements ideally would be completed at the same time as the opening of the new build extension. I am pleased to report that some of this work has either been completed or commenced.

Projects undertaken in 2025

1. Decoration main church doors.
2. LED lighting in church installed.

3. Re-routing of electricity cable and removal of electricity meter.
4. Replacing barge boards on school room.
5. Plastering and redecoration of tower.
6. Re-roofing over toilets and kitchen. (Undertaken as part of building extension programme.)
7. Decorating and fitting out of Foodbank storage room.
8. Reconfiguration of church layout.
9. Repositioning of PA desk

Ongoing Projects in 2026

1. Decoration of church ceiling. - Completed. (External contractor)
2. Decoration of lounge and office. - Completed
3. Decoration of church. - Commenced.
4. Repair of floor, and decoration of schoolroom, toilet, lobby and replacement window.
5. Replacing heating system in church. (External contractor)
6. Concrete pad required for external air pump for new heating system. - Commenced
7. New carpet tiles in church. (External contractor)
8. Partial renewal and other works of electric wiring in church. (External contractor)
9. Reglazing of windows on south aspect of church. (External contractor)

Garden

Regular maintenance was ongoing throughout the year grass and hedge cutting and weeding.

It has been necessary to dispose of the wooden benches as these had become too dangerous to be used. It is hoped to replace these soon. The storage shed is now in very poor condition and will require major refurbishment or replacement.

Projects undertaken in 2025

1. Creation of additional seating area.
2. Waste bin storage area constructed.
3. Anti slip strips installed on ramp

Manse

The window and door replacement programme at the manse was paused in 2025 but has been reinstated for 2026. An electrical inspection and testing will be required to be carried out in 2026.

Keith Hilton

Outreach and Mission

In 2025 we continued to financially support the Falconer Trust (see report below), Alan and Megan Barker (BMS) and Rachel Spencer (GEM) and BESOM, a local charity that supports local people in need.

Rachel Spencer was working in Paris with GEM but has now returned to the UK on secondment. We have also supported the BMS, in particular Alan and Megan Barker who are currently working in Nepal. In 2025 for the first year we have given part of our tithes to BESOM a local charity which supports local people in need - they engage in projects like gardening, decorating etc. They also prepare kitchen packs for single parent families or refugees, sometimes working alongside HOPE in Action.

The Falconer Trust

The Falconer Home, at Kabulamema in the North Western Province of Zambia, is currently home to 55 children. The Falconer Trust is a charity supporting the Home.

Last year the Trust ceased sending parcels of goods to the Home, due to exorbitant costs and ever-increasing complications with the customs process. These complications are highlighted by the fact that the final batch, sent last August, is still snared up in South Africa, while staff at the Home try to get customs clearance finalised.

In November Neil semi-retired from the role of Trust Manager, and now works two days a week instead of full-time. This has been made possible because the parcels aspect of the job has ended.

Projects at the Home currently include the farm, where five hectares of maize is being grown, along with one hectare of vegetables. This enables the Home to be more self-sufficient with regards to food. A girls' dormitory is currently under construction. Progress on this is slow, because work can only continue as and when funds are available.

The Falconer Trust is extremely grateful to all at WBC for their faithful support in both finance and prayer.

You can find out more at www.thefalconertrust.org.uk



Windows being installed in the girls' dormitory.

Neil Starling

Homegroups at WBC

All six homegroups continued to be a great blessing to their members and the wider church in 2025, especially as we navigated significant changes to church routines and meeting locations. They've been invaluable for discipleship, friendship, and mutual prayer. Late in 2025, a member proposed an online Zoom homegroup to support those unable to attend in person due to childcare needs—an exciting development that widens access to small-group fellowship. We therefore began 2026 with seven homegroups involving around 60 people.

Homegroup leaders meet once a term for encouragement and support. Paul updates on the church's vision for homegroups and Gill is available to assist homegroup leaders with any pastoral matters. Our homegrown Bible study materials worked well for us in 2025—tailored to WBC and manageable in length. The Spring 2026 theme, *“The second coming of the Lord Jesus,”* offers a fresh opportunity to explore together the glorious promise of Christ's return and God's unfolding plan for His creation.

Homegroups remain central to WBC's pastoral care and sense of connectedness, and we are deeply grateful to every homegroup leader for their commitment and love in helping this ministry flourish.



“And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one

another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” Hebrews 10:24-25

Vera Cooke and Gill Price

ECO Church



We have now had 4 years of affiliation with the A Rocha charity and with Eco Church. This affiliation goes hand in hand with WBC's vision and mission.

The vision of Eco Church is as follows: 'for churches of all denominations to care for creation as an integral part of loving their neighbours and following God faithfully' (taken from Eco Church website).

At Wymondham Baptist Church, the church vision is centred on elevating and worshipping God in all that we do, engaging with and serving our wider community and looking after our environment and buildings.

Eco church encourages us to express our care for God's creation in the following areas:

- in our worship and teaching
- in looking after our buildings and land
- in engaging with our local community and in global campaigns
- in the personal lifestyles of our congregation

This year, our activities have been more limited due to the exciting building project. But this has given us all a time of rest and focus on God's vision for the next few years at Wymondham Baptist Church. However, the Eco Church team have continued to meet regularly, the garden team have looked after our outside space with such love and care and as a church we are keeping our hearts and minds on worship, service and stewardship.

Here is an overview of what happened Eco Church-wise in 2025 at WBC:

Worship and teaching

- Jan Hodges provided us with beautiful flowers to enhance our worship each week and gave much thought to ensure that both the greenery and flowers were as locally sourced as possible
- On the 23rd March, we were delighted to have Hannah Gray lead our Eco themed service. Hannah is an A Rocha speaker and also coordinates the Eastern Baptist association BUEN meetings (BUEN = Baptist Union Environmental Network). She spoke to us about the work of A Rocha and Eco Church and linked this in with the theme of 'Salt'. It was a really positive and thought-provoking service.



- The 12th October saw a small group of us meet at Ashwellthorpe Woods for an Autumn Worship Walk. The weather was mild and dry, and we all enjoyed a time of praise, worship and prayer together as we walked through the woods.



Buildings and land

- In the garden, early bulbs appeared and later in the year, the wildlife area flourished.
- The raised bed was full of strawberries and herbs, which were great to pick and eat but also attractive to even more insect life.

- This year, we were excited to see that a pair of Great Tits were nesting in one of the bird boxes and on 24th May, Graham was delighted to be able to watch the young birds fledge from the nest.



- With some of the proceeds from our Plant Sale in April, we purchased a bird bath for the garden which will not only be enjoyed by the birds but will help us remember Claire Drake who passed away this year.

Engaging with our Local Community

- On 12th April, we organised a **Seed Swap and Plant Sale**. One of our fellowship, Claire Drake had kindly donated many of her lovely garden pots and plants to WBC and these all went to new homes. Although a small turn out but it was another opportunity to share ideas on growing and caring for our environment.



Personal Lifestyles of our fellowship

- Until the building work started, we had our recycling point in the corridor with the latest information on the board. The latest addition to the scheme was a box for recycling ink cartridges which is now situated in church office. As a team, we are planning to relaunch the recycling when our new building is open again.

- As in previous years, we displayed our Easter and Christmas cards on a communal board which was very well used. Not only does this cut down on the number of cards bought and sent, but it also allows us all to read the heartfelt messages from the senders
- We continued our Uniform Swap scheme. We have a supply of good quality, used uniform from several of the town's schools. Anyone who needs to can come and take items that they need at no cost during Roots hours. They do not even need to bring anything to swap! This will be continued once Roots is open again.
- We continue to include useful eco tips, suggestions and articles in Rooted Life and are always on the lookout for any other ideas for inclusion
- In 2025 we compiled our first Lifestyle Survey which we asked members of the fellowship to complete. This was to prompt and encourage us as individuals to look at our own lifestyles and to ask ourselves.....do our actions and behaviour reflect our words and worship of our Creator? Thank you to everyone who completed the survey and handed it in. We are hoping that this can be an annual activity.
- We produced another Eco calendar which went on sale from the beginning of November. A big thank you to Keith Hilton for his expertise in producing such a lovely calendar and to everyone from the fellowship who contributed by sending in such beautiful photos for us to use.

Finances 2025

Income:

Seed Swap -	£335.25
Ink Cartridge recycling	£18.75
Calendars/Christmas Card board	£154.00
TOTAL	£508.00

Expenditure

Bird Bath	£62.00
Garden items (paving, plants, taps for water butts)	£133.42

TOTAL £195.42

Balance in Fund at the end of the year £379.78

And finally!

As a fellowship, we are hugely supportive and encouraging of each other and once again, we would like to thank everyone who has supported the Eco Church activities and events over this year, both with their prayers, time, skills, and finances. It is very much appreciated.

The team meets about every 6 weeks, and we would be delighted to see new faces or to hear from anyone who has ideas for future projects.

Nicki Waterworth on behalf of the Eco Church Team

Café Church

The Café Church team- Grace, Vic, Owen, Matthew, and welcoming Jan are pleased to report on Café Church during 2025, a year that has brought both opportunities and change.

During 2025 we were delighted to welcome Jan to the Café Church team. Unfortunately, Jan did not have the opportunity to lead a session this year, as planned Café Church services had to be cancelled. This was due to the partial closure of the church building from July onwards while the building extension works began. The nature of Café Church, with its café-style layout and informal seating, has not been possible to replicate within the limited space and altered service arrangements during the building works.

Despite these challenges, two Café Church services were held during the first half of the year. In February, Grace led a session using the film E.T. reminding us to seek 'Childlike faith', and in June Vic led a session using the film Bruce Almighty to highlight that each and every one of us is special to God. As in previous years, attendance remained strong, with numbers comparable to our usual Café Church services. We continue to note that some people attend church specifically because it is Café Church, highlighting its ongoing value as an alternative and accessible form of worship.

The sessions planned for later in 2025 had to be postponed and will now be rolled forward into 2026. These will include Café Church services based on Wallace and Gromit, Toy Story, and The Polar Express. The team are looking forward to delivering these once the building works are complete.

As always, Café Church aims to communicate a clear message from the scriptures, using film and creativity to explore faith in a way that is informal, engaging, and family-friendly. While 2025 has been disrupted by the necessary building work, we are very optimistic about the future. The new space created by the extension will, we believe, enable even better Café Church sessions, offering greater flexibility, improved facilities, and an enhanced welcome for both regular attendees and newcomers.



The team would like to thank the congregation for their continued support with Café Church, it takes a lot of people to successfully deliver each

session and we look forward to it continuing to grow and develop in the years ahead.

Grace Burke and the Café Church team

Home from Home

Home from Home is our Warm Space that we offer to anyone in the community on Thursday afternoon from 1.30p.m.

Each week we offer a welcoming warm space for anyone to come in, enjoy a cuppa, perhaps some toast or a cuppa soup, cake, sausage rolls and biscuits. At the beginning of each session, the team spend time in prayer for those who come in, whether they are part of the church or from the local community. Our aim is make everyone feel welcome.



Normally our sessions would come to an end after Easter and then we would start again in October/November, but for a number of our visitors Thursday afternoon spending time out of their home is a lifeline and they appreciate the friendship, chatting and sharing together, so we decided to continue to the end of May - this was really appreciated especially with the anticipated closure of other activities at the church.

In August/September as a team we started to think about what we would do in October/November and where we might be able to meet. We visited a number of different venues in the town and had thought that using the Abbey halls might be our best option. However, it was then agreed that we could use the church lounge during the building work and so we re-opened in November in our usual space. At this point Kate felt it was time to stand down as part of the team but we have been grateful for her stepping in when one of us is incapacitated. We haven't advertised the Warm Space too widely as there are obviously Health and Safety aspects to consider. However, we regularly have between 12 and 15 visitors who come along and enjoy the food and

drink that is on offer and the time to sit and chat, play cards, do crossword puzzles or jigsaw puzzles. The Thursday before Christmas we enjoyed a time of games, special Christmas food, singing and fun together, sending each person home with a chocolate goody bag, a Christian bookmark and a Christmas bauble and cracker.

We are always pleased to have new people join us and ask that you pray for them that they are aware that God is in our Warm Space and we are there to show them His love. As well as offering them warmth we want each of them to know God's love for them. If you are feeling lonely on a Thursday afternoon why not come along and share in Home from Home.



Val Cook Penny Seall, Rose Kirby and Cathy Finch

Building Project Team Extension

We give thanks to God for the amazing progress we were able to make in 2025. The detail design work was completed, tender documents issued and pricing received from five builders. The lowest price bidder was recommended to us by our architect and contract documents prepared. Meanwhile a combination of our own fundraising and grants from outside bodies provided sufficient funds for us to commit to the building contract with Greystone & Mason in July 2025, with a start date on site no later than 1st September 2025. God has made the impossible possible. Completion is targeted for the Spring of 2026.



Work started with demolition of the two rooms and ground slab that formed a previous small extension, followed by excavations for foundations and a new ground slab laid. Steelwork erection was then completed and used to form the timber framing on which to form the roof, roof lights and glazing and cladding. By the end of the

year, most of the timber framing was complete. Monthly progress meetings have been held with the architect and the builder to review progress and establish information required by all parties. The opportunity was also taken to refurbish the roof over the kitchen and toilet areas (although not directly part of the work required for the Extension). Progress on site has not been as rapid as we would like, but we remain confident that we will be able to reopen in the Spring of 2026.

In parallel with the Extension, we have been working on upgrading the remainder of the church premises, some of which is expected to complete by the time we reopen, and some of which will take place afterwards. An additional planning application was submitted to cover aspects of this work.

A more detailed report is available for those who would like to read it is available from the Church Office.

David Frith



WBC Building Project External Fund-Raising Steering Group (Creating a place for Everyone)

Throughout 2025, the External Fund-Raising Steering Group undertook a comprehensive review of more than 230 potential funding organisations. The principal aim was to identify those whose criteria aligned with the requirements of our capital project, with a particular emphasis on community-focused initiatives and support for vulnerable groups. Each funding body was carefully assessed to ensure compatibility with our objectives and eligibility guidelines.

Following this extensive review, the group submitted applications to 33 grant-awarding bodies. Of these, we successfully secured funding from 13 organisations. For the remaining 20 applications, either the grants were declined, or the outcome remains unknown.

Collectively, these efforts have resulted in a total of £461,638 being awarded in grants to support the building extension project. For a detailed breakdown of these awards, please refer to the summary below.

	Grant Funder	Award
1	South Norfolk Councils Pride in Place (Phase 2 feasibility study funding)	£18,138
2	Congregational & General Charitable Trust	£20,000
3	Community Action Fund	£15,000
4	Paul Bassham Charitable Trust	£2,000
5	Geofrey Watling	£5,000
6	The Leslie Mary Carter Charitable Trust	£5,000
7	Laing Family Trust	£5,000
8	Norwood and Newton Settlement	£30,000
9	Greater Norwich Growth Board Infrastructure Fund	£250,000
10	Joseph Rank	£35,000
11	The Benefact Group	£50,000
12	Garfield Weston	£25,000
13	Wymondham Town Council (for fixtures and fittings)	£1543.50
	Grants Total	£461,638.50

The External Funding Group has provided monthly updates to the Leadership Team throughout 2025, ensuring transparency and continued engagement. Additionally, regular reports have been shared at church membership meetings to keep the wider community informed of our progress and activities.

Next Steps

- Supporting the Vision for WBC: Our focus will remain on advancing the Vision for WBC, particularly as we move forward with the next phase—applying for grants to support the Reduce our Carbon Footprint (RCF) initiative.
- Reporting to Grant Funders: We will continue to provide updates to grant funders regarding the progress of the extension build, maintaining accountability and fostering trust with our partners.
- Outcome Monitoring: The group is committed to developing an outcome reporting tool. This tool will enable us to monitor and assess the use and impact of the extension, helping us create a welcoming place for everyone and allowing the church to track changes and improvements over time.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to those who have contributed to our efforts. Special thanks go to Ray, Grace, David, Cathy, Keith, Paul, and the Leadership Team for their invaluable help, support, and prayers for the External Funding Group.

Please continue to remember us in your prayers as we work to fulfil our shared vision and responsibilities.

Kate Kinsey



Life and Death Course

A group of us from the church joined together to look at matters relating to the end of life, using a course which had been designed following more than a decade of practice. It ran for 6 sessions and covered practical and emotional topics.

A solicitor spoke about Wills and Powers of Attorney and their importance, which was helpful. Several of us have since set up lasting powers of attorney which we had been intending to do.

A representative from Rosedale's guided us through thoughts and plans for funerals. He had us all laughing and it wasn't the slightest bit macabre.

We looked at how we can prepare ourselves and our families for the end of our lives, stressing the importance of talking about these matters, including where we would prefer to die, what music we might like to have during our last days, how we feel about being kept alive artificially. There was much laughter and a few tears but bringing the subject into the open was good.

It is hoped that the course will be run again at some point.

I would like to thank Angela for all her help, especially for her input in poems and prayers.

Christine Spencer

Windmill House

Our team of Mary, Vic, Chris Frith, Doug and I visited Windmill House Care Home 6 times during 2025 going regularly alternate months. We are still the only church in Wymondham to lead worship with a group of residents in one of the lounges. We are always made very welcome by the staff and residents.

Each service lasts about half an hour and follows a simple pattern including familiar traditional hymns, a well known passage of scripture, always the Lord's Prayer and a short Bible based talk. Many of the residents are living

with dementia so it's important to use hymns and Bible events they may remember from Sunday School days or from more recent involvement in church services. Visual aids like an open Bible and a cross, Vic's drawings and relevant items to illustrate the message make it possible for some to actively participate. Celebrating special events in the church calendar, Easter, Harvest and Christmas is always something we find particularly important, and sometimes family members visiting the residents also join us.

On one occasion our homegroup came to Windmill House and took part in the service as an outreach activity. This gave them the opportunity to meet some of the residents and spend time talking to them after the service. This was a good opportunity for our homegroup to gain an insight into this ministry and to give some practical support.



We are never in a hurry to leave at the end of the services as the time we spend sitting talking to people is always appreciated and helps us get to know them better. If you already pray for this ministry, thank you and please continue to pray that we will be a blessing and an encouragement to those who can no longer attend worship in a church building.

Jan Hodges

