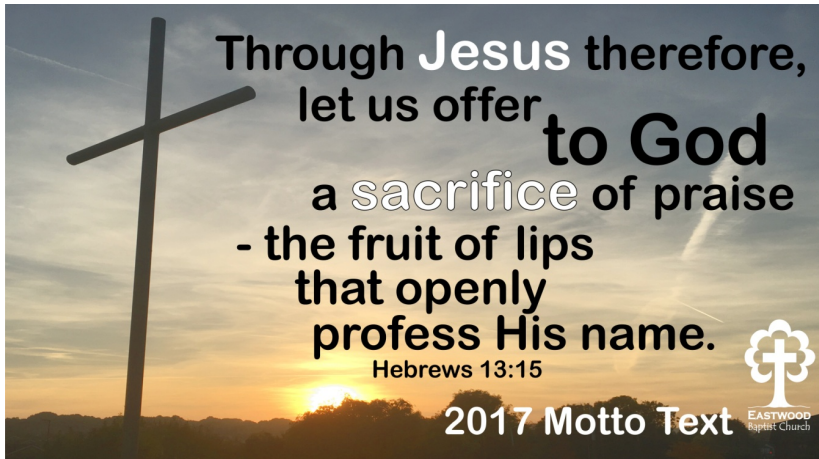


# Secretary's Report

## Val Statt

Our year began on **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017**, we had our new Moto Text for the year:



We also as a church of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ came together in an Act of Rededication, a wonderful start of the year. Our first event was a Quiz Night hosted by Graham Back and Sarah Walker, which was held on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> January, to help Sarah raise money for her trip to Africa, with Zoe

Life. This was well supported and EBC further had communion offerings during March/April for this charity. Sarah spent 3 months helping this charity and we had regular updates from her, what life was like: what she was eating and the friends she made. On her return she and one of her fellow volunteers presented a short film of their work. Well done to Sarah, and for EBC who supported her.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> January, Darren, prepared a Listening Day for all to attend. Darren prepared our thoughts for the day in a letter to everyone, where he encouraged us to listen to God and explained the difference between Listening and Hearing. It was good to see many of us on the day, as we prayed together and looked at key points of Mission, Worship and Sacrifice.

We held a Cafe Style Service on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> January, which many enjoyed going through newspapers and praying about the issues inside. Good to see youngsters involved in this activity.

During **February**, we had delivery of our new Lectern which matched the furniture and hopefully you will agree looks very elegant together with a new microphone. We also introduced our church app.

In **March** we held our AGM and Darren spoke of his vision for the coming year. Carrying on from our Listening Day, with the themes of mission, worship and sacrifice which required investment on our behalf. We are to recognise God in every circumstance and to take time to listen to what God is saying.

Darren encouraged us to even in hard times to focus on God and increase our focus on prayer. This year we will not put so much effort into 'projects' but focus on each other and following God, making sure that Jesus is number one in our lives.

In **April**, we had our Holy week reflections which offered many of us insight into what happened the week before Jesus was crucified. Darren always delivers to us some thought provoking and personal reflections to help us again come to the cross. On Maundy Thursday, again we remember the last supper and how Jesus was betrayed. We left that service in silence having scattered like the disciples did when Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane. Our Good Friday service again brings us to the cross on which Jesus died for each of us. His death and sacrifice gave us our lives today.

On **Easter Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> April**, we celebrated the risen Jesus and also had two baptisms – Molly Pike and Simon Runacre. A wonderful occasion to see both tell their stories of acceptance in our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> April, the ladies enjoyed a lunch at the church. Pauline Warnes and team prepared the tables to receive a bring a share lunch. All enjoyed eating and chatting over cups of tea.

Life in EBC during **May**, including our Church Anniversary celebrating 106 years of worshiping Jesus Christ at EBC. Our Regional Minister Nick Lear came and preached to us on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May. On the previous day the Energise young people raised money for their camp by washing cars and having a coffee morning. The Brigade was away at Clacton for their 'camp' at Pier Avenue Baptist Church, with Melanie and Vinny as Leaders.

On **June 10<sup>th</sup>**, what is coming a yearly favourite of mine is our very own eBand, who did not disappoint us when they put on their show "Desert Island Discs". Songs chosen by each of them took us down memory lane. Well done, to them all.

Another memorable Sunday was on the **2<sup>nd</sup> July**, were it was wonderful to see one our 'sons' of EBC, Youth Brigade Leader David Keeble, go through the waters of Baptism. I have personally seen David grow from 'well before he was born' really to the young man he is today. The service was followed by our annual Church Picnic, were many of us enjoyed some afternoon sun and hear the music from the Bandstand in Priory Park.

It was great also to see so many young people go to SOLID festival (weekend of 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> July, from EBC together with Darren, Melanie, Jan Noble, Andrew Edwards and Sarah Walker. Together they enjoyed the activities and the worship and teaching of this Christian Camp.

Once again, Darren and Melanie opened up the Manse garden to welcome new people to EBC, they shared a barbeque with those who attended and the sun kept shining as all enjoyed the food and conversations. The school year ended with Messy Church being in the church instead of the Park due to weather but all had fun taking part in games.

**August** is a time when many of the clubs had a break, to have a holiday and re-charge their batteries for the new term.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> August, we learned that Arthur Land went to glory, just before his 94<sup>th</sup> Birthday. Our Lord called him home, after many years of service to his Lord Jesus Christ, wife Mavis, and family and EBC. On Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> August we held his Thanksgiving Service, led by Darren.

**September** came and the clubs returned to their normal programmes and towards the end of the month we held our Harvest Weekend on 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> September. It was going to be all about 'bees'. Rosie Midson and Sharon Watkins arranged a wonderful bee themed event inviting the church to make 'bee money hives' to collect money for this worthy cause "Bees Abroad". As you know bees are so important to our ecological system.

At our Members Meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> October, Nick Lear returned to chair our meeting and a vote in favour was taken for Melanie to proceed on her journey in becoming a Baptist Minister.

The launch of our shoebox appeal was on 15<sup>th</sup> October at our Parade Service and you may remember that this was done by the Puppets being present. Thank you to Sharon Watkins for arranging this event.

The Barn was the title 2017 Holiday club in the **October half-term** for 5 – 11 year olds. Once again many youngsters enjoyed hearing stories from the bible, being creative in play, singing and having loads of fun. We also had a mobile farm come along and set up in the car park. I did wonder, how they managed to fit all the animals into one albeit 'large' truck. Everyone worked so well together and great to see the junior leaders too, I helped and age did not come into it. All had fun!! We also had our Alternative Party on the 31<sup>st</sup> October, and Nick Lear came and shared some illusions.

We progressed into **November**; we remembered those who have fallen on Remembrance Sunday on the 12<sup>th</sup> November. As we give those who have given their lives for our freedom, it is also a time, once again to remember that Jesus Christ laid down his life for us all.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> November, we held an Auction of Talents and Gifts. Andrew Statt was the auctioneer. We had so much support for this event, with all sorts of collectable items and not forgetting, offering gifts of their talents. Taking family photos, dog minding, and gardening to name a few. An enjoyable afternoon.

**Our first Sunday in Advent** was on 3rd December, tree in place ready also for the school children's service on the 5<sup>th</sup> December.

During this first week of **December** we learnt of our dear sister Rose Playle had gone to glory. Rose had been a friend of EBC for many years and many would remember her and Reg, her husband when they wheeled in on their mobility scooters. Often having conversations with each other that could be heard by all during the service. Her thanksgiving service was held at EBC on 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2018 by Darren.

At Christmas we saw hundreds of people attend the different services, Nativity Christmas, Carols by Candlelight, Christingle Services on Christmas Eve with the preparing of the Christingles, a record of 200 prepared by a joyful group of volunteers in 90 minutes. Well done to everyone. Rosie Midson also led our early morning service and I led the late Night Service.

To finish the year on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December, our own Neil Keeble led the service at 10.30am with his own brand of sharing the gospel with illusions.

## Home calls

Arthur Land was called home 10<sup>th</sup> August, 2018, who had been a member of EBC for 63 years from February 1954. Serving as a Deacon and Church Secretary, in the 50/60's days when everything was hand written!!!

Later on in the 1990's he was a very successful Gift Aid Secretary. Always active and much loved member of EBC, many of you will have fond memories of all the he did and supporting Love Russia. I regard it such a privilege to have known him.

**Baptisms:** Simon Runacre, Molly Pike and David Keeble.

**Membership:** We welcomed Mrs Rachael Bennett into Membership of EBC on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

## Last words

My report covers some of the highlights of the 2017 which I hope has been an aid to your memories. Further reports are to follow which will give more details.

I would like to thank the Diaconate of EBC for their faithful service and all the different roles they undertake. For everyone, who supports our church in whatever role they play a big thank you to you all.

For our Minister Darren and our Children and Young Families Worker, Melanie Pike for the massive contribution they play in giving so much of themselves in leading our church, giving advice, leading us in the ways of our Lord Jesus Christ week by week.