

## Minister's report for 2022 AGM

### Looking back on 2021

In February 2021 I joined the church and began with a listening exercise - a consultation with all church members in which I tried to speak with those in significant roles and meet with each life group.

From this listening exercise, the Leadership discerned that God was giving us the focus for 2021 of '**Get Connected**' and the following 3 objectives:

1. Help every member of the church CONNECT with God in a fresh way to be released in their gifts and service
2. Develop a new strategy to CONNECT the practical and spiritual needs of local people
3. Develop a new strategy to CONNECT our friends, family and colleagues with Jesus

We achieved this by:

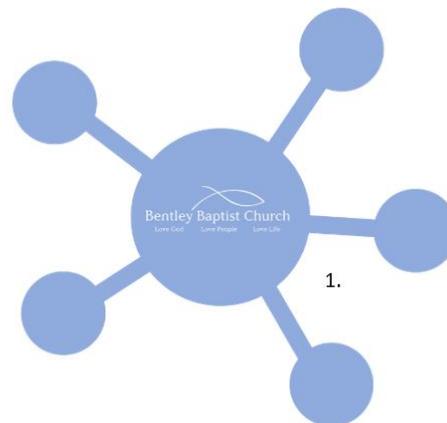
- Creating the **Discipleship Journey Strategy**, showing simple 'stepping stones' on the journey of faith. Each step helps people CONNECT a little more with God and with the church to become disciples who make disciples.
- Creating clarity to understand where *each church ministry* sits in the Discipleship Journey Strategy.
- Meeting in the local park and online to CONNECT with one another during lockdown.
- Resuming onsite services and ministry activities whilst continuing online to ensure our church continues to CONNECT with those not yet comfortable to return to church.
- Employing Hannah Cassell as our Web Resources Leader to improve the way we CONNECT online.
- Running two CONNECT Prayer weeks to encourage and resource people to encounter God.
- Running a successful 'Superhero Party' to CONNECT with dozens of families.
- Running Preaching series with accompanying Life Group studies to help us CONNECT and understand the vision and strategy. These included:
  - 'Covenant: God's good plan to connect with us'.
  - 'Get Connected'. Understanding our 2021 focus.
  - 'Stories worth telling'. How God connected with individuals in the Bible and today.
  - 'Mission Styles'. Understanding how God has made each of us to connect others with Him.

- 'Fear Factor'. Understanding how our connection with God helps us to overcome different fears.
- 'Faith Factor'. Understanding the practical power of Faith that comes from our connection with God.
- 'Connect at Christmas'. A series of messages about God's desire to Connect with us through the coming of Jesus.

As a result of these efforts, many people have responded God's desire to CONNECT with them and given their lives to Jesus. We've seen numerical growth in the gathered church on Sundays and new members of mid-week Life Groups.

We also held a Leader's Away Day at which God revealed a clear picture of the shape of our church in the days to come:

As we attempt to make disciples who make disciples through our discipleship Journey Strategy, our church is to become a **Healthy Hub with Spiritual outposts**<sup>1</sup>. Discerning some of the detail of this vision is a task for the coming season.



### Looking forward to 2022

The Elders believe that our focus for 2022 is from Ephesians 6:10 and the key word is **'BE'**:

**'BE** strong in the Lord and in His mighty power'

In 2021 we received pictures of the future shape of our church and we have a clear strategy to fulfil our vision of 'Make disciples who make disciples', but many of the steps on the journey are unclear and we face several challenges. We will need more than clever ideas and courage!

This year, as we remember to find our strength in God, I believe that His power will be unleashed to guide us in His way.

### Strategic Priorities for 2022

These are not exclusive, but they seem to follow on from our discussions and the path God has laid before us:

1. Discern with the wider church the next step in being a healthy hub with spiritual outposts.
2. Develop Alpha team, run the Alpha course and implement follow-up strategy.
3. Explore, discern and implement a youth ministry strategy.
4. Run 'Know yourself to lead yourself' course(s) to help everyone understand who God has made them to BE and where He might be calling them to serve.