

An underlying enthusiasm for the Word and Spirit to be at the forefront

Encouraging developments at Aldwick Baptist Church in Bognor Regis, West Sussex



Simon Downing and the Leadership Team at Aldwick Baptist Church emerged from the pandemic with a

clear sense that the Holy Spirit was offering the opportunity for a spiritual 'reset'. We had been greatly blessed during the lockdown period in maintaining the 100 or so members of our congregation and also our finances through weekly online Sunday and Wednesday services, supported by pastoral phone calls to every member of the church fellowship. Of course, the services were also shared online with a wider audience – something the church had never done before.

When the church was free to open we were conscious of the needs of our community (who had been cut off from many relationships) and launched in 2021 our 'Love Aldwick' initiative, with regular activities for the community via a number of different groups such as Toddler

Time, cafés, luncheon club, Messy Church and craft sessions, but all with an aim of demonstrating and sharing the love of Jesus with our neighbours. The church also runs quarterly 'Specials' (in 2021 a Treasure Hunt and Cream Tea and in 2022 a World Cuisine and Quiz Night, and recently a Jubilee Pop-Up Vintage Café) all of which have provided a great 'open door' (as the photograph symbolises) for the community to come in.

We have seen the Lord beginning to bless this outreach and the team engaged in it and there are new individuals who have started to attend services, become church members, and deepen their commitment to the Lord. We recently ran an *Alpha* group and, at the café church celebration, six of the seven participants gave testimony to the blessing they had experienced.

The church needs prayer for the development of its work in the community and for additional resources, with youth and vigour to energise it. There is an underlying enthusiasm for the Word and Spirit to be at the forefront of what the church feels called to be and do - particularly as the post pandemic social and financial needs in our community are increasing.

This article was written by Aldwick church administrator Clive Bennett, and was originally shared in the South Eastern Baptist Association news email update. It is republished with permission.

