

This is something that God smiles at - First, 'Thank you!' - Thank you for encouraging us with your custom. This ministry is God's work – to grow his people through Bibles, Books, gifts, cards, teaching resources etc, and to enable others to engage with Him perhaps for the first time. We estimate that at least 70% of all resources that left Bridge Books this year were bought to be given away - and you have been part of this.

Prisoners get theirs, but school children don't - Over 160 libraries in local hospitals, churches, and schools, including 4 schools abroad have received a box full of great Christian books and resources through Bridge Books. Here is a quote from one school:

"They have completely transformed our array of Christian books and are so up to date and modern that the children are showing signs of interest which we have never seen before".

Recently we applied for grants for the 4 Southwest prisons and have been notified they will receive £600 each so providing a very good number of books to go into their libraries and be life changing. However, the 9 schools we applied for didn't do so well. 4 years ago, we were getting grants for £500 per school. Now because of the success of the national funding scheme the 9 schools will only receive £150 each in this round of grants. This amount will provide a rather small box of books.



What we are asking is for you to pray with us. Please pray that at least an additional £900 (addition £100 per school) will become available as soon as possible to enable us to give each school a really good selection of titles for their libraries, so that many more children will get regular opportunities to read and see Christian Bible stories, parables, Action and Minecrafter Bibles in school. Any extra money will be put aside for future grant requests. A quote:

"We cannot thank you enough. We now have a special Christian Book Basket the children take out at playtimes and use in our spiritual garden".

Any financial assistance can be sent to or given into the shop or received into our bank account referencing the Bridge Books Library fund. (08-92-50. Acct no. 68545510). Thanking you in advance for your prayers.

Who can see the future? - Since the start of Bridge Books in 2008 the number of items and value of sales continues to grow. Nearly 25,000 items and over £135,000 in value left us during this past year. Yet, we are not satisfied! The words - 'Prepare for growth' has surrounded everything we have done during these past years and God has blessed the work. However, now we feel hampered!

For the past year we, and many of you, have been praying about the future of the ministry – how to be relevant and still be serving the Christian community in 10 years time.

Option 1) Stay where we are. However, we are maxed out with no more room to add more stock and to better display what we have. Plus, we have very limited office space. Only 2 staff can comfortably work in the office area. At present I (Gary) often need to do my admin and marketing from home - no room in the inn for me! We do need to plan to continue to grow, to better serve the Christian community in Devon and beyond, and so will need space for additional staff (and volunteers) to work in the shop. We also have very limited storage area and are using garage space elsewhere. If we are to move it should be by June next year as our rent agreement is due for renewal, with a natural increase in rent.

Option 2) In an ideal world, to potentially future proof the ministry, could the best way forward be to buy rather than rent a suitable premises? Is this feasible?

If we did move, whether renting or buying, we could only do it if others came and supported the ministry financially - to cover the refurbishment and extra expenses until the new premises got on its feet. This would mean

lots of others getting involved in that vision. Please pray with us that we will hear our Lord's will, and that others will join us to make His plans happen. PTO.

It is still surprising how many do not know -

This year we have done more pop-up shops and bookstalls than ever, working with local churches, Conferences, the Diocese, youth camps, Headteachers, Spree and Edge Fest in Taunton and many more. So, we are getting more and more widely known.

We still have our wonderful part-time staff, and Betty our long-term volunteer, plus this year we have had a small group of volunteers coming in to help out for half days when we are out at bookstalls, which we have really appreciated.



We cannot close without mentioning Christmas. As you have seen we again have a wonderful display of Christmas cards and gifts to benefit you and those around you. However, we are still discovering that many in churches are not aware that Bridge Books is here for them or they have not visited us yet. [Please will you help](#) by telling others and by asking those who do church notices to make a good mention about the wonderful resources (especially the stock of cards, books and gifts for Christmas), all available at Bridge Books for their own encouragement and in spreading the gospel. The more who visit the shop, means many more receiving the story of Jesus.

Other News.

Street Pastors – In October we had a 'Surprise £1 Dip' during 'Christian Bookshop Week'. An additional £110.00 was raised for this valued ministry.

Large Print – One of our best sellers in recent times has been Large print Bibles. Ideal for those whose eyes are getting a little older, and for those preaching/ teaching needing larger print to aid them at the pulpit. Many to choose from.

Take Note – every two months we have a large selection of fine books, music and films all with very special discounts ranging from £1.00 to £8.00. A new selection is now in with exciting titles and lots of choices for Christmas presents. Come and look.

Events – As mentioned we are involved in over 100 days of outside events, where Christian resources of all types are available to buy. Many people find it very helpful to purchase items at these 'pop-up shops'. Talk to us if you or your church would like to have Christian resources available for a special event or on a regular basis. Plus, if you know someone who has a car and would like to help with our outside events please make contact.

Hannah Dunnnett - Over the years Hannah has continued to produce quality items which are bought for personal benefit or as great gifts. She continues to incorporate Scripture in new designs of cards and posters, coasters, tea towels, note cards, notebooks, bookmarks and more. If you want any of her calendars, including her new slim version come soon. They always sell out.

Bible Reading Notes – They help you get closer to God, gain a better understanding of the Bible and wisdom too. If you aren't already into a regular rhythm of reading, come in and view the many options.

Have a great Christmas and every continued blessing for the coming year from all of us on the team.

Gary & Mary



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