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Annual Report for the Year 1994

This report marks two "firsts".

1. It is not a Secretary's Report because we have no Secretary.
2. It could be described as the "Elder's Report because it is in that capacity that I am making it, without all the material that is normally in the mind and at the hands of the Secretary. It will, therefore, be much abbreviated.

Our membership has declined during the year and now stands at 45. Of these 8 now live away from Hebden Bridge and 7 never attend our services. Thus we have an effective membership of 30; a situation which can only give rise to concern. We rejoice to have had during the year one new member. Mrs Christine Smith who was baptised on 6th November. We welcome her with open arms and are delighted that she is entering so actively into the life of the Church. We have lost one member by death, Miss Gwen Uttley, whose life of service has been an example to us all and who, during the time she was at Harehill House never lost her interest in the Church. We have also lost two further members when Charles and Christine Henderson moved to Halifax and started attending a local Church. We not only lost two members when they moved, we also lost a Church Secretary, a Home Mission Secretary, two Deacons, a member of the Music Group and three children from the Sunday School; a grievous blow from which we are still reeling.

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However we are doing God's work and we must endeavour to overcome these set-backs and press on in confidence and faith, relying on His strength to equip us for the future.

What of the year 1994? The work has continued and followed the customary pattern: New Year Covenant Service, Lent Lunches and House Groups, Easter Celebrations, Pentecost, Summer Children's Holiday Club, Harvest and its Missionary connection, Church Anniversary, Advent and finally Christmas. We try with these highlights and other means to expand our work, but it is hard going. We long for an influx of younger people, families with children. We need to make this a matter of urgent prayer.

Which brings me to prayer meetings; 2 a week - average attendance 6 or 7. Does this seem like a Church praying for its work? We could do a lot better - Please think about this.

We have continued our support for other causes: B.M.S. Home Mission, Leprosy Mission, Christian Aid, Spurgeon's Child Care, Bible Society and the Northern Baptist College.

I cannot end this brief report without paying a real tribute to our Minister, Rev. S.J. Kirby, whose hard work, dedication and pastoral care are an example to us all; without his devoted leadership - and all the other assorted tasks he does - we could not carry on. We are indeed very grateful to you for all you do.

Finally we must remember it is God's work we are doing, we commend it to Him and ask for His guidance and blessing on all we do.

S.W.S.