



Annual Report



2022-2023

Director's Report

The last academic year has been really encouraging. It was more 'normal' than the previous three years as there was no pandemic to contend with. The Christmas Journey and The Easter Journey happened as normal, although schools were given the option of accessing the online videos to watch at school or to visit a church. Assemblies continued, and more schools have asked for in-person assemblies as they have relaxed restrictions imposed during Covid.

We completed The Harvest Journey for year 1; our first purely online Journey. Cathy and Natalie wrote the journey, filmed, edited it and produced a teacher's resource booklet and a children's notebook. They worked hard to find age-appropriate activities and crafts which could be tailored according to each child's needs. Positively, one school which we have little contact with, emailed us in August 2023 to ask whether we had a harvest resource for year 1. In September, the journey was piloted in three schools to which we received good feedback.

Although the year was 'normal', with our usual work, we also had to find a new office space and wrestle with depleting finances. The office at St Paul's church provided us with a lot of storage, and after visiting a few different office spaces we realised that we had to 'downsize' (see 'Moving Offices' page). It was hard work, and the three of us based in Stevenage worked extra hours to get the move done, but I'm delighted to say it went smoothly and we have settled in well to The United Reformed Church. Many thanks to those who helped us move physically, as well as those who helped in the run up to the move. In the midst of the move we also sadly said 'goodbye' to Natalie who stopped working for Bridge Builders in June 2023. We pray that her marriage and move to Norfolk bring much joy!

Our grateful thanks go to those who responded to our appeal in February 2023. The trustees did a wonderful job going to many local churches, and the gifts that were given at that point have made a huge difference, so thank you for all your support!

Steph Knell

Director

Moving offices....

This sounds simple but it involved....

Sorting and disposing
of accumulated
resources collected
for over 20 years.

Selling multiple
items, including
furniture, on eBay
and Facebook
Marketplace

Re-organising The
Christmas Journey and
The Easter Journey
resource boxes to be
stored in the garages

Many trips to
charity shops
by volunteers,
staff and
trustees

Organising a table
top sale and running
it over 2 days.

And doing our usual
work ---
**all in 2 days a
week!**

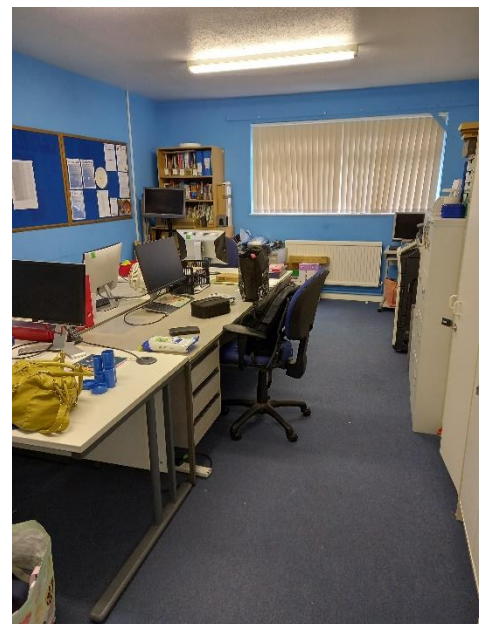
BUT.... The hard work paid off. When we moved to our new offices, the furniture fitted in and we unpacked it all in 2 days. One big answer to prayer was that the printer immediately connected to both the internet and to our computers. Phew!

THANK YOU so much to everyone who helped!

The Old Office on moving day including a manoeuvre to get the stationery cupboard down the stairs!



The New Office at
The United Reformed Church



Building on the success of the Christmas and Easter online Journeys, The Reach project aims to produce an online interactive Journey for each and every year group throughout primary school, reaching upwards of 10,000 children **EACH** year!

The format for the journeys will be three short video clips explaining a Bible based concept followed by three activities to enhance the children's understanding and to encourage them to think about the issues raised. All the content is tied into the Hertfordshire R.E. curriculum.



This year we have focused on producing The Harvest Journey for year one children, to be piloted in schools early in the Autumn 2023 term.

Also, this year The Journey for year six children based on the book of Acts and relating to secondary school transition is nearly complete. This will be piloted in the summer term 2024.

Coming up....

A creation themed Journey for year three children, and life of Jesus Journey for year four children.



TARGET - £21,000



PRAYER



DONATE

Fundraising

We rely on donations to keep our work going. We cover the £8 cost for each child who attends one of our journeys. There are many different ways in which you can support us:

ONE-OFF
GIFT ★



Shopping online, select Bridge Builders as your beneficiary and we will receive a donation for every £1 you spend

If you're a UK taxpayer completing a Gift Aid Declaration means your donation is worth 25% more.



giftaid



Assemblies

Assemblies are a great way for us to spread the message of the Bible through fun, interactive stories and games and they allow us to have regular contact every half term with over 1500 children. Each assembly is only 15 minutes long but we always

- Ask the children questions
- Have children up front to help with anything from holding items for the story through to playing a game
- Talk about Jesus

Our assemblies are designed to not only give the children information about the Bible, but also to inspire them to take the message of the assembly out into their everyday lives.

We want to plant a seed in the hearts and minds of the children that we speak to about the true nature of God, and also encourage them to live out the values that we're discussing in each assembly, such as kindness, change, perseverance, and so much more.

We want our assemblies to have a lasting impact, and for the children to remember them for years to come, which is why we make our assemblies as fun and interactive as possible. We always receive a very warm reception from the children as they remember previous assemblies, and the fun that was had.

In September 2023 Angela joined the Bridge Builders team as ExploRE Manager with a main focus on assemblies. This will allow us to spend more time and attention on assemblies and means we can reach out to schools that we had contact with pre-covid, but who have yet to invite us back, as well as those who haven't had a Bridge Builders assembly for many years.

Please pray that our reaching out will be successful, and that we're able to make contact with more schools and children on a regular basis.



In the Christmas assembly in 2022 the children particularly enjoyed putting together a nativity scene as we told the story of Brother Froilan who carved the figures of the Nativity scene. A beautiful ceramic Nativity set was donated to us just as we needed it for this assembly.



Friends of Bridge Builders

believe Bridge Builders Christian Trust has a significant role to play in Stevenage and the surrounding area and commit to supporting its ongoing work.

- Some Friends of Bridge Builders may choose to offer *practical skills* to support one off events such as cake baking, IT, carpentry, sewing or serving teas and coffees.
- *Prayer support* for all aspects of the Trust's work is vital. Regular updates will be circulated to those Friends who choose to receive them.



If you would like more information, or would like to attend the monthly prayer meetings, please contact the Bridge Builders office. Either phone us on 01438 314314 or email us at admin@bridgebuildertrust.org.uk.

Volunteer



At Bridge Builders our volunteers are a huge part of our ministry. The time and skills of our volunteers are a valuable resource, helping us with a wide range of tasks throughout the year.

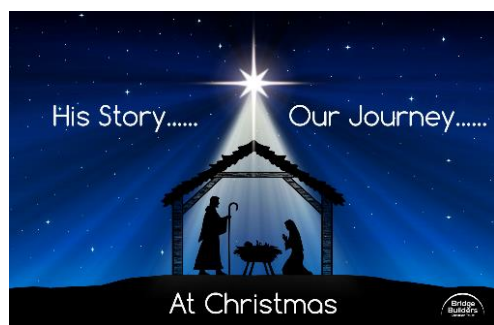
In particular, the REach project needs a number of volunteers, including one off roles such as appearing in one of the videos, to regular weekly volunteering preparing craft materials and other resources for The Journeys.

Contact our office to find out more about our volunteering opportunities. We would love for you to be involved in our ministry work, helping to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with children across Stevenage.

Many Thanks

Broadwater Fair Trading, Bunyan Baptist Church, Churches Together In Stevenage, Grace Community Church, Hertfordshire County Council, Holy Trinity, Prudhoe PCC, Royal British Legion, St. Hugh & St. John, St Ippolyts, St Martin's Knebworth, St. Mary's Graveley, St. Mary's Shephall, St. Nicholas, St. Peter's Church Tewin, St Peter's Church Broadwater, Sirius Digital Solutions, Stevenage Borough Council, Stevenage Churches Inter-denominational Missionary Project, Stevenage Family History Society, Trinity Church Knebworth, United Reformed Church, Verulam Trust and individual donors for your generous support, .

The Christmas Journey



The Christmas Journey is an interactive event for children in primary school year two.

During the COVID pandemic we produced The Christmas Journey as a series of video clips which could be accessed by schools online. In 2022 we offered the schools a choice; to visit a local church hosting this amazing event or the option to use the videos in school (with all craft supplies delivered beforehand).

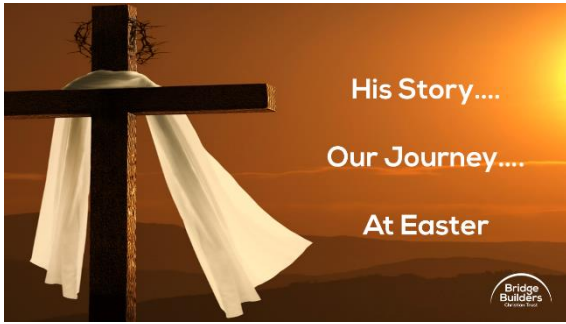
964 children took part in The Christmas Journey

Either way, the children travel back in time to meet the characters involved in that first Christmas event. They meet the shepherds who tell them about the angels, the Wise Men who talk about the star, and Anna and Simeon who express their joy at meeting Jesus. Each child has a special Journey notebook in which they complete an activity after meeting each of the characters to remind them of what was said. They also get to decorate their very own crown. At the finale, they meet Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus before singing a lively song.

We are so grateful to all the volunteers, the hosting churches, and also to the local councillors who donated to fund the craft activities.

One teacher commented : 'All stations are just the right balance of listening/learning activity to keep children's focus. I look forward to this trip every year!'

The Easter Journey



The Easter Journey is an interactive event for children in primary school years five or six.

Like the Christmas Journey, schools were given the option to either attend the event hosted by a local church or to remain in the classroom and use online video clips together with craft materials Bridge Builders provided.

903 children participated in the Easter Journey...

... and they heard about the teachings and miracles of Jesus and the events of Holy Week, starting with Palm Sunday. They found out about Jesus's life, teaching and death, and heard about Jesus's resurrection appearances to his disciples. They were encouraged to think and ask questions, as well as consider and explore: 'Why was Jesus a Saviour?' and 'Why did He die?'

A Catholic teacher said that a highlight was 'To see all of our children engaged in all aspects of all the activities,' and he reflected that the way it was done 'allowed wider, relaxed conversation about the main themes.'

We were very encouraged by feedback from teachers (see quote above) when some churches took up the option to use our online videos rather than having four areas with narrators in each area. The whole class watched each clip before splitting into groups to discuss with a volunteer what they had heard. They each had a notebook as a reminder of the Journey to take back school.



If you wish to have a peek at our Journeys please visit our Bridge Builders YouTube channel.

Psalm 107:29

He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed.

I, like many, have enjoyed being part of The Christmas Journey which delivers the Christmas story to 6-7 year olds. My first experience was one of wonder at how marvellously organised it was. The efforts gone in to creating environments where the characters from the Christmas story would retell their tale to the eager, wide-eyed children.

Bridge Builders is more than the Christmas or Easter Journey, but it may be what most people think of when you mention “Bridge Builders.” Through relationships forged with schools and local church ministers, Bridge Builders are invited to hold assemblies twice a term at primary schools across Stevenage. This allows us to reach out and speak with many primary aged children. This work is immeasurably valuable in spreading God’s word.

This past year, Bridge Builders, like Jesus’ disciples, faced many storms yet held on to faith, and kept their eyes on the Lord. One of the changes is that Anthony, our Chair of trustees, stepped down as a trustee. We are very grateful to Anthony for his work over the years especially steering the ship through the pandemic. I have stepped into the role of Acting Chair and, with the support of Steph as Director and my fellow trustees, we strive to ensure Bridge Builders’ work is a constant presence in schools across Stevenage and neighbouring villages. We can only do this through the dedication of the volunteers who do so much work behind the scenes with preparing craft, packing boxes and more. For that, we as trustees are grateful. The staff who work laboriously in the office do an amazing job to whom we too, are so very grateful for their toil.

There have been staffing changes and location changes bringing much extra work for the volunteers and office team. We give thanks to St Paul’s Methodist for the use of their office space for many years and now look forward to many productive years at the new office location of the United Reformed Church.

We have much to be thankful for and we also have hope for the future. The team have been hard at work on a new virtual Harvest Journey, aimed at 5-6 year olds, which was delivered in September 2023 to a select number of schools as a pilot. The team are hard at work on another journey as part of the REach program.

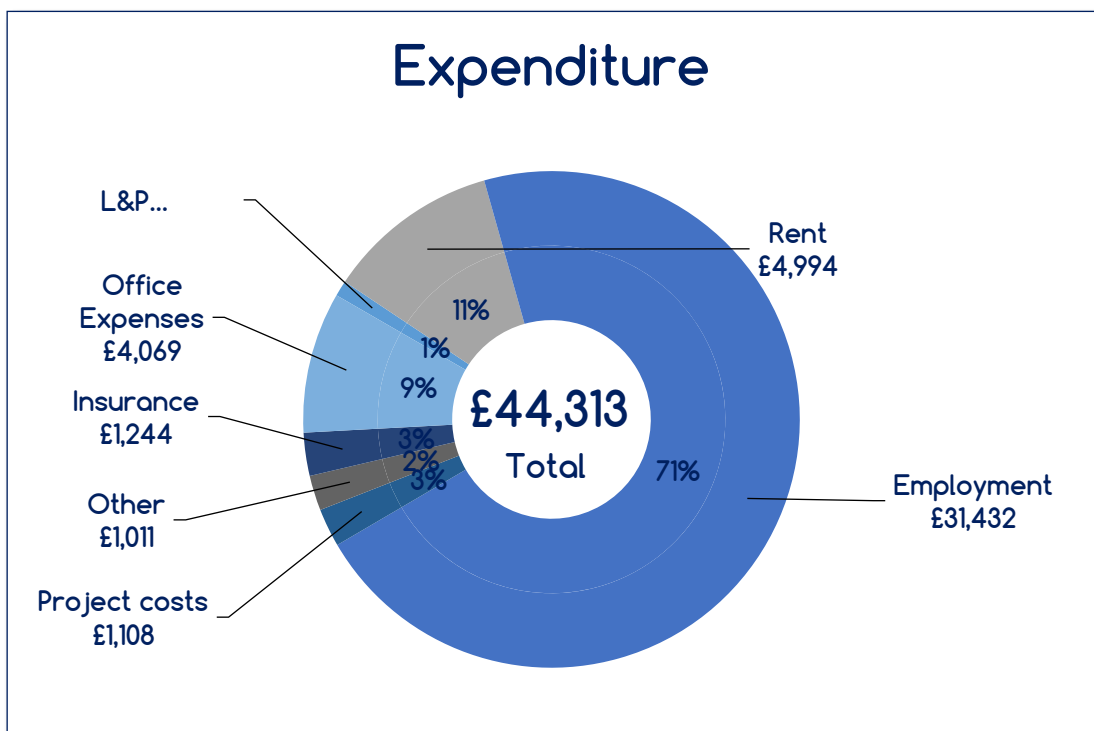
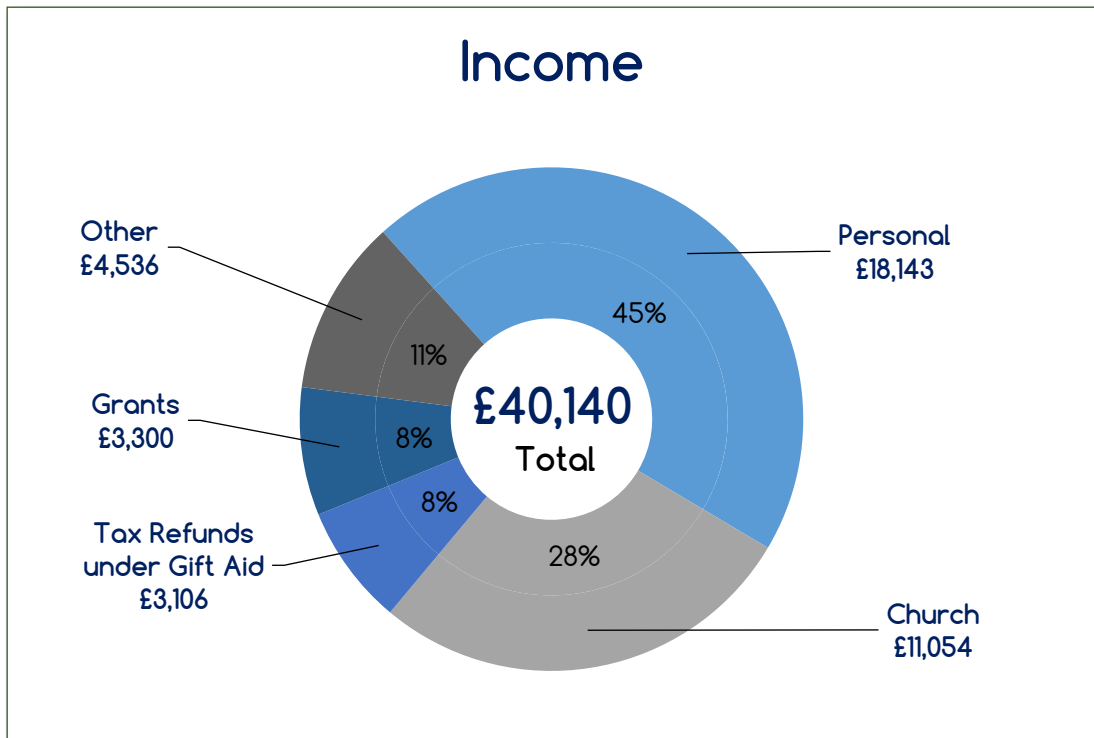
We are ever grateful for the support from local churches, schools, patrons, individual donors, Friends of Bridge Builders... for all their encouragement, prayerful support and to all who play a part within Bridge Builders. We hope you too are encouraged by the work of Bridge Builders and will look to support them generously in whichever way you can. God bless.

Lynne Lee-Diep

Acting Chair of Trustees

Accounts

Income and Expenditure (£) for the Year Ended 31 August 2023



The Team

Staff Team

Mrs Stephanie Knell—Director

Mrs Janice Hawketts—Finance and IT Manager

Mrs Natalie Birch (nee James)—ExploRE Manager (left June 2023)

Mrs Cathy Beach – ExploRE Manager

Mrs Amanda Bryant—Communications Officer and Administrator

Miss Angela Paterson – ExploRE Manager (started September 2023)

Trustees

Mr Anthony Taylor (Chair) (resigned December 2022)

Mrs Lynne Lee-Diep (acting Chair from January 2023)

Mr Peter Gordon

Mrs Penny Paton

Mrs Helen Gale

Rev Margaret MacCarthy

Mr Andrew Brown (started September 2023)



www.bridgebuilderstrust.org.uk



01438 314314

admin@bridgebuilderstrust.org.uk

The United Reformed Church, Cuttys Lane, Stevenage, SG1 1UL

Bridge Builders Christian Trust

REPORTS & ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st AUGUST 2023

Bridge Builders Christian Trust
For the Year Ended 31st August 2023

LEGAL & ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Bridge Builders Christian Trust
United Reformed Church
Cuttys Lane
Stevenage
Herts. SG1 1UL

GOVERNING DOCUMENT Declaration of Trust dated 1 March 2001

CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER 1088885

TRUSTEES

Mr Anthony Taylor (Chair) (Resigned November 2022)
Mrs Helen Gale
Mrs Penelope Paton
Mr Peter Gordon
Mrs Hock Lynn Lee-Diep (Acting chair)
Margaret MacCarthy

BANKERS

Barclays Bank
Unit 3, The Forum Centre
Stevenage, SG1 1ES

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER Mr William Anderson

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Page 9	Notes to the Accounts

Bridge Builders Christian Trust

For the Year Ended 31st August 2023

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

The Trustees have pleasure in submitting the Report and Accounts for the year.

Objects of the charity

To advance the Christian faith

To advance education in accordance with Christian principles

To provide facilities in the interest of social welfare

The vision of the Trust is that all children will have opportunities to explore the values of the Christian faith, and to look forward with hope as they experience Christian love in action.

The mission is to reach out to primary school children, and introduce them to Christian faith and love through conducting Christian assemblies and teaching Christian religious education in schools in conjunction with local churches, and by organising themed visits to churches.

Government

The policy and operating decisions of the charity rest with the Trustees who meet formally six times each year to monitor the activities of the charity, to set policy and overall direction. There are currently five Trustees. New Trustees are appointed by the Trustees who seek committed Christians with broad experience representing a wide range of denominations.

Day to day operations are run by a part time Director supported by a number of part-time highly motivated professionals working in schools or supporting the activities from the central resource centre.

Review of Activities

The last academic year has been really encouraging. It was more 'normal' than the previous three years as there was no pandemic to contend with. The Christmas Journey and The Easter Journey happened as normal, although schools were given the option of accessing the online videos to watch at school or to visit a church. Assemblies continued, with more schools asking for in-person assemblies now restrictions imposed during Covid have been relaxed.

Although the year was 'normal', with our usual work, we also had to find a new office space and wrestle with depleting finances. The office at St Paul's church had provided us with a lot of storage, and after visiting different office spaces we realised that we had to 'downsize'. We had collected many resources over the past 20 years and had to make hard decisions about what to keep and then work out the best way of recycling those which we couldn't keep. It was hard work, and the three of us based in Stevenage worked extra hours to get the move done, but it all went smoothly and we have settled in well to The United Reformed Church. Many thanks to those who helped us move physically, as well as those who helped in the run up to the move.

In the midst of the move we also sadly said 'goodbye' to Natalie who stopped working for Bridge Builders in June 2023. We pray that her marriage and move to Norfolk bring much joy!

Our grateful thanks go to those who responded to our appeal in February 2023. The trustees did a wonderful job going to many local churches, and the gifts that were given at that point have made a huge difference, so thank you for all your support!

The Christmas Journey

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903 children participated in the Easter Journey this academic year and they heard about the teachings and miracles of Jesus and the events of Holy Week, starting with Palm Sunday. They found out about Jesus's life, teaching and death, and heard about Jesus's resurrection appearances to his disciples. They were encouraged to think and ask questions, as well as consider and explore: 'Why was Jesus a Saviour?' and 'Why did He die?'

Some churches used our online videos rather than having four areas with narrators in each area. Instead of moving around the church going from one area to another in small groups the whole class watched each clip together and then the children would go to their group to discuss what they had heard with a volunteer. This worked particularly well as summed up by the feedback given by one teacher: The highlight was 'To see all of our children engaged in all aspects of all the activities,' and he reflected that the way it was done 'allowed wider, relaxed conversation about the main themes.' They each had a notebook as a reminder of their Easter Journey to take back to school.

REach project

Building on the success of the Christmas and Easter online Journeys, The Reach project aims to produce an online interactive Journey for each and every year group throughout primary school, reaching upwards of 10,000 children EACH year!

The format for the journeys will be three short video clips explaining a Bible based concept followed by three activities to enhance the children's understanding and to encourage them to think about the issues raised. All the content is tied into the Hertfordshire R.E. curriculum.

This year we focussed on producing The Harvest Journey for year 1; our first purely online Journey. Cathy and Natalie wrote the journey, filmed it, edited it and produced a teacher's resource booklet and a children's notebook. They worked hard to find age-appropriate activities and crafts which could be tailored according to each child's needs. In September The Harvest Journey was piloted in three schools; the feedback we received was encouraging and so we will be offering this to all our local schools in the Autumn of 2024. Like the previous online Journey events, all the required resources were delivered to the schools in a Bridge Builders' blue bag and links to the online videos were sent directly to the teacher by email.

Further Journeys are planned; For year 6 a Journey based on the book of Acts and relating to secondary school transition which will be piloted in the summer term 2024, A creation themed Journey for year 3 and the life of Jesus for year 4.

Assemblies

Assemblies are a great way for us to spread the message of the Bible through fun, interactive stories and games and they allow us to have regular contact every half term with over 1500 children. Each assembly is only 15 minutes long but we always

- * Ask the children questions

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Please pray that our reaching out will be successful, and that we're able to make contact with more schools and children on a regular basis.

Financial Review

In the year to 31st August 2023 the Trust had income of £40,140 and expenditures of £44,313 leaving a deficit in the year of £4,174.

The income is derived mainly from personal giving including associated Gift Aid £21,249 & from local partnering churches, £11,054. Our REach Project was awarded a £2,500 grant from The Verulam Trust and local councillors gave grants totalling £800 towards purchasing crafts for Christmas Journey.

Expenditure in the year was mainly for payroll costs, £31,432; Rent of Resource Centre, £4,994; Insurance £1,244, HR consultancy £360 & professional services £95.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have decided that a reserve of cash and other current assets less current liabilities is held, sufficient to fund an orderly wind down of the activities of the Charity, should that ever become necessary. At the end of the accounting year unrestricted reserves stood at £14,007 and restricted £9,082. Of the restricted reserves £1,220 is committed to the completion of an IT related project part funded by a grant from Allchurches Trust and the remainder £7,862 is committed to the REach project.

Trustees' Responsibilities

Charity law requires us as Trustees to prepare financial statements for each accounting year which record the income & expenditure of the charity for the year.

We also have a responsibility to safeguard the assets of the charity and to take reasonable steps to prevent fraud or any other irregularities.

Mrs Hock Lynn Lee-Diep
Acting Chair of Trustees

date



23/01/2024.

Bridge Builders Christian Trust

For the Year Ended 31st August 2023

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Bridge Builders Christian Trust for the year ended 31 August 2023 on pages 7 to 9 following.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act;
- or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



William Anderson

Address:

6 The Green

Park Lane

Old Knebworth

Herts. SG3 6QN

date 23rd JANUARY 2024

Bridge Builders Christian Trust
For the Year Ended 31st August 2023
INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

	Notes	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted General	2023 £	2022 £
Income					
<i>Voluntary income</i>					
Grants and gifts received		4,235	28,263	32,498	31,634
Tax refunds under Gift Aid		36	3,070	3,106	3,086
		<u>4,271</u>	<u>31,333</u>	<u>35,604</u>	<u>34,720</u>
<i>Other income</i>					
Interest received		-	63	63	2
Other		775	3,698	4,473	3,031
Total Income		<u>5,046</u>	<u>35,093</u>	<u>40,140</u>	<u>37,753</u>
Expenditure					
<i>Payment in furtherance of the Trust's objectives</i>					
Direct costs	2	33,103	11,210	44,313	41,245
Total Expenditure		<u>33,103</u>	<u>11,210</u>	<u>44,313</u>	<u>41,245</u>
Net Income/(Expenditure)		£ (28,057)	£ 23,883	£ (4,174)	£ (3,492)
Transfers between funds	4	£ 24,776	£ (24,776)	£ -	£ -
Net Movement in Funds		<u>£ (3,281)</u>	<u>£ (893)</u>	<u>£ (4,174)</u>	<u>£ (3,492)</u>
Balances brought forward		£ 12,363	£ 14,900	£ 27,263	£ 30,755
Balances carried Forward		<u>£ 9,082</u>	<u>£ 14,007</u>	<u>£ 23,089</u>	<u>£ 27,263</u>

Bridge Builders Christian Trust
For the Year Ended 31st August 2023
STATEMENT OF ASSETS & LIABILITIES

1. Bank & Cash Balances

	2023	2022
	£	£
Held at Bank	23,563	27,019
Cash float	8	21
	<u>23,570</u>	<u>27,040</u>

2. Other Assets & Liabilities

Assets

Debtors	8	-
Other monetary assets	2,334	2,550
	<u>2,342</u>	<u>2,550</u>

Liabilities

Creditors & Accruals	2,824	2,328
	<u>2,824</u>	<u>2,328</u>

The accounts were approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf

by



Mrs Hock Lynn Lee-Diep (Acting chair)

date

23/01/2024.

Bridge Builders Christian Trust
For the Year Ended 31st August 2023

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1 Accounting Policies

The accounts have been prepared on an accruals basis with a statement of assets and liabilities

2. Direct costs

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Employment costs (Note 3)	-	31,432	31,432	25,895
Rent	4,994	-	4,994	5,327
Insurance	1,244	-	1,244	1,252
Office Expenses	3,953	116	4,069	5,251
Legal & Professional	455	-	455	875
Materials and Resources	4	1,104	1,108	1,902
Independent examination	-	-	-	-
Other costs	560	451	1,011	742
	11,210	33,103	44,313	41,245

The grants to institutions amounting to more than £1,000 in the year were nil.

3. Employees

Employment costs relate to part-time employees, of which the charity had 5 up to 30 June 2023; at 31 August 2023 there were 4 part-time employees.

£175 was paid to Helen Gale (Trustee) and £42.90 paid to Penelope Paton (Trustee) in respect of expenses incurred on behalf of the charity. No amounts were paid or are payable to any other trustee or to any person connected to any trustee.

4. Movement of Funds

	Balance at 31st Aug 22 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31st Aug 23 £
Restricted Funds					
ExploRE	-	2,233	(27,009)	24,776	-
IT Project	1,220	-	-	-	1,220
Reach Project	11,143	2,814	(6,094)	-	7,862
Total Restricted	12,363	5,046	(33,103)	24,776	9,082
Unrestricted Funds					
General Reserves	14,900	35,093	(11,210)	(24,776)	14,007
Total All Funds	27,263	40,140	(44,313)	-	23,089

Bridge Builders Christian Trust

REPORTS & ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st AUGUST 2023

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For the Year Ended 31st August 2023

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For the Year Ended 31st August 2023

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

The Trustees have pleasure in submitting the Report and Accounts for the year.

Objects of the charity

To advance the Christian faith

To advance education in accordance with Christian principles

To provide facilities in the interest of social welfare

The vision of the Trust is that all children will have opportunities to explore the values of the Christian faith, and to look forward with hope as they experience Christian love in action.

The mission is to reach out to primary school children, and introduce them to Christian faith and love through conducting Christian assemblies and teaching Christian religious education in schools in conjunction with local churches, and by organising themed visits to churches.

Government

The policy and operating decisions of the charity rest with the Trustees who meet formally six times each year to monitor the activities of the charity, to set policy and overall direction. There are currently five Trustees. New Trustees are appointed by the Trustees who seek committed Christians with broad experience representing a wide range of denominations.

Day to day operations are run by a part time Director supported by a number of part-time highly motivated professionals working in schools or supporting the activities from the central resource centre.

Review of Activities

The last academic year has been really encouraging. It was more 'normal' than the previous three years as there was no pandemic to contend with. The Christmas Journey and The Easter Journey happened as normal, although schools were given the option of accessing the online videos to watch at school or to visit a church. Assemblies continued, with more schools asking for in-person assemblies now restrictions imposed during Covid have been relaxed.

Although the year was 'normal', with our usual work, we also had to find a new office space and wrestle with depleting finances. The office at St Paul's church had provided us with a lot of storage, and after visiting different office spaces we realised that we had to 'downsize'. We had collected many resources over the past 20 years and had to make hard decisions about what to keep and then work out the best way of recycling those which we couldn't keep. It was hard work, and the three of us based in Stevenage worked extra hours to get the move done, but it all went smoothly and we have settled in well to The United Reformed Church. Many thanks to those who helped us move physically, as well as those who helped in the run up to the move.

In the midst of the move we also sadly said 'goodbye' to Natalie who stopped working for Bridge Builders in June 2023. We pray that her marriage and move to Norfolk bring much joy!

Our grateful thanks go to those who responded to our appeal in February 2023. The trustees did a wonderful job going to many local churches, and the gifts that were given at that point have made a huge difference, so thank you for all your support!

The Christmas Journey

During the COVID pandemic we produced The Christmas Journey as a series of video clips which could be accessed by schools online. In 2022 we offered the schools a choice; to visit a local church hosting this amazing event or the option to use the videos in school (with all craft supplies and teacher resources delivered beforehand).

Either way, the children travel back in time to meet the characters involved in that first Christmas event. They meet the shepherds who tell them about the angels, the Wise Men who talk about the star, and Anna and Simeon who express their joy at meeting Jesus. Each child has a special Journey notebook in which they complete an activity after meeting each of the characters to remind them of what was said. They also get to decorate their very own crown. At the finale, they meet Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus before singing a lively song.

964 children took part in The Christmas Journey this academic year

We are so grateful to all the volunteers, the hosting churches, and also to the local councillors who donated to fund the craft activities

The Easter Journey

Like the Christmas Journey, schools were given the option to either attend the event hosted by a local church or to remain in the classroom and use online video clips together with craft materials Bridge Builders provided

903 children participated in the Easter Journey this academic year and they heard about the teachings and miracles of Jesus and the events of Holy Week, starting with Palm Sunday. They found out about Jesus's life, teaching and death, and heard about Jesus's resurrection appearances to his disciples. They were encouraged to think and ask questions, as well as consider and explore: 'Why was Jesus a Saviour?' and 'Why did He die?'

Some churches used our online videos rather than having four areas with narrators in each area. Instead of moving around the church going from one area to another in small groups the whole class watched each clip together and then the children would go to their group to discuss what they had heard with a volunteer. This worked particularly well as summed up by the feedback given by one teacher: The highlight was 'To see all of our children engaged in all aspects of all the activities,' and he reflected that the way it was done 'allowed wider, relaxed conversation about the main themes.' They each had a notebook as a reminder of their Easter Journey to take back to school.

REach project

Building on the success of the Christmas and Easter online Journeys, The Reach project aims to produce an online interactive Journey for each and every year group throughout primary school, reaching upwards of 10,000 children EACH year!

The format for the journeys will be three short video clips explaining a Bible based concept followed by three activities to enhance the children's understanding and to encourage them to think about the issues raised. All the content is tied into the Hertfordshire R.E. curriculum.

This year we focussed on producing The Harvest Journey for year 1; our first purely online Journey. Cathy and Natalie wrote the journey, filmed it, edited it and produced a teacher's resource booklet and a children's notebook. They worked hard to find age-appropriate activities and crafts which could be tailored according to each child's needs. In September The Harvest Journey was piloted in three schools; the feedback we received was encouraging and so we will be offering this to all our local schools in the Autumn of 2024. Like the previous online Journey events, all the required resources were delivered to the schools in a Bridge Builders' blue bag and links to the online videos were sent directly to the teacher by email.

Further Journeys are planned; For year 6 a Journey based on the book of Acts and relating to secondary school transition which will be piloted in the summer term 2024, A creation themed Journey for year 3 and the life of Jesus for year 4.

Assemblies

Assemblies are a great way for us to spread the message of the Bible through fun, interactive stories and games and they allow us to have regular contact every half term with over 1500 children. Each assembly is only 15 minutes long but we always

- * Ask the children questions

- * Have children up front to help with anything from holding items for the story through to playing a game

- * Talk about Jesus

Our assemblies are designed to not only give the children information about the Bible, but also to inspire them to take the message of the assembly out into their everyday lives.

We want to plant a seed in the hearts and minds of the children that we speak to about the true nature of God, and also encourage them to live out the values that we're discussing in each assembly, such as kindness, change, perseverance, and so much more.

We want our assemblies to have a lasting impact, and for the children to remember them for years to come, which is why we make our assemblies as fun and interactive as possible. We always receive a very warm reception from the children as they remember previous assemblies, and the fun that was had.

In September 2023 Angela joined the Bridge Builders team as ExploRE Manager with a main focus on assemblies. This will allow us to spend more time and attention on assemblies and means we can reach out to schools that we had contact with pre-covid, but who have yet to invite us back, as well as those who haven't had a Bridge Builders assembly for many years.

Please pray that our reaching out will be successful, and that we're able to make contact with more schools and children on a regular basis.

Financial Review

In the year to 31st August 2023 the Trust had income of £40,140 and expenditures of £44,313 leaving a deficit in the year of £4,174.

The income is derived mainly from personal giving including associated Gift Aid £21,249 & from local partnering churches, £11,054. Our REach Project was awarded a £2,500 grant from The Verulam Trust and local councillors gave grants totalling £800 towards purchasing crafts for Christmas Journey.

Expenditure in the year was mainly for payroll costs, £31,432; Rent of Resource Centre, £4,994; Insurance £1,244, HR consultancy £360 & professional services £95.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have decided that a reserve of cash and other current assets less current liabilities is held, sufficient to fund an orderly wind down of the activities of the Charity, should that ever become necessary. At the end of the accounting year unrestricted reserves stood at £14,007 and restricted £9,082. Of the restricted reserves £1,220 is committed to the completion of an IT related project part funded by a grant from Allchurches Trust and the remainder £7,862 is committed to the REach project.

Trustees' Responsibilities

Charity law requires us as Trustees to prepare financial statements for each accounting year which record the income & expenditure of the charity for the year.

We also have a responsibility to safeguard the assets of the charity and to take reasonable steps to prevent fraud or any other irregularities.

Mrs Hock Lynn Lee-Diep
Acting Chair of Trustees

date



23/01/2024.

Bridge Builders Christian Trust

For the Year Ended 31st August 2023

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Bridge Builders Christian Trust for the year ended 31 August 2023 on pages 7 to 9 following.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act;
- or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



William Anderson

Address:

6 The Green

Park Lane

Old Knebworth

Herts. SG3 6QN

date 23rd JANUARY 2024

Bridge Builders Christian Trust
For the Year Ended 31st August 2023
INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

	Notes	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted General	2023 £	2022 £
Income					
<i>Voluntary income</i>					
Grants and gifts received		4,235	28,263	32,498	31,634
Tax refunds under Gift Aid		36	3,070	3,106	3,086
		<u>4,271</u>	<u>31,333</u>	<u>35,604</u>	<u>34,720</u>
<i>Other income</i>					
Interest received		-	63	63	2
Other		775	3,698	4,473	3,031
Total Income		<u>5,046</u>	<u>35,093</u>	<u>40,140</u>	<u>37,753</u>
Expenditure					
<i>Payment in furtherance of the Trust's objectives</i>					
Direct costs	2	33,103	11,210	44,313	41,245
Total Expenditure		<u>33,103</u>	<u>11,210</u>	<u>44,313</u>	<u>41,245</u>
Net Income/(Expenditure)		£ (28,057)	£ 23,883	£ (4,174)	£ (3,492)
Transfers between funds	4	£ 24,776	£ (24,776)	£ -	£ -
Net Movement in Funds		<u>£ (3,281)</u>	<u>£ (893)</u>	<u>£ (4,174)</u>	<u>£ (3,492)</u>
Balances brought forward		£ 12,363	£ 14,900	£ 27,263	£ 30,755
Balances carried Forward		<u>£ 9,082</u>	<u>£ 14,007</u>	<u>£ 23,089</u>	<u>£ 27,263</u>

Bridge Builders Christian Trust
For the Year Ended 31st August 2023
STATEMENT OF ASSETS & LIABILITIES

1. Bank & Cash Balances

	2023	2022
	£	£
Held at Bank	23,563	27,019
Cash float	8	21
	<u>23,570</u>	<u>27,040</u>

2. Other Assets & Liabilities

Assets

Debtors	8	-
Other monetary assets	2,334	2,550
	<u>2,342</u>	<u>2,550</u>

Liabilities

Creditors & Accruals	2,824	2,328
	<u>2,824</u>	<u>2,328</u>

The accounts were approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf

by



Mrs Hock Lynn Lee-Diep (Acting chair)

date

23/01/2024.

Bridge Builders Christian Trust
For the Year Ended 31st August 2023

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1 Accounting Policies

The accounts have been prepared on an accruals basis with a statement of assets and liabilities

2. Direct costs

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Employment costs (Note 3)	-	31,432	31,432	25,895
Rent	4,994	-	4,994	5,327
Insurance	1,244	-	1,244	1,252
Office Expenses	3,953	116	4,069	5,251
Legal & Professional	455	-	455	875
Materials and Resources	4	1,104	1,108	1,902
Independent examination	-	-	-	-
Other costs	560	451	1,011	742
	11,210	33,103	44,313	41,245

The grants to institutions amounting to more than £1,000 in the year were nil.

3. Employees

Employment costs relate to part-time employees, of which the charity had 5 up to 30 June 2023; at 31 August 2023 there were 4 part-time employees.

£175 was paid to Helen Gale (Trustee) and £42.90 paid to Penelope Paton (Trustee) in respect of expenses incurred on behalf of the charity. No amounts were paid or are payable to any other trustee or to any person connected to any trustee.

4. Movement of Funds

	Balance at 31st Aug 22 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31st Aug 23 £
Restricted Funds					
ExploRE	-	2,233	(27,009)	24,776	-
IT Project	1,220	-	-	-	1,220
Reach Project	11,143	2,814	(6,094)	-	7,862
Total Restricted	12,363	5,046	(33,103)	24,776	9,082
Unrestricted Funds					
General Reserves	14,900	35,093	(11,210)	(24,776)	14,007
Total All Funds	27,263	40,140	(44,313)	-	23,089