

**UNION ROAD COMMUNITY CHURCH
(OSWALDTWISTLE)**

REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

**YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024
(Registered Charity Number 1093218)**

UNION ROAD COMMUNITY CHURCH (OSWALDTWISTLE)

REPORT AND ACCOUNTS - 2024

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UNION ROAD COMMUNITY CHURCH (OSWALDTWISTLE)

TRUSTEES' REPORT

YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

Charity Registration Number: 1093218

The Trustees of Union Road Community Church (Oswaldtwistle), Lancashire ("the Church"), formerly called "The Christian Institute Church (Oswaldtwistle)", are pleased to present their annual report and financial statements for the accounting year, 2023-2024, according to the format outlined in the Charity Commission's guidelines.

Structure, Governance and Management

The charity is an independent evangelical church. In summer 2023 our application to join the Assemblies of God (AoG), a network of Pentecostal churches, was formally accepted, superseding our long-standing membership of the non-denominational Evangelical Alliance. We have been based in the small town of Oswaldtwistle in East Lancashire since the Church's foundation in 1901, and have continued to exercise an active Christian ministry in the local and wider community. In August 2015 we appointed the Rev. Arnot Bridges as a part-time Senior Team Leader (and later Associate Team Leader), who has now relinquished formal leadership responsibilities. We made a further appointment in April 2022, engaging the Rev. Duncan Allton, initially as an Associate Team Leader and in November 2022 recognised as our Senior Team Leader and paid a full-time salary. We have recently appointed Mrs. Alison Allton as a Senior Team Leader in a part-time salaried capacity, with both employees supported by the voluntary efforts of our Leadership Team and our faithful, committed, members. Following the adoption of the new Constitution, our key governing document, by the membership on 23rd June 2002 and the subsequent registration of the Church with the Charity Commission, all those formally and actively exercising leadership are now recognised as Trustees. An amendment to the Constitution was approved by the membership on 9th September, 2018, to set up a new Leadership Team consisting of at least five persons which superseded the traditional distinction between the roles of elders and deacons and has enabled us to develop a more flexible and effective structure to lead the Church. The Leadership Team in 2023-2024 consisted of the following individuals and roles:

Rev. Duncan Allton – Senior Team Leader
 Mrs. Alison Allton – Treasurer (from Feb. 2024), Senior Team Leader (from May 2024)
 Rev. Arnot Bridges – (on sabbatical May 2023, resigned as Trustee Nov. 2023)
 Mrs. Angela Bridges
 Mrs. Ann Flood (provisional – confirmed May 2024)
 Dr. Mark Haydock
 Mr. David Legg
 Mrs. Dawn Preston
 Mrs. Heather Roberts – Treasurer (resigned Feb. 2024)
 Mr. Norman Sucherzewski (provisional – confirmed May 2024)
 Mrs. Barbara Sucherzewski (provisional – confirmed May 2024)

Appointment Process: New Team Leaders are chosen by consensual agreement of the existing Leadership Team following consideration of the views of the wider membership. All nominations of the Leadership Team are ratified by members at a full meeting.

Decision-making Procedures: The lifting of all Covid-19 restrictions (see previous Trustees' Reports) allowed us to resume our normal pattern of internal decision-making throughout 2023-24. The Team Leaders met in person at least once a month to provide spiritual oversight and direction for the Church and to administer our day-to-day practical needs and our financial and property resources. Whenever possible during the year, the whole Leadership Team sought to discuss specific objectives and strategies for the future, to engage in training and skills enhancement, and to review and, where necessary, update procedures, policies and governance structures. In addition, the Trustees meet when required to make major decisions related to the Church's buildings, other assets, and liabilities. The Constitution specifies that formal members' meetings are held at least twice per annum for the leadership to inform and consult members about the Church's affairs and for the opportunity to vote on particular issues and recommendations.

UNION ROAD COMMUNITY CHURCH (OSWALDTWISTLE)

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

Risk Assessment: Because of the inevitable risks associated with the Church's programme of activities for children and young people, especially in the current climate of heightened concern over child safety, we require full DBS disclosures for any person involved with these ministries, as set out in the Church's Child Protection Document. Because the Church's worship services and other activities are open to the general public, the Trustees ensure that any buildings we own or use are covered by Public Liability insurance, and that any employees are similarly protected against third party claims..

Charitable Aims and Activities

The general aims of the Church are fivefold, as defined in the Constitution:

- The promotion of God's glory.
- The furtherance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- The salvation and discipling of eternal souls.
- The support of the needy.
- The service to the local community.

We have recently adopted this summary of our constitutional aims: "Union Road Community Church aims to preach, teach and outwork the Gospel of Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit."

Review of Achievements and Performance

In the 2022-2023 Trustees' Report, the Leadership Team defined the following objectives for the Church in 2023-2024:

- 1) It was hoped that in the long-term the Senior Team Leader's salary would be built up to a level commensurate with pastors and ministers with equivalent responsibilities in other churches and denominations, and that our paid staff would be expanded to develop specialist ministries, requiring a strengthening of the Church's financial base and continued support from our members.
- 2) The membership structure would be kept under review by the Leadership Team, with the objectives of encouraging a faith-centred model of discipleship and also recognising the contribution of attendees and volunteers who are not yet formal members.
- 3) We would continue to embed the policy of "continual development", not only of future leaders, but of members/attendees.
- 4) A further objective was the growth of family-based activities, extending beyond the monthly "All Age Worship" services into several regular ministry areas: Messy Church; the Food Bank; Noah's Ark, where we wanted to focus more attention on parents and grandparents.
- 5) We also hoped to develop wider ministry teams for several activities: Noah's Ark; the children's work; technical systems (on-line streaming and sound/projection desk), with potential for youth participation.

Significant progress has been made by the Church in achieving most of these objectives during 2023-2024. Like many other faith communities, the Church was significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, but had largely recovered during this period, allowing it to focus on its core mission. A recurring theme has been organic growth in several areas of the life and wider ministry of the Church, which the Leadership Team did not necessarily plan or even foresee.

UNION ROAD COMMUNITY CHURCH (OSWALDTWISTLE)

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

- The Rev. Duncan Allton continued as Senior Team Leader in a full-time salaried capacity, following his appointment in November 2022. The Rev. J Arnot Bridges ministered as Associate Team Leader in a non-salaried capacity until taking a sabbatical in May 2023 and later stepping down as a Trustee. We were also hoping to appoint Mrs. Alison Allton as a Senior Team Leader, and this was confirmed at a members' meeting in May 2024.
- In terms of the objective of using the Food Bank as a pastoral/missional base of ministry, with potential for an "organic church" development, we have continued to build on the progress reported in the 2022-2023 Trustees' Report. We have been encouraged that more Food Bank clients have been asking for aspects of pastoral care, ie. counselling, advice & prayer for healing and situational needs, and that attendance at meetings for prayer and mutual ministry before the Food Bank sessions on Tuesdays and Saturdays has also grown in 2023-24. The Leadership Team believes that these activities form the nucleus of an "organic church" for Food Bank clients and service team members which could expand further as an internal missional congregation, reflecting the value of "belonging before believing". In addition, the significant increase in the use of the Food Bank presents a number of practical and financial challenges, and so we will continue to explore and review ways to better manage demand, as well as ensuring we can offer clients the high quality of food, particularly fresh fruit and vegetables, they rightly expect.
- A similar potential for internal development continues to be explored with our Noah's Ark meetings for pre-school children and their mothers, fathers and carers. Organic growth here in 2023-2024 has also underlined the importance of "belonging before believing" and the pastoral/missional base of ministry as core values for the fellowship. We have been encouraged as well by the growth of other aspects of our children's work, particularly on Sunday mornings, linked to several young families having joined us for worship recently.
- Following the end of the Covid-19 restrictions, we renewed contact with Moor End Primary School which the Church has "adopted" for the purposes of ongoing spiritual, pastoral and community care. In 2023-24 we hosted well-attended Messy Church events, leading to some significant pastoral conversations. We will continue to cultivate our relationship with Moor End, with the possibility of Messy Church events developing into a "pastoral hub" based in the school community.
- Ongoing relationships with White Ash Primary School have developed into a regular Friday AM "Story Time" in the Church building where pupils with special educational needs from a mix of two classes, together with staff members, enjoy an interactive session followed by basic refreshments.
- We have continued to host a small group of post-16 SEN pupils from Broadfield School who come and do teacher-supervised cleaning after the Tuesday AM Food Bank, enabling them to achieve a Community Service Certificate. Our relationships with both SEN schools, which often struggle to find organisations & venues to accommodate their pupils for community-based activities, have developed as unplanned "organic" extensions of the Church's mission to serve the community and support the needy.
- Our on-line community, which developed during the successive Covid-19 lockdowns, when we live-streamed Sunday services, was sustained as a significant part of the Church's ministry during the year, with 85 subscribers, 308 videos of our services and an average of 27 views per video on our YouTube channel by October 2024. The feedback on our live-streamed or catch-up services has been consistently positive despite audio hitches, now largely resolved. We have an active presence on Facebook too, with 857 followers and 3,200 interactions over the year up to October 2024.

UNION ROAD COMMUNITY CHURCH (OSWALDTWISTLE)

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

- Undergirding this growth in 2023-2024 has been the centrality of prayer in the life of the Church, whether within the Leadership Team, during our monthly Communion services which have developed into times of participatory prayer ministry, before the Food Bank sessions and other regular activities, or at the Church prayer meeting after the Saturday Food Bank regularly attended by 10-15 people and focussing on both global/national issues and individuals/families within the local community.

Plans and Objectives for 2024-2025 and beyond

- 1) We will emphasise the model of "organic church" to develop our collective life and ministry, with the hope that this growth will become self-sustained and self-replicating.
- 2) A key priority will be the growth of family-based activities, including Noah's Ark (pre-school infants), the Children's Church (aged up to 11), and the Youth Group (aged 11-15). Our expectation is that family growth will support the organic growth of several regular ministry areas.
- 3) We will continue and extend the policy of continuous professional development, not only of future leaders but also of members/attendees, for example the Tuesday "Full Picture" meetings (previously known as the "Mentoring Group") provides opportunities and a safe environment to grow ministry skills, to encourage our development as disciples, and to enlarge our view of the Church's mission within our community.
- 4) We will continue to emphasise the development of wider teams for several areas of ministry, such as Noah's Ark and the children's work. Our model is the Ephesians 4:11-12 church, working actively and encouraging the exercise of spiritual gifts to build up the whole Body
- 5) We will seek new opportunities to plant organic congregations both inside the Church, such as the Food Bank (now called "Food Market"), and outside in the local community.

Financial Review

General Fund: In 2023-2024, unrestricted funds income, primarily from members' direct contributions, was £35,061 and expenditure (including depreciation) amounted to £34,573, leaving a surplus of £488. During this financial year the Trustees have continued to manage the higher running costs associated with inflation, especially of energy bills, and with more intensive use of our building following the lifting of all Covid-19 restrictions.

Gift Aid: Members who are eligible taxpayers are encouraged to join the Gift Aid scheme, which enables us to reclaim tax from the government pertaining to relevant donations.

Reserves Policy: Unrestricted liquid funds are needed to sustain and develop the day-to-day operations of the Church. The Trustees' policy is that unrestricted reserves should be managed, firstly, to avoid the need to realise fixed assets for the Church's current use, and, secondly, to cover at least 6 months' current expenditure, especially the salary of employees. The level of reserves is reviewed regularly by the Trustees, usually once a month.

UNION ROAD COMMUNITY CHURCH (OSWALDTWISTLE)

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)

YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

Financial Review (continued)

In the light of the above information, the Trustees are satisfied that the Church is financially able to meet its regular commitments and liabilities in the next accounting year, 2024-2025. The Trustees have continued to assess monthly any major financial risks to which the Church may become exposed, concerning both our day-to-day general work and, especially, the building project.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:

By Duncan Allton

Duncan Allton

Dated: 27th January 2025

**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINER TO
THE TRUSTEES OF UNION ROAD COMMUNITY CHURCH (OSWALDTWISTLE)**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2024 which are set out on pages 7 to 11.

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 trustees 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.

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and the seeking of explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- 1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act;
- 2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- 3) the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a "true and fair view" which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

Carlton G Cooper

.....

27th January 2025

Carlton G. Cooper, FCA

61 Woodfield Avenue
Accrington
Lancashire
BB5 2PJ

UNION ROAD COMMUNITY CHURCH (OSWALDTWISTLE)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

		Unrestricted funds £	2023 Restricted funds £	Total £	2023 Total £
INCOME	Note				
Offerings, collections & legacies	2	34,671	-	34,671	26,145
Foodbank donations and grants	3	-	21,683	21,683	22,331
Noah's Ark toddler group		-	979	979	1,091
Other income		150	-	150	150
Investment income		240	-	240	76
Total income		35,061	22,662	57,723	49,793
EXPENDITURE					
Charitable activities					
Salaries and pension		18,500	-	18,500	18,516
Missionary, workers support and other causes		-	-	-	380
Church events		-	-	-	-
Depreciation		761	6,648	7,409	7,531
Telephone and internet		317	-	317	388
Repairs and outside maintenance		2,928	-	2,928	939
Insurance		1,522	-	1,522	1,376
Light and heat		7,885	-	7,885	2,891
Bank charges		150	-	150	144
Licences and subscriptions		877	-	877	749
Teaching, training, etc		55	-	55	150
Sundry expenses		1,578	-	1,578	1,525
Foodbank expenses		-	23,051	23,051	17,012
Noah's Ark toddler group		-	789	789	814
		34,573	30,488	65,061	52,415
Governance Costs					
Professional fees		-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-
Net incoming/ (outgoing) resources for the year		488	(7,826)	(7,338)	(2,622)
Transfers between funds		649	(649)	-	-
Total funds brought forward		107,497	430,798	538,295	540,917
Total funds carried forward		108,634	422,323	530,957	538,295

In 2023 restricted funds income of £23,422 was received and expenses of £24,630 were incurred.

UNION ROAD COMMUNITY CHURCH (OSWALDTWISTLE)

BALANCE SHEET

31ST MARCH 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	6	513,027	519,480
Current assets			
Debtors		4,090	3,947
Cash at bank and in hand		18,790	16,853
		<u>22,880</u>	<u>20,800</u>
Liabilities: amounts falling due within one year			
Creditors and accruals		4,950	1,985
		<u>4,950</u>	<u>1,985</u>
Net current assets		17,930	18,815
Net assets		<u>530,957</u>	<u>538,295</u>
Funds			
Unrestricted – General Purposes	7	108,634	107,497
Restricted	7	422,323	430,798
		<u>530,957</u>	<u>538,295</u>

Approved by the Trustees on **27th January 2025** and signed on their behalf by:*Angela Bridges*.....
Mrs A Bridges – Trustee

UNION ROAD COMMUNITY CHURCH (OSWALDTWISTLE)

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

1. Accounting policies

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: "Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" ("the Sorp") and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The particular accounting policies are described below.

a) Accounting convention

The accounts are prepared under the historical cost convention.

b) Donations

- i) Donations and gifts under deeds of covenant, together with the associated income tax recoverable, are recognised as income when the donation is received.
- ii) Other donations and gifts received are credited to the income and expenditure account in the period they are received.

c) Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost of the asset over its useful economic life as follows:

Land	-	nil
Buildings	-	2% per annum
Equipment	-	10%-20% per annum

2. Offerings, Collections & Legacies

	2024	2023
	£	£
Offerings, covenants and other collections	34,251	26,145
Legacy	- =====	- =====

3. Foodbank Donations and Grants

Included within Foodbank Donations and Grants is £13,000 (2023 - £15,000) of monies received via agencies which administer and distribute government funds.

4. Expenditure

	2024	2023
	£	£
Included within expenditure for the year are the following costs:		
Staff costs	18,500	18,516
Reporting accountants' fees:		
- Independent Examination Fee	- =====	- =====

There was 1 employee during the year (2023 – 2).

UNION ROAD COMMUNITY CHURCH (OSWALDTWISTLE)

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

5. Trustees' remuneration, expenses and other transactions

One of the Trustees, the senior team leader, received remuneration as disclosed in note 3 above. No remuneration or reimbursement of personal expenses was paid during the year to any other trustee or to any person known to be connected with any trustee.

In common with most charities the Trustees make donations to the charity.

6. Tangible fixed assets	Land and buildings £	Fixtures and equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At 1st April 2023	605,050	56,081	661,131
Additions	-	956	956
Disposals	-	(1,012)	(1,012)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31st March 2024	605,050	56,025	661,075
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Depreciation			
At 1st April 2023	88,428	53,223	141,651
Charge	6,746	663	7,409
Disposals		(1,012)	(1,012)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31st March 2024	95,174	52,874	148,048
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net book value			
At 31st March 2024	509,876	3,151	513,027
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31st March 2023	516,622	2,858	519,480
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

UNION ROAD COMMUNITY CHURCH (OSWALDTWISTLE)

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

7. Statement of funds

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Tangible assets	97,198	415,829	513,027
Current assets	16,386	6,494	22,880
Liability: amounts falling due within one year	(4,950)	-	(4,950)
	<u>108,634</u>	<u>422,323</u>	<u>530,957</u>
	=====	=====	=====

The restricted funds comprise amounts raised, given or transferred from unrestricted funds toward the building project, Noah's Ark toddler group and the Foodbank.