

# THE SQUARE METHODIST CHURCH, DUNSTABLE

England & Wales · Charity number 1126936

## Details

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Status	Registered
Legal form	Previously excepted
Registered	2008-11-26
Register	<a href="#">View on the Charity Commission register</a>

## Contact

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Address	6 Friars Walk Dunstable LU6 3JA
Phone	07702012755
Email	<a href="mailto:thesquaretreasurer@outlook.com">thesquaretreasurer@outlook.com</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.squaremethodist.org">www.squaremethodist.org</a>

## Activities

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**Objects:** The purposes of the Methodist Church are and shall be deemed to have been since the date of union the advancement of -(a) the Christian faith in accordance with the doctrinal standards and the discipline of the Methodist Church;(b) any charitable purpose for the time being of any Connexional, district, circuit, local or other organisation of the Methodist Church;(c) any charitable purpose for the time being of any society or institution subsidiary or ancillary to the Methodist Church;(d) any purpose for the time being of any charity being a charity subsidiary or ancillary to the Methodist Church.

**Activities:** Christian worship and service on Sundays and during the week held on church premises. Bible study, prayer and fellowship groups meeting at church or in member's homes. Social activities and groups for specific age groups - children, young people and adults, and all age activities.

## Classification

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- **How:** Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** Religious Activities
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

## Geography

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- **Area of benefit:** DUNSTABLE
- Bedford
- Central Bedfordshire

## Finances

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Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-08-31	£167,312	£99,908	-	-
2024-08-31	£93,085	£109,494	-	-
2023-08-31	£97,097	£90,988	-	-
2022-08-31	£96,464	£84,878	-	-
2021-08-31	£71,751	£81,398	-	-
2020-08-31	£88,296	£89,566	-	-

## Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Abel Bunu		2023-06-01
BRIDGET ELIZABETH CALVERT		
Carole Denise Pratt		2014-01-27
Debbie Mitchelmore		2022-07-31
Dr Maria Simon		2021-08-01
IAN STUART ELLIS		2011-10-01
IVOR JOHN MITCHELMORE		
Jenny Smith		2014-09-01
Linda June Berry		2022-07-28
Marjorie Samudzimu		2020-09-28
PEARL MATHIESON		2014-03-11
Rev Claudia Lupi		2022-09-01
SHARON ANDREW		
STEPHEN FOX TURNER		
Stephen Parkinson		2020-09-01
Wendy Armiger		2015-09-01

**THE SQUARE METHODIST CHURCH, DUNSTABLE**

England & Wales - Charity number 1126936

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# Accounts

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# **ANNUAL TRUSTEES REPORT FOR THE SQUARE METHODIST CHURCH**

September 2024 - August 2025

**Name of Church:** The Square Methodist Church, Dunstable

**Address:** Ashton Square, High St South, Dunstable LU6 3SN

**Correspondence address:** as above

**Name of person to whom correspondence should be addressed:**

Rev Claudia Lupi

**Names of those who have served as managing trustees in the year (Church Council):**

Rev Claudia Lupi                      **[Minister]**

**[Church stewards]**

Debbie Mitchelmore

Wendy Armiger

Jenny Smith

Abel Bunu

Maria Simon

**[Treasurer]**

Jenny Frith

**[Pastoral committee secretary]**

Bridget Gavanga

**[Council secretary]**

**[Council members elected by the AGM]**

Sharon Andrew

Marjorie Samudzimu

Linda Berry

Jan Rollings

Stewart Mitchelmore

Barrie Wells

Armund Kouadio

Adelaide Nartey

**[representatives from areas of church life]**

Ian Ellis

**[Property team]**

Carole Pratt

**[S Club]**

Debbie Mitchelmore

**[Safeguarding Officer]**

Ivor Mitchelmore

**[Worship Leader]**

Wendy Armiger

**[Worship Leader]**

Tania Stanford

**[Circuit Steward]**

Ivor Mitchelmore

**[Circuit Steward]**

## **Structure**

The Square is part of the South Bedfordshire Methodist Circuit. The decision-making body is the Church Council, but all members are involved in the running of the church and setting its strategy at the General Church Meeting.

## **Aims and Mission**

A new Vision Statement was developed and approved in the autumn of 2024:

*We are an inclusive, dynamic, flourishing Christian community seeking to radiate God's love for all, through our worship, prayer and service, to both the local community and the wider world.*

## **Review of the year (September 2024 – August 2025)**

### ***Sunday worship services***

Traditional services, led by our own minister, visiting ministers or lay preachers, take place on all Sundays except the first Sunday of the month when we hold a Café style worship, Café Church. Traditional services may be partially interactive, with time for conversation, as well as the use of pictures and videos for reflection. Café church also takes place on the third Sunday of the month giving the congregation a choice of either attending the traditional service or the Café Church. Café Church is an opportunity for outreach into the community and is well attended by church members and people from our local area. The atmosphere is very warm and welcoming, and this type of worship is very popular. For most services we have approximately 60 people attending. As of 31st October 2025, our community roll stood at 228, an increase of 16, of which 99 are Church members, an increase in one from the previous year. During the year these numbers continue to fluctuate.

### ***Other forms of mission or 'church' (e.g. church-led community groups, etc.)***

A number of different groups/clubs run by members of the church family operate within the church:

- **Pastoral care** - We have a team of Pastoral Visitors and Group Leaders who have pastoral care alongside our minister, Reverend Claudia Lupi. Pastoral Visitors and Group Leaders have a list of church members whom they contact regularly. The Pastoral Team meet quarterly to discuss the Pastoral situation of the Church. During this last year we have established a Pastoral Care Policy to help us carry out this work. We have also instigated a Church Prayer Diary which is now being produced quarterly. The minister offers pastoral care and practical help to those in need, both Christians and Muslims, as well as members of the wider community who seek support.
- **Baptism, Membership and Bible classes** - We continue to run these classes during the year and are led by the minister and an accredited local preacher. These offer teaching on the Bible, as well as Protestant history, basic theology, and ethics open to all those who seek to be baptised, to become church members or to learn more about Methodism.  
We have baptized 13 asylum seekers and 3 of them were also welcomed as Church Members between Sept 2024 – August 2025. Bible classes are also taking place for the Asylum Seekers we support.
- **'House groups'** - We have three house groups who meet in members' homes:
  1. **Priory House Group** - Priory House Group's aim is:
    - To encourage and support each other in our daily lives

- To help each other to grow in prayer, faith and spiritually
- To pray for our church and each other

Priory House Group meets in member's homes on a Tuesday evening between 7.30pm and 9.00pm. The group find support and fellowship which supplements our Christian living during the week.

Typical activities include Bible studies for Lent and Advent. These were based on resources from the Methodist Church. The house group discovered 'Conversations Against Mundanity' which encouraged them to talk about various topics from a chosen theme. Priory House Group watched two inspiring films: 'Ruth and Boaz' and 'One Life'. Creative sessions involving Bible Journalling using mix media and collages were popular as were the social buffets for members and family at Christmas and during the summer. Priory House Group also hosted several fund-raising activities to raise funds towards the church kitchen project.

- 2. Buttercup House Group** – This group meets once a month, usually on the third Wednesday of the month. It is a small group of seven members, mostly of advancing age but have been delighted to have recently welcomed a much younger new member. There is friendly and informal discussion around biblical and current social and community issues and how they relate to our faith in Christ. Twice a year, in the summer and at Christmas time we meet for a social, just chatting and eating!
  - 3. Villager House Group** – This is now a small group of three members who meet monthly. The group takes turns to lead the meeting which usually consists of prayers, a hymn, a religious topic or a quiz followed by discussion and refreshments. A buffet and social afternoon are enjoyed in December and in the summer.
- **Meeting Point** is a Bible study and fellowship group that meets fortnightly on a Tuesday morning at the church made up of eight people of both church and community members. Our minister, Reverend Claudia Lupi, leads the session once a month with a variety of topics. It is a time to reflect on the Bible on the personal journey of believers, and to share support, solidarity and encouragement. In other sessions, the group has used some reflections by Sheridan Voysey, based on the Sermon on the Mount.
  - **Prayer Meeting** – This takes place on the first Monday of each month where a small group meet to share private and shared prayer for the church, our local community, and the wider world.
  - **'Ladies Thursday Club'** – Ladies Thursday Club' meet twice a month and enjoy refreshments, develop friendships, and have a varied programme of visiting speakers, chair exercises. crafts, game afternoons and quizzes. The group has 30 members made up of ladies from our church, the community, and ladies from other denominations and to anyone who wants to join, though most of the members are 70+.
  - **Armchair exercise group** – Between September 2024 and September 2025 the group met weekly for chair exercises. Any money that we accrued over and above expenses was donated to the church. The exercise group ended in September 2025 and are hoping to integrate it into the Ladies Thursday Club.
  - **Gather Round** – Gather Round is a social group that welcomes new members. Meetings are held at 2pm on the second Tuesday in the month. Over the last year the programme of events has included such things as tabletop games, a well contrived quiz, a picnic in the park, dinner out, and a variety of discussion matters.

As with all sociable groups of elderly people a good deal of nattering, reminiscing and tea drinking also features.

- **The Square Drama Circle** is a multi-generational community group of people who love to act and bring productions to the local community. In October 2024 we put on a production called Agatha Crusty which was well attended. We received two nominations for this production from NODA who are the UK's leading amateur theatre organisation. In March 2025 we performed our family pantomime Goldilocks and the Three Bears, which was well received by all families and adults that attended. Here's to lots more drama and laughter in years to come.
- **Gardening Team** – Following on from our Garden Project, where both the gardens on the north and south sides of the church have been developed, a small team meet on a Wednesday afternoon to care for the gardens. Members of the community often stop to comment on how nice the gardens are looking. As we are in the town's Heritage Action Zone, Dunstable Town Council have continued to provide on-going maintenance advice for our garden spaces. Our gardens were again part of the town's entry to both Anglia in Bloom and Britain in Bloom. We once again received a Thriving Neighbourhood Award from The Royal Horticultural Society. We also achieved 2nd place in Best Community Garden, and we came first in the 2025 Wheelie Fantastic competition.
- **The Living Room** – This has now been running for four years, opening every Friday from 10.30am to 1.30pm. Our wonderful volunteers set up the Assembly room every week with board games, sewing, knitting, newspapers, books, colouring, painting, crafts etc. We provide fresh rolls and toast, with the local Co-op donating end of shelf-life pastry goods every week. Numbers attending vary from week to week, with our guests tending to be asylum seekers living locally, some adults with learning disabilities, members of the church, passers-by and a core group of regulars who have been coming for some time. We are able to provide gifts for our guests at Christmas and Easter.
- **Asylum Seekers** - Help is still being provided by the church for many of the people staying at the local hotel. This help comes in a wide range of areas, practical help, wellbeing, administration, Pastoral support etc. Some attend the weekly Living Room at the church. Some have also been encouraged to attend weekly Bible classes, which has led to baptisms led by Rev. Claudia Lupi. We not only have a good number of volunteers supporting asylum seekers at the Living Room, but also two Care4Calais volunteers who are members of the church. They support hotel-based asylum seekers and refugees who have settled in the UK.
- **Square Singers** – is an informal group of singers established in 2024 and have taken part in various services throughout the year. The group also took part in the local Twilight Market in December 2024 and provided singing in the church during the Festival of Carols where members of the public joined in.

### ***Activities aimed at young people***

- **'S Club'** meets on Sunday mornings when we cater for children and young people to learn and share about Jesus' love. We have two groups: under 11's and 11–18-year-olds with a good number attending the older group. Our sessions are based on a Bible reading. The two groups come together for Big Breakfast every two or three months when they enjoy food and activities together, which have included making a Fair Trade poster, planting daffodils, creating a display for the Festival of Carols, creating an Easter Garden, had an Easter egg hunt and an Easter Quiz and fun and games outside in the park opposite the church. The young people

have participated in services including the Nativity Service where they took part in a sketch about two lads 'Searching for Christmas'.

- **3-Generate** – Eleven young people, attended 3-Generate, a National Youth event, at the NEC in Birmingham, in October, where there is time for interactive Bible studies and worship as well as a full programme including crafts, reflective opportunities, sporting and physical activities.
- **Friday Youth club** continued to meet monthly on a Friday evening running from 6.30pm-8.30pm on the last Friday of each month. Typical activities included: preparations for a youth weekend run by the Methodist Church: 3Generate, stained glass window workshop, and Easter crafts session, games and sports evenings, and a chip chomp survey! Each evening included fellowship and refreshments which enjoyed by all.
- **Uniformed groups:**
  - **The Scout Group** includes Squirrels aged 4-6, Beavers aged 6-8, Cubs aged 8-10 and Scouts aged 10-14. The sections have all been up to various exciting things. The Cubs and Scouts each had a summer camp filled with activities at Tolmer Scout Activity Centre. The Beavers and Squirrels joined together to go to Climb Quest in Milton Keynes. As normal we ran our jumble sale in March and made a good profit which will be going towards a group camp in 2026.
  - **Guiding groups** include Rainbows aged 4-7, Brownies aged 7-10 and Guides aged 10-14. The Brownie pack celebrated their 90<sup>th</sup> birthday at the local campsite when activities included archery, making friendship bracelets and racing balloons along a pieces of string. The Brownies were treated to a Birds of Prey display when the girls were able to hold different species of owls. Previous Brownies that had gone through the unit joined the celebrations with the lighting of a birthday cake.  
Parties were held to celebrate Brownies that had received their gold awards. Due to a shortage of girls and few on the waiting list a decision was taken to close the unit in July 2025. Prior to their final evening lots of exciting activities had been planned including a visit to a local swimming pool with inflatables, pottery painting, trampolining, bowling and a chip shop romp around the town tasting chips and voting to see which chips were the best.  
The final evening consisted of water games, a treasure hunt and picnic at the local campsite where the girls performed two farewell songs to the parents who had been invited to join them.  
For the Brownie leader this meant the end of 48 years enjoyment with the pack, something she will never forget.  
The Brownie pack kindly donated £500 to be used to purchase two microwaves for the new kitchen at the church.

### **Outreach events**

The Festival of Carols 2024 ran on Friday and Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> December in conjunction with the town's Twilight Market when we had a steady flow of visitors into the church.

The children's crafts were very popular with craft supplies being donated by volunteers.

Volunteers distributed Christmas service flyers.

Earlier in the year, a quiz raised £275 for children's outreach books, with £276 spent on books, which were given to children both visiting and passing by our church.

We held a craft stall run by a member of our church who kindly donated the profits of £540.46 to our Kitchen Project.

Our refreshment stall donations raised £108.76.

### ***Resources***

We have a large church building with a number of halls to the rear, which are available to hire to the local community. The halls are used regularly by our own church groups, but we also have regular bookings with Slimming World, Local History Society and U3A groups, plus numerous short-term lets from both individuals for parties and organisations for events. We have now taken on a new regular booking with a Romanian Church hiring both the church and some of our halls for use for their services twice a week.

We are located in the centre of town with a large town centre car park adjacent to the building. The church itself is able to accommodate a large number of people and hosts concerts by Vauxhall Male Voice Choir, Shambles Band, drama productions amongst others.

Lettings income is a vital and necessary part of being able to run and maintain the buildings. An Administrator is employed part-time to manage existing lettings and seek to promote further lettings.

During the year 2024-2025 our church fundraising project was for our Kitchen Project. Two grants were applied for in the spring/summer of 2025, and we hope to be able to progress the kitchen refurbishment in early 2026. The refurbished kitchen will then be made available to the wider community through our hall lettings.

At the Annual Church Meeting in May 2025, it was suggested that the work needed on our Church Tower become the new project, but having been blessed with a generous gift this put us in a position where these works could be progressed and grants applied for. We hope to be able to progress these repairs in the near future.

Our organ had to undergo a costly repair during the year, and fundraising has taken place to cover this cost.

### ***Looking forward***

The Property Team continue to care for our extensive and aging Grade II listed building which presents many challenges for us.

We continue to be challenged by the fact that we have an aging congregation with limited capacities and abilities to carry out the many weekly housekeeping tasks of the church. We continue to be encouraged as we welcome newcomers to the church.

We have consulted with the church to review our practices around the worship life of the church, and many suggestions have been taken on board and implemented. This is an on-going process.

**THE METHODIST CHURCH**  
**STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS**

THE METHODIST CHURCH, THE SQUARE	Church
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FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 August 2025

SOUTH BEDFORDSHIRE	Circuit	Circuit no.	34/04
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Registered Charity - Charity Registration number

1126936
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If not a registered charity **His Majesty's Revenue and Customs Gift Aid number**

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(The HMRC number is equivalent to a registered charity number in terms of evidence of charitable status and may be used to give to donors or grant funders wishing to see evidence of the organisation's charitable status. Methodist charities in England and Wales that are not registered charities are excepted from registration under Statutory Instrument 2014 No.242)

Minister:

REV. CLAUDIA LUPI
-------------------

Church Stewards:

Wendy Armiger
Debbie Mitchelmore
Abel Benu
Jenny Smith
Rachel Bond (2nd Steward)
Pierre Ricco (2nd Steward)

Treasurer:

DR MARIA SIMON
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SECTION A		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
		£	£	£	£
a1	<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>Note</b>			
a2	Offerings and Tax recovered	56977		56,977	61,302
a3	Bank and CFB interest and Investment income	1183		1,183	1,489
a4	Lettings	31079		31,079	15,394
a5	Other receipts	49248	28825	78,073	14,900
a6	<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>138,487</b>	<b>28,824</b>	<b>167,312 (a7)</b>	<b>93,085</b>

SECTION B					
b1	<b>PAYMENTS</b>				
b2	Circuit Assessment or Share	60954		60954	58,937
b3	Donations	200		200	25
b4	Repairs and Maintenance	6535	4,474	6535	18,472
b5	Utilities (Insurances, water charges, heating & lighting)	18333		18333	20,236
b6	Property employment costs			9137	
b7	Other payments	9137	275	4474	11,824
b8	<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	<b>95,159</b>	<b>4,749</b>	<b>99,908 (b9)</b>	<b>109,494</b>

SECTION C						
c1	<b>NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>(a6-b8)</b>	43,328	24,075	<b>67,403</b>	(16,409)
c2	Total funds brought forward from last year		48,504	2,189	<b>50,693 (c6)</b>	68,020
c3	<b>Sub total</b>	<b>(c1+c2)</b>	91,832	26,264	<b>118,096</b>	<b>51,611</b>
c4	Transfers and adjustments			(39)	<b>(19,832) (c7)</b>	(918)
c5	<b>TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR</b>	<b>(c3+c4)</b>	<b>91,832</b>	<b>26,225</b>	<b>98,264 (c8)</b>	<b>50,693 (c6)</b>

SECTION D			
<b>FOR INFORMATION ONLY: MONEY RECEIVED AND PASSED ON TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS</b>			
d	(these amounts are not to be included in total receipts/payments figures above)		
d1	Balance brought forward from last year	£ 39	£ 10
d2	Offerings/Gifts - received for external organisations	385	1,897
d3	Offerings/Gifts - passed to external organisations	424	1,868
d4	<b>BALANCE STILL TO BE PAID</b>		<b>39</b>
	(d1+d2-d3)		

**SUMMARY OF CHURCH ACCOUNTS AND INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS REPORTING TO THE CHURCH COUNCIL**

**SECTION E**

**Please follow the Guidance Notes to complete this page**

Summary of the Church accounts for the year ended 31 August 2025 and Internal Organisations reporting to the Church Council/Church Meeting. Note that the funds of an Internal Organisation would normally be Restricted funds unless it could be clearly shown that they could be used for any Methodist purpose. This section must be completed to arrive at the gross income and expenditure totals of the Church. If gross income exceeds the Accruals threshold, then the Accruals method of accounting AND A DIFFERENT FORM must be used to report the accounts (see Methodist website). Please refer to the guidance notes regarding transfers between the District and connected District Organisations.

INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS	Receipts	Payments	Net Receipts/ Payments	Adjustments	Opening balances	Closing balances
e1 <b>SQUARE DRAMA CIRCLE</b>	1,389	3,757	(2,368)		5,251	2,883
e2 <b>LADIES THURSDAY GROUP</b>	1,076	980	96	1	1,038	1,135
e3 <b>S CLUB</b>	250	312	(62)	(1)	1,379	1,316
e4 <b>SQUARE FC</b>					113	113
e5						
e6						
e7						
e8 Sub total of Internal Organisations funds	2,715	5,049	(2,334)		7,781 (e11)	5,447 (e12)
e9 <b>Church accounts (totals brought forward from page 2 - totals column)</b>	167,312 (a7)	99,908 (b9)	67,404	(39) (c7)	50,693 (c6)	118,058 (c8)
e10 <b>TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH</b>	170,027	104,957	65,070	(39)	58,474 (x)	123,505 (y)
	<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>				

Continue on a separate sheet if necessary and bring the totals forward

**SECTION F**

**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**

**CHURCH - CASH FUNDS HELD at 31 August 2025**

	OPENING BALANCES	CLOSING BALANCES
f1 Cash in hand		
f2 Bank Current Account	24,613	69,971
f3 Bank Deposit Account		
f4 Central Finance Board	26,080	28,107
f5 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes		19,980
f6 Other funds		
f7 <b>SUB TOTAL - Church accounts</b>	<b>50,693 (c6)</b>	<b>118,058 (c8)</b>
f8 Total funds held by Internal Organisations (the closing balance total from above) (e12)	<b>7,781 (e11)</b>	<b>5,447 (e12)</b>
f9 <b>TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH</b>	<b>58,474 (x)</b>	<b>123,505 (y)</b>

**SECTION G**

**OTHER ASSETS and LIABILITIES**

	At 1 September 2024	At 31 August 2025
g1 Investments (include Endowments)		
g2 Land & Buildings (see notes re Insurance value)	10,193,940	10,459,018
g3 Other Assets	203,879	209,181
g4 Loan(s) - show amount outstanding at year end		
g5 Other Liabilities		

f4 Include only Funds held at the Central Finance Board

f5 Include only Funds held at Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes

g1 Include any other investments (not the cash element of TMCP trusts accounts this is included in line f5)

Name of Church ...THE METHODIST CHURCH, THE SQUARE..... No...1126936.....

## Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these Receipt and Payment based accounts for the year to 31 August 2025 have been prepared from the records of the Church and that they include all funds under the control of the Church trustees.

Signature of treasurer ..... *M. T. Simon* ..... Date.....30.09.25.....

Name and address of treasurer .....DR MARIA SIMON.....

...34 CLARIDGE CLOSE, LEIGHTON BUZZARD..... Post Code.....LU7 4TW...

### Presentation to the Church trustees

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2025 will be presented to the meeting of the Church trustees held in October 2025.

Signature of the Chair of the meeting ..... *Claudia Lupi* .....

Name of the Chair of the meeting ...Rev. Claudia Lupi..... Date .....

## Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

...The Methodist Church, The Square...

Charity Number ...1126936.....

### Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the The Methodist Church, The Square for the year ended 31 August 2025 set out on pages 1 to 5. As the Church'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 Church'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.

\* delete or circle as appropriate

Name of Church ..... THE METHODIST CHURCH, THE SQUARE..... No .....

**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 (other than that disclosed below\*) which give me cause to believe that in any material respect:

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

I have/have not\* obtained independent verification of all investments with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes or held in other trusts, bank balances and funds at the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church which are individually in excess of £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) at the balance sheet date.

Signature of independent examiner ..... 

Name of independent examiner ..... C. J. SHEEHAN

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner ..... Chartered Accountant

Name of firm (where appropriate) .....

Address ..... 88 Goswell End Rd, Harlington, Beds

..... Post Code LUS6NX

Date ..... 25/10/25

\* delete or circle as appropriate

**THE SQUARE METHODIST CHURCH, DUNSTABLE**

England & Wales - Charity number 1126936

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# Accounts

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# **ANNUAL TRUSTEES REPORT FOR THE SQUARE METHODIST CHURCH**

September 2023 - August 2024

**Name of Church:** The Square Methodist Church, Dunstable

**Address:** Ashton Square, High St South, Dunstable LU6 3SN

**Correspondence address:** as above

**Name of person to whom correspondence should be addressed:**

Rev Claudia Lupi

**Names of those who have served as managing trustees in the year (Church Council):**

Rev Claudia Lupi                      **[Minister]**

**[Church stewards]**

Debbie Mitchelmore

Wendy Armiger

Jenny Smith

Rachel Bond (stood down November 2023)

Pierre Ricco (stood down November 2023)

Abel Bunu (appointed May 2024)

Maria Simon                              **[Treasurer]**

Jenny Frith                                **[Pastoral committee secretary]**

Bridget Gavanga                        **[Council secretary]**

**[Council members elected by the AGM]**

Sharon Andrew

Bridget Calvert

Barrie Wells

Jenny Smith

Pearl Mathieson

Stephen Parkinson

Linda Berry

**[representatives from areas of church life]**

Ian Ellis                                    **[Property team]**

Carole Pratt                               **[S Club]**

Stephen Turner                          **[Musical Director]**

Debbie Mitchelmore                  **[Safeguarding Officer]**

Ivor Mitchelmore                      **[Local Preacher]**

Wendy Armiger                         **[Worship Leader]**

Terry Sissons                            **[Circuit Steward]**

## **Structure**

The Square is part of the South Bedfordshire Methodist Circuit. The decision-making body is the Church Council, but all members are involved in the running of the church and setting its strategy at the General Church Meeting.

## **Aims and Mission**

Our church mission statement:

*We are a town centre church aiming to radiate God's love, as revealed in Jesus Christ, for the local community and the wider world.*

*We seek to help people in their search for God through our worship, prayer and action.*

## **Review of the year** (September 2023 – August 2024)

### ***Sunday worship services***

Traditional services take place on all Sundays except the first Sunday of the month when we hold a Café style worship, Café Church. Café church also takes place on the third Sunday of the month giving the congregation a choice of either attending the traditional service or the Café Church. Café Church is an opportunity for outreach into the community and is well attended by church members and people from our local area. The atmosphere is very warm and welcoming, and this time of worship is very popular. For most services we have approximately 60 people attending. As of 31st October 2023, our community roll stood at 212 of which 98 are Church members. During the year these numbers continue to fluctuate.

### ***Other forms of mission or 'church' (e.g. church-led community groups, etc.)***

A number of different groups/clubs run by members of the church family operate within the church:

- **Pastoral care** – A team of Pastoral Visitors and Group Leaders has now been established who offer pastoral care alongside our minister, Reverend Claudia Lupi. Pastoral Visitors and Group Leaders have a list of church members whom they contact regularly. The Pastoral Team meet quarterly to discuss the Pastoral situation of the Church. A new Pastoral Secretary was appointed in March 2024.
- **Baptisms, Membership and Bible classes**  
Baptism and Membership classes were held early in 2024 and following this five people were welcomed as Members of the church including one asylum seeker. Four lady asylum seekers have been baptized during the year September 2023 to August 2024.  
Bible classes have also taken place for the Asylum Seekers we support.
- **'House groups'** – We have three house groups who meet in members' homes. Two groups, which are small in number, meet monthly to share bible studies, prayers and fellowship. The third group meet on a weekly basis where they start by sharing their week, then follow on with a programmed activity and finish off with prayer time and a cup of tea/coffee. This group has been inspired by Indian craft work and enjoyed outings to exhibitions at St Albans Cathedral and held social buffets.

- **Meeting Point** is a Bible study and fellowship group that meets fortnightly on a Tuesday morning at the church. Our minister, Reverend Claudia Lupi, leads the session once a month with a variety of topics. In other sessions, the group has used some reflections by Sheridan Voysey, based on the Sermon on the Mount.
- The **Gather Round** group is another group who meet at the church once a month to enjoy fellowship and support each other. Activities have included discussions on television programmes, playing board games, sharing hobbies, interesting occasions and experiences.
- **Prayer Meeting** – This takes place on the first Monday of each month where a small group meet to share private and shared prayer for the church, our local community, and the wider world.
- **'Ladies Thursday Club'** meet twice a month and enjoy refreshments, develop friendships, and have a varied programme of visiting speakers, crafts, game afternoons and quizzes. The group has 30 members made up of ladies from our church, the community, and ladies from other denominations.
- **Armchair exercise group** meets weekly and is open to anyone who wants to come along for some armchair exercise and provides an opportunity to meet, find company and friendship and share any problems they may be having.
- **The Living Room (Warm Space)** is open every Friday from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm, and offers a variety of refreshments, including soup, filled rolls, bread, cakes, biscuits, and drinks. Additionally, it features a nail bar, jigsaws, games, and craft resources. A diverse range of guests have visited, including refugees, rough sleepers, adults with learning disabilities, as well as members of our church and local community who come in to meet friends or have a chat.
- **The drama group** is a multi-generational group of people living in and around Dunstable. In November 2023 they performed Golden Days, a huge musical production performed in the church when they were very fortunate to be joined by special guest, Claire Moore, a renowned West End singer and actress.
- **Gardening Team** – Following on from our Garden Project, where both the gardens on the north and south sides of the church have been developed, a small team meet on a Wednesday afternoon to care for the gardens. Members of the community often stop to comment on how nice the gardens are looking. As we are in the town's Heritage Action Zone, Dunstable Town Council have continued to provide on-going maintenance advice for our garden spaces. Our gardens were again part of the town's entry to both Anglia in Bloom and Britain in Bloom. We once again received a Level 4 – Thriving Neighbourhood Award from The Royal Horticultural Society.
- **Asylum Seekers** – A small group of church members provide English lessons on a weekly basis to asylum seekers staying at one of our local hotels. The asylum seekers have come from far and wide. Our service has also extended to providing clothing and hospitality, as well as setting up a home once asylum has been granted. As a church, we have welcomed four ladies who were baptized following the baptism classes. Other asylum seekers have come to our warm space, 'The Living Room'. This has helped some to integrate with our local church family and the wider community. The Reverend Claudia Lupi graciously opens her home to welcome asylum seekers, offering them individualised pastoral care with deep compassion and commitment. In addition to spiritual support, she actively assists

with their practical and personal needs, making calls to schools, corresponding with local councils when needed and serving as a mediator in their initial contact with legal professionals.

- **Square Singers** – an informal group of singers formed to take part in the Festival of Carols in December 2023. The group became established in 2024 and took part in various services and a local outdoor community event in August 2024.

### ***Activities aimed at young people***

- **'S Club'** meets on Sunday mornings when we cater for children and young people to learn and share about Jesus' love. We have two groups: under 11's and 11-18 year olds, and our sessions are based on a Bible reading. We have a good number of young people attending the older group. The two groups come together for Big Breakfast every two or three months when they enjoy food and activities together, which have included making an Easter Garden, a scavenger hunt, a Pearl race using marbles, and writing a Peace prayer.
- **3-Generate** - Eight young people, accompanied by three leaders, included the minister, attended 3-Generate, a National Youth event, at the NEC in Birmingham, in October, where there is time for interactive Bible studies and worship as well as a full programme including crafts, reflective opportunities, use of technology, sporting and physical activities.
- **'Youth Club'** meets once a month on a Friday evening with a team of leaders which includes the minister, the Reverend Claudia Lupi, and features food, fun, and fellowship. The programme consists of spiritual input and reflection, as well as a pasta meal, pancakes, Indian snacks and games such as giant Jenga, an art session, and parachute games.
- **Uniformed groups** include Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, Squirrels, Guides, Brownies and Rainbows. Scouts camped at Chalfont St Peters and completed a high ropes course. The Cubs went to Tolmers Scout Activity Centre and enjoyed activities, including archery and pedal carts. The Beavers went skiing, trampolining and attended a local Beaver Fun Day. The Brownies visited the Fire Station, went to the cinema, and went on a Pack Holiday. Brownies assisted with the decorations at the church's Harvest Festival and Remembrance Service, and held a coffee morning, raising £365 for the Mayor's charities.

### ***Outreach events***

We again held our Festival of Carols to coincide with the Town Council's Christmas Twilight markets. As part of this event, we had refreshments available, craft activities for children, and a craft stall that drew in many visitors. Carols were sung and played throughout the event, featuring singers from the church.

Our newly formed Singing group performed at the Town Council's Ashton Square Day in August 2024.

### ***Resources***

We have a large church building with a number of halls to the rear, which are available to hire to the local community. The halls are used regularly by our own church groups, but we also have regular bookings with Slimming World, Local History Society and U3A groups, plus numerous short-term lets from both individuals for parties and organisations for events. We are located in the centre of town with a large town centre car park adjacent to the building. The church itself is able to accommodate a large

number of people and hosts concerts by Vauxhall Male Voice Choir, Shambles Band, drama productions (Golden Days), amongst others.

Lettings income is a vital and necessary part of being able to run and maintain the buildings. In August 2023 we appointed an Administrator to manage existing lettings and seek to promote further lettings.

During the year 2023-2024 our church fundraising project was for repairs required to the west wall of the church. Just over £4,000 was raised and has now all been spent on the necessary repairs.

### ***Looking forward***

The Property Team continue to care for our extensive and aging Grade II listed building which presents many challenges for us. The team identified issues within our Tower which will need to be addressed in the near future. As such we have started to investigate sources of grant funding to assist with these repairs.

We continue to be challenged by the fact that we have an aging congregation with limited capacities and abilities to carry out the weekly housekeeping tasks of the church. To try to address this we promoted an initiative to encourage more members of the church to contribute to these varied needs, with some success. We continue to be encouraged as we welcome newcomers to the church.

We have consulted with the church to review our practices around the worship life of the church and many suggestions have been taken on board and implemented. This is an on-going process.

**THE METHODIST CHURCH  
STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS**

<b>THE SQUARE METHODIST CHURCH DUNSTABLE</b>	<b>Church</b>
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FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 August 2024

<b>SOUTH BEDFORDSHIRE</b>	<b>Circuit</b>	<b>Circuit no.</b>	<b>34/04</b>
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<b>Registered Charity - Charity Registration number</b>	1126936
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If not a registered charity <b>His Majesty's Revenue and Customs Gift Aid number</b>	
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(The HMRC number is equivalent to a registered charity number in terms of evidence of charitable status and may be used to give to donors or grant funders wishing to see evidence of the organisation's charitable status. Methodist charities in England and Wales that are not registered charities are excepted from registration under Statutory Instrument 2014 No.242)

Minister:

REV. CLAUDIA LUPI
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Church Stewards:

Abel Bunu
Debbie Mitchelmore
Wendy Armiger
Jenny Smith
Rachel Bond (2nd Steward)
Pierre Ricco (2nd Steward)

Treasurer:

DR MARIA SIMON
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SECTION A			Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
		Note	£	£	£	£
a1	<b>RECEIPTS</b>					
a2	Offerings and Tax recovered		61,302		61,302	63,051
a3	Bank and CFB interest and Investment income		1,489		1,489	949
a4	Lettings		15,394		15,394	18,862
a5	Other receipts		12,362	2,538	14,900	14,235
a6	<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>		<b>90,547</b>	<b>2,538</b>	<b>93,085 (a7)</b>	<b>97,097</b>

SECTION B						
b1	<b>PAYMENTS</b>					
b2	Circuit Assessment or Share		58,937		58,937	57,550
b3	Donations		25		25	324
b4	Repairs and Maintenance		10,734	7,738	18,472	6,472
b5	Utilities (Insurances, water charges, heating & lighting)		20,236		20,236	18,185
b6	Property employment costs					
b7	Other payments		9,539	2,285	11,824	8,457
b8	<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>		<b>99,471</b>	<b>10,023</b>	<b>109,494 (b9)</b>	<b>90,988</b>

SECTION C						
c1	<b>NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>(a6-b8)</b>	<b>(8,924)</b>	<b>(7,485)</b>	<b>(16,409)</b>	<b>6,109</b>
c2	Total funds brought forward from last year		58,346	9,674	68,020 (c6)	62,219
c3	<b>Sub total</b>	<b>(c1+c2)</b>	<b>49,422</b>	<b>2,189</b>	<b>51,611</b>	<b>68,328</b>
c4	Transfers and adjustments		(918)		(918) (c7)	(308)
c5	<b>TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR</b>	<b>(c3+c4)</b>	<b>48,504</b>	<b>2,189</b>	<b>50,693 (c8)</b>	<b>68,020 (c6)</b>

SECTION D					
			£	£	
d	<b>FOR INFORMATION ONLY: MONEY RECEIVED AND PASSED ON TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS</b>				
	<b>(these amounts are not to be included in total receipts/payments figures above)</b>				
d1	Balance brought forward from last year		10	318	
d2	Offerings/Gifts - received for external organisations		1,897	833	
d3	Offerings/Gifts - passed to external organisations		1,868	1,141	
d4	<b>BALANCE STILL TO BE PAID</b>	<b>(d1+d2-d3)</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>10</b>	

**SUMMARY OF CHURCH ACCOUNTS AND INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS REPORTING TO THE CHURCH COUNCIL**

**SECTION E** Please follow the Guidance Notes to complete this page

Summary of the Church accounts for the year ended 31 August 2024 and Internal Organisations reporting to the Church Council/Church Meeting. Note that the funds of an Internal Organisation would normally be Restricted funds unless it could be clearly shown that they could be used for any Methodist purpose. This section must be completed to arrive at the gross income and expenditure totals of the Church. If gross income exceeds the Accruals threshold, then the Accruals method of accounting AND A DIFFERENT FORM must be used to report the accounts (see Methodist website). Please refer to the guidance notes regarding transfers between the District and connected District Organisations.

INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS	Receipts	Payments	Net Receipts/ Payments	Adjustments	Opening balances	Closing balances
e1 <b>SQUARE DRAMA CIRCLE</b>	2,906	3,682	(776)		6,027	5,251
e2 <b>LADIES THURSDAY GROUP</b>	1,242	920	322		716	1,038
e3 <b>S CLUB</b>	552	402	150	933	296	1,379
e4 <b>SQUARE FC</b>					113	113
e5						
e6						
e7						
e8 Sub total of Internal Organisations funds	4,700	5,004	(304)	933	7,152 (e11)	7,781 (e12)
e9 <b>Church accounts (totals brought forward from page 2 - totals column)</b>	<b>93,085 (a7)</b>	<b>109,494 (b9)</b>	<b>(16,409)</b>	<b>(918) (c7)</b>	<b>68,020 (c6)</b>	<b>50,693 (c8)</b>
e10 <b>TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH</b>	<b>97,785</b>	<b>114,498</b>	<b>(16,713)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>75,172 (x)</b>	<b>58,474 (y)</b>
Continue on a separate sheet if necessary and bring the totals forward	<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>				

**SECTION F**

**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**

**CHURCH - CASH FUNDS HELD at 31 August 2024**

	OPENING BALANCES	CLOSING BALANCES
f1 Cash in hand		
f2 Bank Current Account	40,223	24,613
f3 Bank Deposit Account		
f4 Central Finance Board	27,797	26,080
f5 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes		
f6 Other funds		
f7 <b>SUB TOTAL - Church accounts</b>	<b>68,020 (c6)</b>	<b>50,693 (c8)</b>
f8 Total funds held by Internal Organisations (the closing balance total from above) (e12)	<b>7,152 (e11)</b>	<b>7,781 (e12)</b>
f9 <b>TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH</b>	<b>75,172 (x)</b>	<b>58,474 (y)</b>

**SECTION G**

**OTHER ASSETS and LIABILITIES**

	At 1 September 2023	At 31 August 2024
g1 Investments (include Endowments)		
g2 Land & Buildings (see notes re Insurance value)	9,897,035	10,193,940
g3 Other Assets	197,941	203,879
g4 Loan(s) - show amount outstanding at year end		
g5 Other Liabilities		

f4 Include only Funds held at the Central Finance Board

f5 Include only Funds held at Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes

g1 Include any other investments (not the cash element of TMCP trusts accounts this is included in line f5)

Name of Church .....The Methodist Church, The Square

No...1126936

## Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these Receipt and Payment based accounts for the year to 31 August 2024 have been prepared from the records of the Church and that they include all funds under the control of the Church trustees.

Signature of treasurer ..... *M. Simon*

Date.....01.10.24.....

Name and address of treasurer .....Dr Maria Simon

...34 Claridge Close, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire

Post Code...LU7 4TW

### Presentation to the Church trustees

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2024 were/will be\* presented to the meeting of the Church trustees held on .....

Signature of the Chair of the meeting ..... *Claudia Lupi*

Name of the Chair of the meeting ..... Rev. Claudia Lupi ..... Date ...11.11.24.....

## Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

### The Square Methodist Church

Charity Number .....1126936.....

### Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Square Methodist Church for the year ended 31 August 2024 set out on pages 2 to 3 As the Church'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 Church'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.

\* delete or circle as appropriate

Name of Church                      The Square Methodist Church... No .1126936..

**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 (other than that disclosed below\*) which give me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

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

I have/have not\* obtained independent verification of all investments with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes or held in other trusts, bank balances and funds at the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church which are individually in excess of £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) at the balance sheet date.

Signature of independent examiner                      *CJ Sheehan*

Name of independent examiner    C J Sheehan

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner Chartered Accountant

Name of firm (where appropriate) .....

Address    88 Goswell End Road, Harlington, Beds

Post Code LU5 6NX

Date 10/11/2024

\* delete or circle as appropriate