

Marlborough Road Methodist Church

Registered Charity No 1128694

Trustees Annual Report for year ending August 2022



FAIRTRADE



The Methodist Church
Marlborough Road
St Albans
AL1 3XG

Reference Information and Administration

The managing trustees

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
1	Rosemary Fletcher	Chair	
2	Revd Andrew Prout	Presbyter (Hatfield Road Methodist Church)	
3	Deacon Linda Kinchenton	Deacon (Cornerstone House)	
4	Janis Gilbert	Church Steward	
5	Theresa Tetteh	Church Steward	
6	Ann Scorer	Church Steward	
7	Carl Meredith	Treasurer	
8	Celia Hudson	Pastoral Co-ordinator	
9	Rona Wightman	Secretary to Church Council	
10	Frances Bates	Representative from General Church Meeting	
11	Jenny Evers	Representative from General Church Meeting	
12	Andrew Johnstone	Representative from General Church Meeting	
13	Erma Profit	Representative from General Church Meeting	
14	Mike Scorer	Representative from General Church Meeting	April 2022
15	Marjorie Wilson	Representative from General Church Meeting	
16	Di Churcher	Pastoral Visitors' Representative	
17	Judith Head	Safeguarding Officer	
18	Ian Gilbert	Senior Property Steward	
19	James Rowley	Secretary to Finance and Property committee	

Trustees for the charity

The Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) are custodian trustees.

Appointed advisers

We appoint an Auditor each year to check our accounts.

Structure, governance and management

The charity's trusts

Our governing document is the Methodist Church Act 1976

The charity is constituted as a trust.

Trustees are selected in accordance with the Constitutional Practice and Discipline (CPD) of the Methodist Church. Representatives are elected by the Annual General Church Meeting. Other trustees are appointed by Church Council by virtue of their role. There is also provision in the CPD for trustees to be co-opted by Church Council.

Governance

As a Methodist Church, we are a Church within a Circuit, in our case the St Albans and Welwyn Circuit. The Circuits fall within Districts, our Circuit is in the Bedfordshire, Essex and Herts District. The Methodist Church is a Connexional Church, that is, we see ourselves as part of an interconnected 'body' that offers mutual encouragement and support.

Connexional systems, requirements and guidance help us minimise risks; our Circuit Meetings and Church Council and committees consider any specific issues for us to deal with.

Our safeguarding policy is reviewed annually.

Trustees are required to familiarise themselves with CC3 *The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do*. Our Circuit arranges annual Trustee training sessions.

Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

The purposes of the Methodist Church are 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.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

Our main activity is the holding of regular public acts of worship, open to members of the church and non-members alike.

Pastoral work includes visiting the sick and bereaved.

We run a weekly drop-in toddler group for pre-school children and their carers and a weekly drop-in coffee morning that is mainly attended by older people.

Our premises are used by a number of community groups for cultural, educational and physical activity.

We support other charities in the UK financially and with prayer.

We have been working jointly with Hatfield Road Methodist Church (Charity No 1173147) to employ two Lay Workers: a three-year post for a Children and Families Worker and a five year post for an Anna Chaplain. The Children and Families Worker was appointed in June 2020 but tendered her resignation effective from June 2022, this was for personal reasons and we wish her well. Our Anna Chaplain was appointed in April 2021. The Employer is Hatfield Road Methodist Church.

Our trustees have regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Local churches, circuits and districts are not defined as external grant-making bodies.

Nearly all of our activity is carried out by volunteers with support of stipendiary and supernumerary presbyters and the lay workers, and administrative staff provided by the circuit.

Achievements and Performance 2021-22

Marlborough Road Methodist Church is an open and diverse congregation of Christians set near the centre of St. Albans. Our Calling is to:

Worship

The Church exists to increase awareness of God's presence and to celebrate God's love

Learning and Caring

The Church exists to help people to grow and learn as Christians, through mutual support and care

Service

The Church exists to be a good neighbour to people in need and to challenge injustice

Evangelism

The Church exists to make more followers of Jesus Christ

Most of our activities fall under more than one heading! This year we continued to adjust and adapt to the ongoing pandemic situation as we worked towards anticipated changes. We also had to cope with the unexpected losses of two key people.

A significant theme this year throughout Methodism has been Justice, Dignity and Solidarity, and this has been a thread running through our activities. We became a Fair Trade church some years ago, this year we added EcoChurch (Bronze) and Inclusive Church to our badge collection.

Church and Circuit Resources

This year we implemented the first changes under 'The Way Forward' plan for our Circuit that was drawn up during 2020/21. Under this plan, from September 2022 there would be one presbyter looking after both Methodist Churches in St Albans and the Deacon based in Salisbury Village, a housing estate on the St Albans side of Hatfield, would be part of the St Albans section.

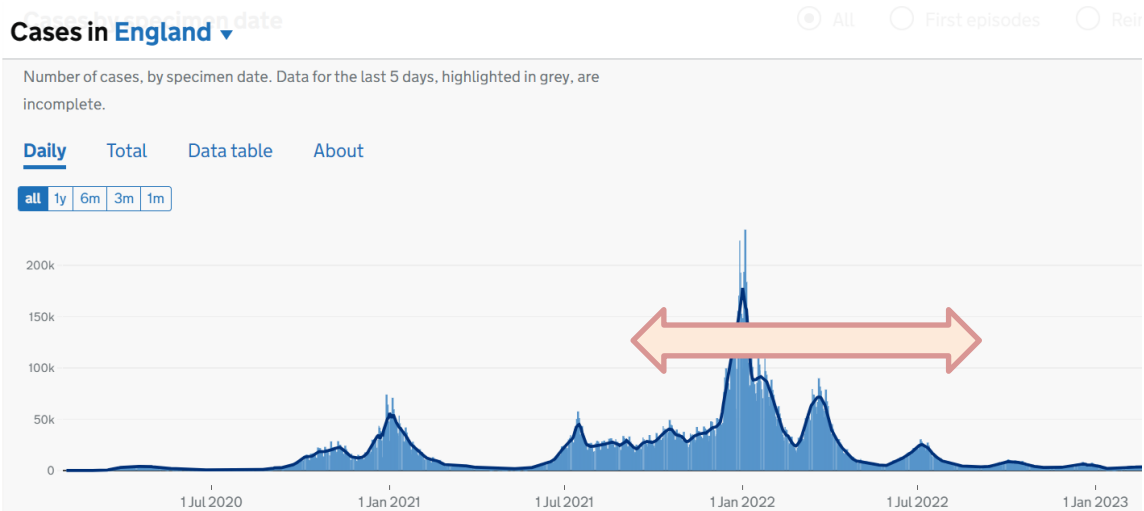
The De Havilland Project in Salisbury Village, Hatfield was wound up over the summer of 2021 and the work of Deacon Linda Kinchenton came under the auspices of the two St Albans Churches a year earlier than envisaged.

Looking ahead to being two churches in one section, we had already embarked on a shared project to employ two lay workers. Our Children and Families Worker began work in August 2020 and the St Albans Anna Chaplain was appointed in March 2021. Their work is detailed in later sections of this report. We were very sorry to lose Emma Williams, our Children and Families Worker in May 2022 when for personal reasons she moved away from the St Albans area. Throughout the year we were consciously looking for opportunities to strengthen our relationship with Hatfield Road ahead of becoming two churches with one minister.

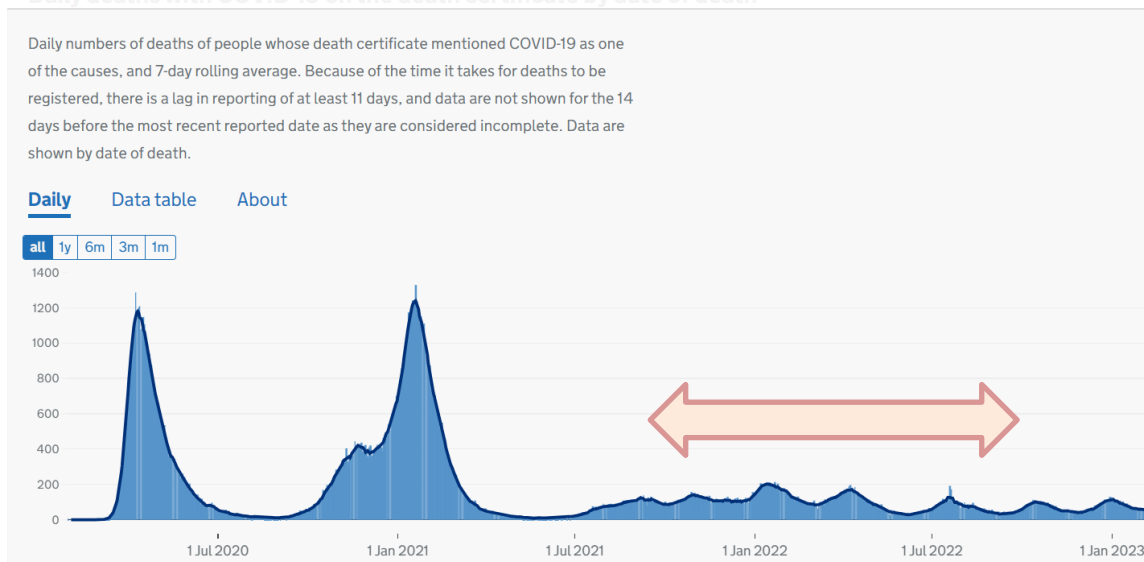
Our minister, Revd Rosemary Fletcher, was due to retire in September 2022. This year was therefore extra busy, as she made sure things were in order for the Hatfield Road presbyter, Revd Andrew Prout, to add us to his care from September 2022, as well as of course attending to personal arrangements for her retirement. As Superintendent of the Circuit, Rosemary has always had oversight of the other churches in the circuit, and during her time in the circuit she had assumed pastoral charge for prolonged periods when other circuit presbyters were unwell. She again took on extra responsibility this year when the minister of St Johns Potters Bar was granted permission to leave her station earlier than planned to take up a hospital chaplaincy post from November 2021.

An ongoing concern for our church is the demographic of the congregation, which is skewed heavily towards older people. Gradually there are fewer people able to take on the voluntary roles that deliver our mission. It was a severe loss when Mike Scorer died in May 2022. Mike had served the church in many ways – most recently, his attention to detail and genial personality gave us a wonderful maintainer of the community roll, Church Council member, Junior Church helper, Chatterbox coffee morning stalwart and brilliant Lettings Officer. He was a tremendous asset to the Finance and Property team, especially during the church refurbishment project. His willingness to examine and digest Coronavirus Regulations and Methodist Church Guidance was invaluable to the Covid-19 group as they worked out how to maintain our premises and church life during the pandemic.

Living and worshipping during the pandemic 2021/22



Deaths in England



Source: (accessed June 2023)

[Cases in England | Coronavirus in the UK \(data.gov.uk\)](#)

[Deaths in the UK | Coronavirus in the UK \(data.gov.uk\)](#) (accessed June 2023)

Most Coronavirus legal restrictions were lifted on 19 July 2021. However, the emergence of the Omicron variant in late autumn led to the introduction of 'Plan B' measures by the Government, in spite of which an estimated 1 in 15 people in the UK were infected in late December. This affected education, social and health care. Although case levels remained high, most measures were lifted on 24 February 2022, with measures to protect care home residents remaining in place until June 2022.

In looking at the graphs above, for this period, the availability of free Lateral Flow Tests (until the end of March 2022) and the life-saving effects of vaccines and boosters are evident.

For many people, including those associated with this church, the pandemic has affected their health and wellbeing and how they live their lives, through the illness itself and through side effects of measures needed to try and tackle the dangerous and highly infectious virus.

Worship

Thanks to careful consideration and adjustments to church seating layout and circulation, and in line with Methodist Church guidance, we opened the church for private prayer on 23 August 2021 and held a service of worship in church on Sunday 30 August 2021, the first since lockdown began in March 2020.

As restrictions changed we no longer required 'track and trace' registration although we encouraged voluntary 'pre-booking' as it helped with seating arrangement; Methodist Church guidance and our own risk assessment meant we continued masking for some time after masks were no longer a legal requirement, and we remain supportive of people who choose to use a face covering in indoor settings.

As the year progressed we were able to resume 'in person after church coffee in the hall', building from twice a month to most Sundays as more people returned to in person worship and were able to volunteer to serve. We are very grateful to the Covid-19 Management Group for enabling us to return to in-person activities in a careful manner.

At-home service sheets prepared by Circuit presbyters and Local Preachers and 'Church Coffee Zoom' were continued, to support those unable to return to in-person worship.

Thinking Lunches and Evenings

We were able to resume Thinking Lunches at Marlborough Road. The format is a speaker then discussion on (usually) the first Thursday of the month. The audience bring their own drinks and snacks. The lunches are free to attend, donations are invited to cover costs and any surplus is donated to a charity chosen by the speaker. Our seating is comfortable, the topics are challenging. However, attendance numbers are lower than before the pandemic. Our 21/22 programme was:

September – The Revd Dr Inderjit Bhogal

The Roots of Sanctuary – making St Albans a City of Sanctuary

October – The Revd Dr Evie Vernon (pictured)

For Black History Month, ***Still I rise – acknowledgements to Maya Angelou***

November – Tony Miller, Whitechapel Mission

How do we prevent homelessness rather than relieving it?

December – The Revd Jonathan Even, St Martin's in the Fields, London

Being with God on the edge

January – The Rt Revd Michael Beasley (pictured)

Asset Based Church Development – lessons from the Global South about starting with what we've got, not with what we don't have

February – Mia Hasenson-Gros

Human Rights – a legacy of the Holocaust and the duty to act today

March – Rachel Lampard

Walking with Micah – Justice or Just Is? What does it mean to do the right thing?

April – Revd Fiona Souter, University of Hertfordshire (pictured)

Social Media, Crochet and Chocolate Chip Cookies: the life and times of a University Chaplain

May – Justin Thacker, Christian Aid

How the West steals from Africa

June – Kath Clough, Green Christian

Code Red for Humanity – How might we live in a collapsing civilisation



In October 2021, ahead of COP26 (United Nations Climate Change Conference) in Glasgow in November, we held an online Thinking Evening. The speaker was Molly Pugmire, of the Methodist Climate Justice for All campaign (CJ4A). Molly is one of a team of campaign workers comprising young people from Britain, Italy, Zambia, Fiji and Uruguay. The CJ4A team are working to raise awareness and to inspire people to take action.

There was a special Thinking Lunch in August 2022, when the Bishop of Kurunegla, Rt Revd Dr Keerthisiri Fernando, in England for the Lambeth Conference, visited us to talk about the situation in Sri Lanka. We had retiring collections in July for The Samaritan Journey Project, a relief effort by the Methodist Church in Sri Lanka, to help people suffering from the political instability, food and fuel shortages and rising prices.



A Church in a Connexion



Our Circuit was delighted to be visited by the President of Conference, Revd Sonia Hicks, who led a Circuit Service of morning worship at Marlborough Road on Sunday 10 October 2021. *Picture: Revd Sonia Hicks and Revd Rosemary Fletcher in the MRMC porch.*

Following the resolutions at Conference in 2021, in February 2022 a joint special Church Council meeting was held in person at Hatfield Road to consider whether we wished to register our churches for same sex marriages and to permit blessings of such marriages. It was good to be together for an evening of thoughtful discussion and careful listening and reflection. The two churches had separate ballots on the proposal, both churches voted in favour by a substantial majority. It was firmly stated that we respect the integrity and different views of individuals within our congregations on these matters.

Our premises were confirmed as Registered in June 2022, and the two St Albans Ministers are Authorised.

We continue to feature works from the Methodist Modern Art Collection in our church magazine – the art is accompanied by some background information and by carefully chosen poetry or song lyrics.

Service – being a good neighbour

Our community outreach and support activities had been in abeyance because of the pandemic.

With support from our Children and Families worker Emma Williams we were able to restart the Tuesday morning **Toddlers** group in October. Emma set up a booking system to manage numbers to avoid overcrowding while Covid-19 remains a hazard. The Toddlers group did not run during the January to February half term when Covid-19 prevalence was high.

Chatterbox coffee morning had only just resumed in November 2021 when Covid-19 case rates began to rise, so Chatterbox was suspended again until March 2022. Chatterbox is a drop-in coffee morning with 'regulars' who appreciate the companionship and stimulating conversations, as well as 'occasionals' who turn up from time to time and those who do just walk in off the street - Chatterbox takes place in the vestibule, so is visible to those passing by. We held a special Chatterbox to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee which was very well attended, *pictured*. Although the charges for drinks and biscuits and sometimes cake are modest, there is a gradual build up of surplus funds, from which this year we have donated to Christian Aid in May and the Sri Lanka appeal in August.



As a church we also support a number of local, national and international organisations. When we could not hold the usual collections and fundraising activities, the church and members made donations directly.

Organisations we regularly support are:

- Action for Children – a national charity founded by a Methodist minister, supporting children living in poverty. Members of the congregation have 'lantern' collecting boxes, although the difficulty of gathering them in during lockdown meant that the lantern box holders have been donating direct instead. There is an annual collection at church on Action for Children Sunday – this year 10 July 2022.
- All We Can – the Methodist Development and Relief Fund, works with local organisations to help people experiencing poverty and injustice, and also responds to humanitarian emergencies such as civilians suffering as a result of the invasion of Ukraine. We are a Partner Church, and each year a different local project is featured. This year we were learning about HEFO, an supporting the community in Nkayi in Zimbabwe's Matabeleland North. The region suffers from persistent drought and extremes of rain and temperature. One HEFO intervention provided a women's collective producing tomatoes and green vegetables with a solar borehole, a water tank and three taps to make crop watering easier. This increased the yield and meant the women could find more markets for selling their produce.
- Christian Aid – the Christian Aid Week house to house collections did not resume. We raised money through collections at church and sponsorship of 'the 'Wesley Walkers' from Hatfield Road and Marlborough Road Methodist Churches, who walked 17 miles visiting 26 St Albans churches.
- FEED – a foodbank run by the Vineyard Church in St Albans. We have a monthly collection of items at church, and we publicise other ways for our church members to contribute.
- Fund for Human Need – a Methodist-affiliated charity that provides small emergency grants to individuals who are destitute and vulnerable. We hold a quarterly benevolence collection to top up our church benevolence fund and any overspill goes to the Fund for Human Need.
- The Living Room – has centres in Hertfordshire, including St Albans, helping people overcome addiction. We hold a retiring collection at the Aldersgate Sunday evening service, held this year on 22 May 2022. It is a joint service with St Peter's church.
- Methodist Homes – a housing and care charity, we hold a collection on Methodist Homes Sunday, this year 12 June 2022.
- Winter Beds Project – an initiative by the City Centre Churches, now administered by Open Door, providing emergency overnight accommodation. This year the arrangements to allow for Covid-19 remained in place, so instead of communal sleeping space on church premises, guests were accommodated in individual cabins at Emmaus St Albans. Four members of our church volunteered with the project, helping to receive guests in the evening and helping with breakfast and cleaning in the morning.
- Write for Rights – an annual initiative by Amnesty International each December. We held card-writing sessions at church in late November / early December.

There were two local appeals for donations during the autumn and winter. The first appeal was from the charity St Albans for Refugees, and this was for new underwear and socks for men, women and children; and the second appeal was from the Salvation Army for warm clothing to go to the homeless people attending Centre 33, which is now running from the Salvation Army premises in Victoria Street.. Both these appeals were very well supported.

Lay Workers

The Lay Workers Project is a joint initiative by the two St Albans Methodist Churches.

Our **Children and Families Worker**, Emma Williams, began working with us in August 2020 and worked very hard throughout 20/21, holding online sessions with our young people and building up contacts with local primary schools and preparing and delivering activity packs to families.

In September we were able to restart our Junior Church sessions on the 1st and 2nd Sundays of the month. However, as number of children attending was low or even none, the Junior Church team decided to focus on Junior Church on the 1st Sunday of the month and look to other ways we could engage the children in church. This led to the introduction of the children's area where the children are welcome to sit and do some drawing or craft activities, read or do a puzzle. This has been popular and well used. Emma and the Junior Church team organised a Good Friday creative service for all ages, with craft activities and also quiet space for reflection.

We were thrilled to be able to restart our Toddler group. We opened up the hall to use the full space, Emma set up an online booking system and we restricted numbers to minimise the risk of having a Covid outbreak within the group. We weren't able to restart again after the Christmas break until after February half term but once re-started were close to full every week and many parents/carers have commented how much they appreciated us being open. A new addition to Toddlers has been the introduction of a mini service on the 3rd week of the month. During this time, the children and adults are invited to join us for a Bible story or story with a biblical message, some songs and an activity which reinforces the message of the story. An ongoing concern has been having enough volunteers to run the sessions, a number of the attending adults have come forward to help in various way so that we can keep the sessions going.



During the October half term, we joined up with Hatfield Road to host a Holiday Club for those in school Years 1- 6. During each session we shared Bible stories, sang songs, played games and were creative with crafts. *Picture: the parable of the lost sheep.*

Following on from the links made with St Peter's Primary and Oakwood Primary last year, Emma was able to go into the schools to lead Assemblies on a regular basis. She was asked to lead a Year 6 lesson at Oakwood Primary one afternoon about Christmas and a Year 5 lesson at St Peter's about the roles of lay worker and minister

in a church. We were also delighted to welcome the Year 2s from St Peter's Primary to an afternoon of exploring the church. Emma also volunteered with Step (the St Albans and Harpenden Christian education project) and helped to lead lessons at two local secondary schools, Sandringham and Beaumont, and also a Youth Alpha at Sandringham.

Emma moved on to a new post in Derbyshire in June 2022, we were very sad that we were losing her, we are thankful that she spent time with us, and we wish her well.

We appointed Maggie Dodd to the post of **Anna Chaplain** in March 2021 and she began work in late April 2021. She is the first Anna Chaplain in Hertfordshire and the first full-time Anna Chaplain in the country.

Initially Maggie started to get to know members of both churches by organising Afternoon Teas – in the end 17 were held and Maggie met more than 80 people at the various parties. Good connections were made and have endured from these initial meetings.

Over the summer of 2021 Maggie had contacted various ministers and clergy with a questionnaire asking about older people's ministry and whether older church members were returning to church

activities. This culminated in a booklet being produced in October, which detailed the different weekday provision churches across the city offer older people. Maggie distributed around 1000 copies to churches, homes, and public buildings across St Albans.

Maggie attended the Older People's Roadshow in the Civic Centre in October and was able to meet various reps from Age UK, Communities 1st, Age Concern, Herts Help etc, and hand out the booklet and speak to the public. Maggie also has regular Zoom meetings with stakeholders in Older People's Care.

Maggie networks with the other Anna Chaplains regularly via Zoom gatherings and continues to promote Anna Chaplaincy in St Albans and further afield. She and Revd Rosemary Fletcher attended the two national Methodist Superintendents' Conferences. Anna Chaplaincy is ecumenical and Maggie has been engaging with churches across St Albans throughout the year. A meeting with Revd Peter Crumpler of St Paul's led to a Herts Advertiser (local newspaper) article and an interview with BBC Three Counties radio. Maggie has since written further articles for the Herts Ad. In September 2021 she hosted a Zoom Café for St Albans Diocese about Older People's Ministry, working with their Flourishing Churches Team. In February 2022 she led a reflection at the Cathedral's Free Church Service, and gave a talk later in the month at a Hemel Hempstead's Churches Together meeting. In March she led a reflection at St Luke's Church Sunday service and introduced members of The Gathering at St Mark's church in Colney Heath to Anna Chaplaincy. She is working with SS Alban and Stephen to set up a home visitors support group and in June she addressed the St Albans Deanery Synod on Anna Chaplaincy and Dementia-Friendly worship.

Maggie is involved with Friday Day Care at Hatfield Road providing transport for guests, and sometimes activities in the afternoons. She started a weekly Coffee Morning at St Stephen's after a Said Communion service on a Wednesday morning, which has encouraged that small congregation to stay and chat with one another. She initiated a Crafting Moring at St Julian's which now runs itself with a monthly larger gathering which Maggie helps to organise. This encourages a mixed attendance, ages range from 35 to over 70.

Worship in Care Homes restarted late in 2021 and Maggie has been working alongside Sandridge's new Vicar, Revd Wendy Sellers, helping lead worship at Tara's Retreat care home in the village. In May 2022 Maggie visited Leigh-on-Sea to experience the Memory Worship service developed there and she has begun to use the service style at Tara's Retreat with residents who live with dementia. She also started to go with a Lay Leader of Worship from St Julian's church into nearby Vesta Lodge care home every month for a service of Holy Communion.

Maggie supports the services at two city centre retirement flat complexes that were initiated by Marlborough Road and St Peter's as a shared ministry, and with the help of an MRMC member this year started a monthly Communion service at Eleanor House retirement flats on London Road. The services are also now run on a rota with St Peter's.

In December Maggie's Sending Love to Care Homes star project reached 587 residents in the 12 residential Care Homes across St Albans. There was an amazing response from both church communities and St Albans residents, young and old, who wanted to create a star and send some love. Twelve churches of different denominations got in touch to help, Rainbows and Brownies across the city took part, Sandringham School KS3 Art Club, Sandridge Primary School, Knit and Natter groups, local crafts people - so many people came forward to help that Maggie was able to reach the target number with a few to spare. Not only did the little stars bring a lot

of joy to those who received them, the project also helped Maggie to engage with some of the care homes that she had not previously been involved with. *(Picture: Maggie with stars at MRMC)*

Afternoon Worship sessions began in September 2021 at both MRMC and HRMC. Both services regularly have over 10 people attending, some of the congregation can't manage Sunday services but enjoy the shorter and more informal style of the weekday afternoon service.





Since December 2021 Maggie has taken Communion to the housebound from HRMC and MRMC, and also on occasion has been able to gather a couple of households together for the Home Communion which has been very rewarding, enabling both fellowship and sharing of the sacrament. Maggie regularly visits older people in their homes who have contacted her via booklets or local info, who value a visit and a chat, the number of people visited is slowly growing.

The Platinum Jubilee was an occasion for special events, including an afternoon tea at Marlborough Road for around 50 guests. Holiday at Home was again held in August with four days of fun food and friendship, comprising two days at Hatfield Road and two days at Marlborough Road, with support from St Peter's. *Picture montage: Holiday at Home at MRMC*

Eco Church



In October we supported the St Albans Day of Action (*pictured*) in advance of the COP26 meeting in Glasgow, and we held a special Thinking Evening on the topic of Climate Justice.

We gained our A Rocha Bronze Award in November 2021. We are limited in what ecological actions we can take with our premises, so much of our Eco Church points come from what we say and do. Our support for All We Can is strongly linked to our Eco-Church commitment – climate change is clearly affecting the partner organisations that All We Can work with.

We feature Eco Tips and other items in our church magazine, including recycling options, but knock-on effects of the pandemic have meant we were not able to resume collections of items to pass to Terracycle collectors.

Following a resolution at our Annual Church Meeting we twinned our bins – this is an initiative by Tearfund and the *pictured* bin-sticker gives information about a rubbish collection and recycling service in Haiti supported by Tearfund.

We participate in SustFest, an annual programme of events organised by Sustainable St Albans, including our June Thinking Lunch.



Inclusive Church

We have been endeavouring to ensure that we are inclusive in our welcome. In June 2021 our Church Council decided that we should apply to join the organisation Inclusive Church and in November 2021 we were welcomed into membership.

We also signed up to the Welcome Churches initiative, which was set up to ensure a welcome to people coming to the UK from Hong Kong, but with a view to welcoming people wherever they come from.

Fair Trade

Our church Fair Trade stall was affected by the pandemic and then by the loss of Mike Scorer, who ran the stall with the help of his wife Ann. Mike knew what everyone liked and would make sure the relevant items were always in stock.

We have of course continued to serve Fair Trade tea, coffee and sugar at church events and to encourage our congregation to support Fair Trade.

Inter-Church relations

We have continued to work more closely with Hatfield Road Methodist Church, the bonds being strengthened by the Lay Workers project. The church stewards hold regular joint meetings, which they have found very helpful for brainstorming and mutual support. Holiday at Home has been a joint activity since 2019. We are looking ahead to changes arising from the adoption of the Circuit's Way Forward measures, with the churches now supporting diaconal work in Salisbury Village and St Albans and looking ahead to sharing a presbyter from September 2022.



Picture montage: Holiday at Home at Hatfield Road MC, August 2022

To mark the changeover from the De Havilland Project, the manse where the Deacon lives was renamed as **Cornerstone House** and that is the term used to refer to diaconal work based there. Cornerstone House has been adapted to create a community meeting room with access from a side gate, so mission work can be kept separate from home life. The St Albans churches jointly support Cornerstone House, with MRMC given responsibility for the legal and financial administration, this balances HRMC managing the Lay Workers project.



Monthly 'Journey Light' services of informal worship and creative reflection and other outreach activities began again after 18 months of pandemic, including weekly Cuppa'n'Natta which appeals to a wide age range, a monthly family craft café aimed at primary age children and a monthly pop-up café after school on the playground opposite Cornerstone House. Window Trails were popular, with a pumpkin trail in late October and a Christmas trail during Advent, leading to a Christingle.

We continue to value our close relationship with **St Peter's** Church. The clergy meet regularly and our minister is authorised to preside at Eucharistic worship at St Peters (since September 2015). We are very grateful to the two Lay Readers from St Peters who regularly lead worship at Marlborough Road. There are several special services each year which are now united services – the Covenant Service, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Aldersgate Sunday and St Peter's Patronal Festival. Chatterbox Coffee Morning and Thinking Lunches are well supported by St Peter's. The retirement flats services was a joint initiative and St Peter's have been involved in Holiday at Home since its inception. Marlborough Road was one of the places on the Live Nativity Trail organised by St Peters on 18 December 2021 – behold, Herod's Palace being made ready!



Herod's Palace



Right: Rt Revd Anne Hollinghurst, Bishop of Aston, previously vicar of St Peter's, Aldersgate Sunday united service preacher, with Revd Rosemary Fletcher

We have also been developing a closer relationship with the **Church of God of Prophecy**, which meets at MRMC. A joint service in September was followed by an afternoon picnic, *pictured*.

The congregation joins our Church Anniversary service and there is a picnic together and cricket in the park afterwards. Our minister and their pastor have formed a firm bond of friendship and support.



Churches Together in St Albans (CTSA) seeks to help churches to work and to grow together. CTSA is part of Churches Together in Hertfordshire which in turn is part of Churches Together in England.

CTSA have three forums a year as well as other events such as the Cross Procession, Unity at the Cross, 24 Hour Prayer for Thy Kingdom Come, Carols at the Clock Tower, and the service of prayer for Christian Unity each January. Meetings are open to all.

Rosemary has been a participant in CTSA events over the years she has been here in St Albans. MRMC is always open for the annual September CTSA City Centre Prayer Walk, when a short prayer and pause is held in each location.

Each church has CTSA reps who can vote at the AGM. A small Enabling Group is drawn from member of several different churches and meets about 4 times a year. Maggie Dodd is about to join this group in her role as Anna Chaplain.

CTSA member churches are supporting refugees from Afghanistan and elsewhere as well as holding online Prayer Meetings for Ukraine. There are 120 refugees at a hotel on the outskirts of St Albans, they cannot afford bus fares to get to appointments and classes. Within days of CTSA's appeal for help, nine bicycles had been offered, Hertfordshire Cycling loaned a cycle stand and the hotel built a bike shelter. Herts Welcomes Refugees assisted with bike safety checks and cycling training.

Each Good Friday CTSA organises a Walk of Witness in the form of a Cross Procession which starts at from SS Alban & Stephen Church, calling in at churches including MRMC on the way to the Unity at the Cross Service in the Cathedral.

And finally...



This has been the last year in our Circuit for four of the Circuit ministers, including Deacon Linda Kinchenton and our minister and Circuit Superintendent Revd Rosemary Fletcher. Pictured at the Circuit Farewell Service at MRMC are Deacon Linda Kinchenton, Revd Bruce Anderson., Revd Rosemary Fletcher and Revd Ali Facey.

We held an afternoon tea at MRMC to show our appreciation of Rosemary and also her husband James Rowley, who has been a steady support to this church in his own right. His work with the property committee and on the refurbishment project was invaluable, and he undertook many other roles and tasks great and small, including pastoral visiting and serving coffee.



Pictures: farewell cake; Rosemary's last service at MRMC on 7 August, celebrating Jamaica Day; At the Farewell Afternoon tea, James reflects on nine years at MRMC in front of a pictorial celebration.

Financial review

The Church's policy on Reserves is to maintain a reserve in the general fund to cover a month's running costs and to hold a sensible reserve in the repair, organ and cottage funds to cover emergency repair works.

No funds are materially in deficit.

Our principal sources of funds are voluntary donations, lettings and fund-raising. Lettings income has continued to be affected by Covid-19 lockdowns.

Our expenditure goes entirely in support of our key objectives and activities.

Our investment policy has been maintained through the moral and ethical policies of the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church

Please refer to our Accounts for more details.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the foregoing report.

Signed on behalf of the trustees:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Rona Mary Wightman', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rona Mary Wightman
Church Council Secretary

26 June 2023

THE METHODIST CHURCH

STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS

Marlborough Road Methodist Church
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FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 Aug 2022

St Albans & Welwyn Circuit	Circuit No. 34/13
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Registered Charity - Charity Registration number	1128694
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If not a registered charity Her 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:

Reverend Andrew Prout

Treasurer:

Carl Meredith

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2022

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2021-22
		£	£	£	£	£
Income						
1 Offerings		69,982				69,982
2 Donations		19,127		25,668		44,795
3 Gift aid		15,836				15,836
4 Interest and investment income		195				195
5 Income from investment properties		29,815				29,815
6 Internal organisations			757			757
7 Other charitable income				225		225
8 Total income		134,955	757	25,893	-	161,605
Expenditure						
9 Circuit assessment or share		84,000				84,000
10 Grants and donations		4,466				4,466
11 Property maintenance		18,909				18,909
12 Insurance,utilities etc		10,142				10,142
13 Depreciation						-
14 Office expenses		764				764
15 Other expenditure		3,440		32,572		36,012
16 Internal organisations			253			253
17 Total charitable expenditure		121,721	253	32,572	-	154,546
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments						-
19 Gains/(losses) on investment properties						-
20 Net income/(expenditure)		13,234	504	- 6,679	-	7,059
21 Transfers between funds	-	21,149		21,149		-
22 Other gains/(losses)						-
23 Net movement in funds	-	7,915	504	14,470	-	7,059
24 Total funds brought forward		71,183	3,143	45,822	-	120,148
25 Total funds carried forward		63,268	3,647	60,292	-	127,207

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2021

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2020-21
		£	£	£	£	£
Income						
1 Offerings		68,210				68,210
2 Donations		12,816		40,902		53,718
3 Gift aid		15,806				15,806
4 Interest and investment income		38				38
5 Income from investment properties		13,167				13,167
6 Internal organisations			4			4
7 Other charitable income				3,630		3,630
8 Total income		110,037	4	44,532	-	154,573
Expenditure						
9 Circuit assessment or share		84,000				84,000
10 Grants and donations		3,891				3,891
11 Property maintenance		10,290				10,290
12 Insurance,utilities etc		7,637				7,637
13 Depreciation						-
14 Office expenses		1,203				1,203
15 Other expenditure		1,776		22,761		24,537
16 Internal organisations			3,916			3,916
17 Total charitable expenditure		108,797	3,916	22,761	-	135,474
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments						-
19 Gains/(losses) on investment properties						-
20 Net income/(expenditure)		1,240	-	3,912	21,771	-
21 Transfers between funds						-
22 Other gains/(losses)						-
23 Net movement in funds		1,240	-	3,912	21,771	-
24 Total funds brought forward		69,943	7,055	24,051	-	101,049
25 Total funds carried forward		71,183	3,143	45,822	-	120,148

Name of Church

Marlborough Road Methodist Church

Circuit No 34/13

Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2022

Notes to the Accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (Unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Totals 2022	Totals 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£

Fixed Assets

Church building and other property	2,000,000				2,000,000	5,000,000
Investment properties	575,000				575,000	425,000
Investments					-	
Total fixed assets	2,575,000	-	-	-	2,575,000	5,425,000

Current Assets

Debtors and prepayments	34,860		2,325		37,185	51,679
Loans by the Churches					-	-
Investments with TMCP					-	-
Central Finance Board Deposits	-	154	43,922		44,076	50,884
Cash at Bank and in hand	33,626	3,494	18,580		55,700	44,855
Total current assets	68,486	3,648	64,827	-	136,961	147,418

Current liabilities

Creditors (due in under 1 year)	5,220		4,534		9,754	27,270
Grants payable within 2018-19					-	-
Total current liabilities	5,220	-	4,534	-	9,754	27,270
Net current assets/liabilities	63,266	3,648	60,293	-	127,207	120,148

Total assets less current liabilities	2,638,266	3,648	60,293	-	2,702,207	5,545,148
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Long term liabilities (due after more than one year)						
Grants payable after 2018-19					-	-
Loans to the Church					-	-
Net assets	2,638,266	3,648	60,293	-	2,702,207	5,545,148

Funds of the Church

General Fund (Unrestricted)	2,638,266				2,638,266	5,456,841
Designated Funds (Unrestricted)		3,648			3,648	42,870
Total Unrestricted Funds					2,641,914	5,499,711
Restricted Funds			60,293		60,293	45,437
Endowment Funds				-	-	
Total Funds	2,638,266	3,648	60,293	-	2,702,207	5,545,148

Signed



Church Treasurer

CARL MEREDITH

Notes to the Accounts

1 Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 in accordance with the 2014 version of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS102 – the Charities SORP (FRS102) and taking note of the Update Bulletin 1 issued in 2016.

2 Funds

The funds held constitute: General Funds held for any purpose of the Church which are Unrestricted. Restricted funds which are held for a narrower purpose. There are no Endowment funds. Details of each material fund are disclosed in the final note to these accounts. Any funds may be represented by more than just cash.

3 Accounting policies

Basis

These accounts have been prepared on the basis of historical cost except that investments are shown at their market value at the end of the year, on the accruals basis to show a true and fair view of the Church's financial position and activities.

Incoming Resources

Income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the Church becomes entitled to the resources, and the trustees are reasonably certain they will receive the resources; and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Resources Expended

This is recognised when a liability is incurred, or a constructive obligation arises, that results in the payment being unavoidable. Liabilities are recognised as soon as an outflow of economic benefit is considered more likely than not under the legal or constructive obligation committing the Church to pay out resources.

Grants

Grants made by the Church from its own funds are recognised in full at the time of agreement or when the Church accepts that there is a legal or operational obligation to make the payment.

VAT

Since the Church is not VAT registered, all input VAT is charged with the expenses to which it refers.

Tangible fixed assets for use by the Church

Tangible fixed assets are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £10,000. Property assets are stated at current fair value. The current fair value of the main church premises is evaluated by the trustees at 2022 deemed values, with reference to estimated resale value as vacant possession. The current fair value of the residential investment property is evaluated by the trustees with reference to comparable property sale transactions in the locality and to advice received from the letting agent engaged to manage the property on behalf of the trustees. Both properties have been reviewed for impairment.

Debtors and Prepayments

Debtors primarily constitute amounts owing by HMRC in respect of gift aid claims.

Creditors

Creditors include both trade creditors and donations to be paid to charities from the church General Reserve as determined by Church Council following confirmation of the full year income and expenditure.

4 Payment to Trustees

There were no payments made to trustees for additional services provided to the Church, in either the current or prior year.

5 Fees for examination or audit of the accounts

There were no fees paid or payable to the independent examiner for reporting on the accounts or for other services, in either the current or prior year.

6 Paid employees

The church did not employ any staff during the current or prior year.

7 Capital Commitments and Contingent Liabilities

At the 31 st August 2022 there are no capital commitments.
No Contingent liabilities were identified at 31st August 2022.

8 For information only Money received and passed on to External Organisations

	2021/22	2020/21
	£	£
Balance brought forward from last year	564	-
Offerings/Gifts - received for External Organisations	5,998	1,744
Offerings/Gifts - passed to External Organisations	2,956	1,180
Balance carried forward	3,606	564

9 Tangible Fixed Assets

Cost or valuation

	Main church premises	Residential investment property	Fixtures, fittings and equipment	Total
	£	£	£	£
Balance brought forward	5,000,000	425,000	-	5,425,000
Additions	-	-	-	-
Revaluations (+/-)	- 3,000,000	150,000	-	- 2,850,000
Disposals (-)	-	-	-	-
Transfers * (+/-)	-	-	-	-
Balance carried forward	2,000,000	575,000	-	2,575,000

Accumulated depreciation

Balance brought forward	-	-	-	-
Depreciation charge for year (-)	-	-	-	-
Revaluations (+/-)	-	-	-	-
Disposals (-)	-	-	-	-
Transfers* (+/-)	-	-	-	-
Balance carried forward	-	-	-	-

Net book value

Brought forward	5,000,000	425,000	-	5,425,000
Carried forward	2,000,000	575,000	-	2,575,000

10 Loans

The Church currently has no loans and has not held any loans during the current or prior year.

11 Analysis of funds

2021-22

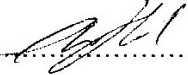
Fund Name	Opening Balance	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Transfers	Closing Balance
Restricted Funds					
Benevolent Fund	442				442
Cornerstone Project	-	8,235	3,870		4,365
Lay Worker Fund	45,381	17,658	28,702	21,149	55,486
Total Restricted	45,823	25,893	32,572	21,149	60,293
Unrestricted Funds					
General Fund	31,454	125,454	114,657	- 18,772	23,479
Major Repair Fund	18,475	18			18,493
Organ Repair Fund	6,251	43			6,294
Investment Property Maintenance Fund	15,000	9,441	7,064	- 2,377	15,000
Internal Organisations	3,145	756	253		3,648
Total Unrestricted	74,325	135,712	121,974	- 21,149	66,914
Total Funds	120,148	161,605	154,546	-	127,207

""Comparative analysis of restricted and designated funds 2020-21

Fund Name	Opening Balance	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Transfers	Closing Balance
Restricted Funds					
Benevolent Fund	442				442
Lay Worker Fund	23,610	44,532	22,761		45,381
Total Restricted	24,052	44,532	22,761	-	45,823
Unrestricted Funds					
General Fund	30,234	100,845	108,797	9,172	31,454
Major Repair Fund	18,469	6			18,475
Organ Repair Fund	6,237	14			6,251
Investment Property Maintenance Fund	15,000	9,172		- 9,172	15,000
Internal Organisations	7,057	4	3,916		3,145
Total Unrestricted	76,997	110,041	112,713	-	74,325
Total Funds	101,049	154,573	135,474	-	120,148

Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these accruals-based accounts for the year to 31 August 2022 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  Date 9/3/2023

Name and address of treasurer MR CARL MEREDITH

31 CANN ST, ST ALBANS Post Code AL3 5JR

Presentation to the Church trustees

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2022 were ~~will~~ ~~not~~ presented to the meeting of the Church trustees held on 21/2/23

Signature of the Chair of the meeting 

Name of the Chair of the meeting Rev Andrew Pratt Date 21/2/23

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

Marlborough Road Methodist Church

Charity Number 1128694

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Marlborough Road Methodist Church for the year ended 31 August 2022 set out on pages 1 to 7. 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: Marlborough Road Methodist Church No: 34/13

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; or
- 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
- the trustees' annual report is not consistent with the accounts

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 J. N. ROBINSON

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner M.A. A.C.A

Address 5 HAMMER DELL WELWYN

HELTJ Post Code AL6 0BE

Date 10/3/23