



BIRSTALL METHODIST CHURCH

LEICESTERSHIRE

(Registered Charity No: 1128974)

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22



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MINISTER: Rev Paula Hunt

TRUSTEES AS AT 1st SEPTEMBER 2021

Rev Paula Hunt (Chair)

Mrs Wendy Allan

Mrs Janet Bradford

Mrs Mary Downs

Mrs Alison King

Mrs Joan Pearson

Mr Richard Tinley

Mrs Susan Wheeler

Mrs Ann Boettcher

Mr Chris Brice

Mrs Shirley Harrison

Mrs Marion Liquorish

Mrs Sylvia Taylor

Mr John Towson

Mrs Margaret Young

Mrs Dorothy Bond

Mrs Jane Brice

Mr John Kilby

Mr Tony Moore

Mrs Christine Tilford

Mr Andrew Webster

LOCATION

Birstall lies about 5 miles north of Leicester City centre and is one of six churches which make up the Leicester Trinity Circuit of the Methodist Church of Great Britain.

MISSION

The church continues to be guided by the mission statement formulated by the Leicester North Circuit – *‘Deepening Discipleship – Making More Disciples’*.

THE CHURCH FAMILY

Membership

We are an open and inclusive organisation which values everyone who chooses to join us. Membership is open to all who wish to serve Jesus Christ and current membership stands at 97 and many friends also choose to worship with us.

Weekly Worship

This year, the church has transitioned back to holding services in person each Sunday and Wednesday morning, whilst continuing to stream the Sunday services via Zoom for those who are unable to attend. The online Circuit Service every Sunday evening, (also on Zoom).

Baptismal Roll

Unfortunately we only have one child on the cradle roll under the age of three. All the other children previously on the roll have reached their third birthday. Birthday cards and Christmas cards continue to be sent. On the child’s third birthday an invitation to Sunday Club is sent with their birthday card.

Sunday Breakfast Club

The Sunday Club meets throughout the year starting in church for a short time of All Age Worship then continuing its own activities a simple breakfast in the Coffee Shop. The young people often contribute to worship & occasionally lead a service. What's App continues to be the most effective & practical way of communicating & holding the group together. Ages range from 4-14 & attendance varies from 2 -10 with 4 adult leaders.

School-based work

The Circuit employs a Schools and Community Worker, who is based in Birstall and Rothley. His responsibility in Birstall is to work with young people and local schools. He has engagement with the three schools in Birstall under the administration of the Lionheart Academy Trust (3 primary schools and a secondary school). He has also helped with Religious Study lessons. He has contributed to assemblies and has led workshops in the Primary Schools. He is also involved in working with the local Parish Church to deliver this work including: delivering workshops and Easter Experience. Volunteers in this aspect of the work have assisted the worker.

Boys' Brigade –

The Boy's Brigade is still running well, and numbers are slowly rising. It is now a mixed company of boys and girls. Richard Tinley visits regularly as their chaplain. It is worth noting that four other companies in our area closed during lockdown, mainly due to lack of adult volunteers.

Birstall Methodist Monday Women's Group

The Monday Group meets at 7.30pm. We have evenings amongst ourselves and lots of interesting speakers. We also have a project every year for a different charity. In 2021/22 it was Birstall playgroup for children with additional needs and at our AGM in September 2022 we will present them with a cheque for £2,000. We are a friendly group. Visitors always welcome.

We were very pleased to be meeting again once most of the Covid restrictions were lifted and attendance at our meetings has remained around the 25/30 mark. We are still following guidelines to keep everyone safe by opening doors/windows and keeping an eye on room temperature. We are pleased that the committee work as a team and are supported by regular members. Details of our weekly programme are advertised in the Church Notices and on the various Notice boards around Church and we are always pleased to welcome new members.

Thursday Group

Meetings resumed in October 2021 in the Coffee shop in the afternoons rather than the evening as before. We were not able to have our usual Christmas party, but we were very actively involved with the annual Church Festival, both with decorating, making and baking, and manning stalls. It is something we all very much enjoy and look forward to. We also met one of our new police officers who was invited along to introduce herself.

Following the rise of the Omicron variation, we cancelled a few of our January meetings, then continued with just informal get togethers, quizzes etc., again with increased safety precautions. By August 2022 Thursday Group was almost back to its usual programme of events, speakers, quizzes and amongst ourselves meetings. These included a meeting with Rosie Rollins who started the local Community Help Group, and a talk about Christians against Poverty. We were also able to hold a fundraising coffee morning for Jade's Retreat, and had a couple of Bring and Share afternoons, one for the Queen's Jubilee, and our usual Faith Supper to mark the end of the season at the end of June. We were also able to make a donation to the Church. We do not meet between the end of June until the start of September, but were able to get together in August with a series of afternoon teas hosted by our members, just to keep in touch through the summer. We are still continuing to welcome new members which is quite gratifying.

Community Bible Study

This is a Bible Study group with a global reach that has met at our church for over twenty years. It not only attracts members of the Methodist Church but its membership includes Christians from other Churches within Birstall and beyond. From September 2022 the group will have two elements, one meeting face to face in the lounge, one meeting online with both elements connecting online for part of the time. This allows the group to welcome people from outside the UK'

The Pastoral Committee - Marion Liquorish

Our pastoral visitors keep in touch with church members and also with regular church attendees by home visits, telephone, e-mail and at church and church meetings. Pastoral visitors are a unique and essential part of the Methodist Church and try and support the minister by keeping in touch with the church membership, particularly the elderly, bereaved and infirm.

WORLD SERVICE, MISSION AND NEIGHBOURHOOD

The Lunch Club

After the long break the Lunch Club opened its doors once again in October 2021.

All of our members (except for two) returned & the group has gone from strength to strength. Since then we have celebrated all the festivals & the late Queen's 70th Jubilee.

Sadly a few members have passed away or moved into care but we have welcomed new members & the Lunch Club continues to be a happy & welcoming group to older residents of Birstall.

Birstall Methodist Coffee Shop

The weekday coffee shop was not able to reopen after the pandemic due to the retirement of the organisers and no voluntary replacement being found.

By this time Saturday was organising pop-up sessions during the week by request of the attendees. It was agreed that it would all be taken under the auspices of the Saturday committee, running Tuesday to Saturday.

It is now run to bolster church income in this difficult time.

After some trial runs church groups have been able to do some fundraising on occasional Saturdays.

World Church

The total amount raised for World Church in the year 2021-22 was £332.66. Thank you for the ever more vital support for our brothers and sisters in the world through your generous giving to the World Mission Fund.

World Day of Prayer

Our Ecumenical committee met in October this year to reflect on the World Day of Prayer which was held on 4th March 2022 and was held at St Teresa's Church when the country was England, Northern Ireland and Wales. The World Day of Prayer on 3rd March 2023 will be held in the Methodist Church when the country concerned is Taiwan.

Special Needs Playgroup

The group now has three paid workers and 18 children. We have grown quite a bit since last year!

Action for Children

Action for Children is an organisation related to the Methodist Church. The organisation was born in the Methodist Church. Their work is split into three main areas. 1) Best start in life. We know how important the early years are and they are there to help. From parenting advice to education and early intervention, they focus improving children's life chances. 2) Good mental health. Everyone has ups and downs in life. Mental and emotional well-being experts work with families and schools to make sure children and parents feel able to cope with challenges when they arise. 3) A safe and loving home. They make sure more children feel part of a family that cares for them. They find

homes for those without, protect children who have been abused and neglected, and help ensure young carers don't miss out on a childhood themselves.

Here are some highlights of the fundraising by the Leicester Support Group for the period 1/9/21 to 31/8/22: After the extensive lockdowns due to the pandemic it was a great relief to stage a Little BIG Band Concert at Anstey Methodist Church on 2 Oct 2021 where we raised an amazing sum of £305. Fortunately, the lockdowns only had a minimal effect on the Home Collecting Boxes income for the 2021 calendar year, which amounted to £497.46. In 2022 Action for Children Sunday at Anstey Methodist Church on 10 July raised £245. We would like to thank supporters in Birstall Methodist Church and Birstall Village for their continued support.

FINANCE

The closure of the church building from March 2020 meant a major change to the church's income and expenditure. Church staff were furloughed (until August 2021), collection receipts fell sharply and letting income stopped. Lettings began again (at a much reduced level) in June 2021. We had a reduction in some costs in 2020/21, such as heating and lighting, while the building was closed but in 2021/22 as the church re-opened, with much higher gas and electricity prices, costs increased markedly. In 2021/22 church income was up by £7,600 on 2020/21 (despite the loss of £6,200 in furlough payments received in 2020/21), with the Christmas Fair re-instated and donations from other Church Groups re-commencing, particularly the Coffee Shop.

But Expenditure increased by nearly £12,000, particularly in areas of Heating and Lighting and Staff Wages. Some costs were one-offs, such as £3,745 for the Walk in the Light project.

From the Annual Accounts, Income and Expenditure as a percentage of totals is as follows:

The break-down of income is:	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Personal Giving	36%	42%	46%
Fund Raising Events	11%	22%	10%
Donations from Church Groups	19%	4%	12%
Other Donations	4%	0%	3%
Lettings	20%	5%	19%
Gift Aid	9%	12%	9%
Other	0%	0%	0%

The breakdown of expenditure is:	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Circuit Share	52%	59%	51%
Caretaking & Security Staff	12%	13%	12%
Premises Expenditure (inc. repairs)	14%	10%	9%
Donations	2%	4%	8%
Heat and Light	9%	4%	8%
Insurances	1%	3%	3%
Other	7%	6%	4%
'Walk in the Light'	4%	0%	5%

The church effectively broke even in 2019/20 with a deficit of a few hundred pounds. The accounts for 2020/21 saw a deficit of just over £2,000, while the 2021/22 accounts saw a much more serious deficit of £6,660 (this does not include the £1,200 repayment of the loan to the circuit, which is not included in Expenditure in the formal accounts. With that included the deficit would be £7,860).

Fund Raising

The Christmas Festival in November 2021 was a great success, and raised just over five and a half thousand pounds. Nearly £640 was also raised on the door for Christians Against Poverty.

RESERVES POLICY

1. BACKGROUND

The Birstall Methodist Church requires financial reserves to (i) fulfil its commitment to outreach work, (ii) to fund its regular operating costs and (iii) for repairs and maintenance of the building.

2. OUR RESERVES

Ideally, we aim to hold in reserve sufficient money in our general funds to cover six month's expenditure i.e. £37,000, which is made up of expenditure categories as follows:

- Circuit Assessment
- Staff Wages
- Premises Expenditure
- Heat and Light

In general terms we very rarely achieve this ideal because regular income through Sunday collections, Standing Orders and Letting over a six month period are not sufficient to cover this expenditure, and Lettings income has been much reduced under lockdown restrictions. The Church relies increasingly upon donations from Church Groups and other sources and Fund Raising events to supplement its regular income.

At the end of August 2022 £29,878 was held in the church's reserves, and nearly £12,500 in our current accounts. Combined this was just over £42,200, while our outstanding loan to the Circuit was £43,000. Effectively this meant the church had no reserves, and this was taken into account when our annual Circuit Assessment amount was calculated.

3. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This Reserves Policy is monitored by the Church Treasurer who will submit a report to the Church Finance & Property Committee at its spring meeting. The Finance & Property Committee will review the Reserves Policy and recommend the changes necessary to the Church Council.

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	Table 1	
		2021-2022
Income	Opening Balance	50,253.92
	Sunday Collections	8402.79
	Standing Orders	22703.22
	Gift Aid	6251.73
	Special Services	N/A
	Donations From Church Groups	8310.14
	Other Donations and appeals	1816.62
	Fundraising	6586.54
	Lettings	12520.50
	SNPG rent	0.00
	Furlough payments from HMRC	511.48
	Interest.	104.06
	Total Income	67,207.08
Expenditure		
	Circuit Assessment	38,216.62
	Staff Wages	9,105.75
	Heating Water Light	5,936.58
	Premises Expenses	433.23
	Telephone/internet	575.05
	Photocopy/Printing	228.35
	Computer Equipment	0.00
	Repairs	4,418.45
	fundraising costs	0.00
	Licenses	777.66
	insurance	2,347.14
	Donations	6,239.76
	Corrections	100.00
	ADS Accountants	408.00
	Walk in the Light	3,745.00
	Miscellaneous	1,420.26
	Payment of loan	1200.00
	Total Expenditure	75,151.85
	Surplus/Defecit	-7,944.77
	Closing Balance	42,309.15
	Bank Accounts	
	Barclays	9,859.69
	NatWest	2,613.14
	Central Finance Board	29,787.56
	TMCP	
	Unreconciled Chq's	48.76
	Total	42,309.15
	Balance Y/N	

	Funds	
	General	42,260.39
	Total	
Within these funds Walk of Light Balance of:		18,425.36
Loan from Trinity Church		-43,000.00

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. It includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounting records with the trustees' records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and the trustees' responses to such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the assurance that would be given in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed in the accounts) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or

(1) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding to be reached.

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the Charities Act have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding to be reached.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply appropriate*

(3) I have/have not* obtained independent verification of all investments with the Trustees for the Central Finance Board of the Trusts, Bank balances and Funds at the Central Finance Board of the Trusts which are individually in excess of £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) at the balance sheet date.

** Please circle as appropriate*

Name

Denise Wynne

Signature

DWynne

Relevant Professional qualification or body

Address

46 Highfield Road, Groby, Leicester, LE6 0GU

Date

16/1/23