



**BIRSTALL METHODIST CHURCH**

**LEICESTERSHIRE**

(Registered Charity No: 1128974)

# **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25**



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**MINISTER:**        **Rev Kim Alexander**

### **TRUSTEES AS AT 1<sup>st</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024**

Rev Kim Alexander(Chair),	Rev Andrew Farrington,	Mr Andrew Biggins
Mrs Julie Bamford	Mrs Dorothy Bond	Dr Christopher Brice
Mrs Jane Brice	Mrs Mary Downs	Mrs Maxilyn Geary
Mrs Alison King	Mrs Marion Liquorish	Mrs Joan Pearson
Mr Graham Tennant	Mrs Christine Tilford	Mr Richard Tinley
Mrs Julie Tinley	Mr Andrew Webster	Mrs Susan Wheeler

### **LOCATION**

Birstall lies about five miles north of Leicester City centre and is one of eighteen 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 82 and many friends also choose to worship with us.

#### **Weekly Worship**

This year, the church continues to hold 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 is every Sunday evening, (also on Zoom).

#### **Baptismal Roll**

Sadly there are at present no children on the baptismal roll. This is due to the fact that all children previously on the roll have reached their third birthday.

### **Sunday Club**

The Sunday Club meets week by week joining the congregation for a short time for All Age Worship then continuing with our own activities and simple refreshments. The theme each week is based either on the lectionary or a topic of our own choosing. The first Sunday in the month is an All Age Worship service which we encourage the families to attend and often the preacher invites the young people to take part.

We have 20 young people aged from 5 – 17 which can be challenging so we endeavor to choose a variety of crafts & activities to suit the age span.

In the present climate there are so many other activities taking place on Sunday we feel privileged to have a thriving Sunday Club.

### **Boys' Brigade**

Another summer session done. A couple of members have left us over the summer both have said they will return if they have chance. We have had a busy summer and are now settling in for the run up to Christmas. We will of course be attending the remembrance parade in the village.

At this point I would like to open our doors to any young person that is free and would like to join us on a Friday evening for some exciting and fun activities. If anyone would like more information please don't hesitate to contact myself or Richard who would point you in the right direction. We operate in the main hall from 7pm on Fridays and only charge a couple of quid for each session that is attended. The leaders have booked ourselves on a recruitment seminar in Nottingham in October so we are hoping to grow our numbers this session.

The boys brigade has been running at this Methodist church for many years We accept children between 5 to 11 in the junior section and 11 to 18 in the company section. Our aim is to offer a safe and enjoyable weekly meetings in which the members can enjoy and take part in some or all of the activities that we offer. Our evenings include craft, indoor games, film nights, Billie bear, Christian festivals and evenings out.

### **Birstall Methodist Monday Women's Group**

The Monday Group continues to meet at 7.30pm during term time. We have some new members all willing to help out. We have 37 members in total. Our project for 2024/25 was Mesothelioma UK. This has proved to be a very popular cause. With the team from the charity supporting our coffee mornings. We also had Eileens Little Big Band in June playing & Singing along to a full house. Our final treat before summer break was afternoon tea at The British Legion. We return on September 8th with Quiz night. On 15th we present our charity cheque. And follow with our AGM & choose a new charity. Our harvest celebration is 29th when we donate our items to the food hub. Final night is December 15th party night.

### **Thursday Group**

We continue to meet weekly providing speakers and enjoying entertainment amongst ourselves. Many members provide games afternoons and often cake. The group is working hard to access activities for all members, enabling members to access activities where they need support. We are maintaining our caring and

sharing this year by raising money for Heartlink a charity which has supported members over the years

### **The Pastoral Committee**

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.

### **Safeguarding People at Birstall Methodist Church**

Birstall Methodist Church, along with the whole Christian community, believes each person has a value and dignity which comes directly from God's creation in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things, this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

Birstall Methodist Church is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults and affirms that the needs of children or of people when they are vulnerable and at risk are paramount.

As the people of the Methodist Church we are concerned with the wholeness of each individual within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the church community of all ages.

Birstall Methodist Church currently has a Safeguarding Officer actively in post with 25 years experience of safeguarding people. As a Church we will respond without delay to any allegation or cause for concern which is raised that any person has been harmed, whether in the church or in any other context.

Birstall Methodist Church has a current and up to date Safeguarding Policy which is on display at all times on the Church noticeboard for all to have access to it. The Safeguarding Policy details how our Church will safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults who use our premises and provide a safe and supportive community. It is reviewed and updated annually, or at any other time during the year when the need arises.

Birstall Methodist Church has taken steps to make sure those who work with children, vulnerable people and any who perform roles of responsibility or leadership within our Church are fully DBS checked to a satisfactory standard and have also completed the appropriate level of safeguarding training for their role. This is regularly monitored and refresher training completed at the time required.

We affirm, encourage and give thanks for those who work with children and vulnerable adults and also acknowledge the shared responsibility of all of us at Birstall Methodist Church to safeguard the people who use our premises.

### **Other groups**

As well as the above church affiliated groups the church is pleased to host a large number of Community groups, including a Playgroup for Children with Additional Needs, Seaforth Highlander, the Birstall Reading Group, LOROS (Birstall BAGS), Highcliffe Harmony (choir) and many others.

## **WORLD SERVICE, MISSION AND NEIGHBORHOOD**

### **The Lunch Club**

Overall, the financial position is similar to previous years. The club runs at a loss but the use of grants allowed us to make a small profit of £300. This year we have used

£600 of grants and have succeeded in getting a £1000 grant for 2025-26 which leaves the day to day running in a healthy position. However, the amount of reserves for the club has dropped overall by £500 as the club gave a donation for the cooker hood and slightly more to the church for hosting. But the club still has over £3000 in savings and it will be recommended at their September AGM that we investigate being more generous in our donations.

### **Birstall Methodist Coffee Shop**

The coffee shop is still very busy and most mornings all tables are in use, sometimes two or three times over! Prices have remained the same, all items still sold at a nominal cost of £1. Our happy band of volunteers continue to provide a warm welcome to all and our bakers provide a lovely selection of tempting edibles supplemented by some purchased goods. Many thanks to them all. More offers of help are always gratefully received.

We are hoping to provide a Warm Space again for the worst of the winter months as many of our customers are worried about heating bills. We are applying for grants to help fund this.

IT gurus still attend most Fridays and provide a much needed service to those struggling with computers, phones and tablets.

We are running a "Crafts in the Coffee Shop" corner on two Thursdays each month. Anyone is welcome to bring their own projects or learn a new skill while enjoying a hot drink and a cake or scone. Ladies have been recycling table clothes into tote bags to help with funding 'Warm Space'.

The book and jigsaw swaps continue to be very popular.

We are dog friendly, (free dog snacks on the counter, water bowl,) much appreciated by the owners as we are very close to the country park walks. Also much enjoyed by those customers unable to have a pet of their own anymore.

### **World Church**

The total amount raised for World Church in the year 2024-25 was £332. 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. We have eight regular contributors Tim having recently taken over would also like to offer a vote of thanks to Sylvia for her efforts in maintaining the collections during her time at the helm.

### **World Day of Prayer**

The World Day of Prayer Service for 2025 took place on Friday 7th March at St Theresa's RC church. It was prepared by the Christian women of the Cook Islands on the theme "I made you wonderful." The message was summarised in the final blessing: "Treat yourself as a precious and beloved child of God and treat others as precious and beloved children of God."

Next year the service will be held here at our church on Friday March 6th.

The service has been prepared by the Christian ladies of Nigeria and is based on "I will give you rest, come."

Everyone is very welcome.

### **Action for Children**

Year end Report on Action for Children for Birstall Methodist Church – September 2025

Donations in Home Collecting Boxes for the calendar year to the end of December 2024 amounted to £466.69. Home Collecting Boxes are held by people in the Birstall Village, some of whom are members of Birstall Methodist Church. This amount is

down on previous years so it would be good to promote Home Collecting Boxes in the village to reverse this trend.

However, The Little BIG Band is still very active in raising funds for Action for Children. We have organised Concerts and entertainments at various venues in Birstall, Rothley, Ratby, Syston, Queniborough and Markfield and for the above year we have banked £1,060 for Action for Children. So thanks to faithful members of our Band from Anstey, Thurcaston, Cropston, Syston, Groby and Birstall who support this very worthy cause.

In total the Support Group has raised £1,526 from the above events and donations.

## **FINANCE**

It has been a difficult year with lots of unforeseen expenses. The concert hall kitchen needing a new fan above the cooker costing £1800 and a break-in to the premises in March 2025 has incurred expenditure over and above the insurance claim. Although most of the work has been completed the insurance claim payment is still outstanding and a short term loan of £15k from the Circuit has been used.

Income from personal giving by standing order has decreased by approximately 15% on 2023/24, however there is a small increase to lettings income..

Donations from Church Groups, particularly the Coffee Shop, have also remained strong and are an important part of our finances.

Overall total income is up slightly due to grants from outside organisations.

Everyday expenses such as utilities, staff wages, licenses and insurance have continued to increase as well as the circuit assessment..

Another £1,200 has been paid off the circuit loan. The outstanding loan amount at the end of August 2025 is £15,400. £8k has been repaid from the £15k short term loan.

Fund raising is a vital part of the churches success. The Christmas Festival in November 2024 was again a success, raising £6194 which included a donation of just over £530 to Dementia UK.

Overall the church had a small surplus this year of just under £800. A late Gift Aid claim has been made for January to August 2024 of £5,021 and is included in the 2024/25 accounts.

## **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. £44,000, 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. 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 2025 £8,787 was held in the church's reserves, and £7,277 in our current accounts. Combined this was just over £16,000, while our outstanding loan to the Circuit is £15,400.

## **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.

**October 2025 . (Prepared by Maxilyn Geary Church Treasurer)**

**BMC Accounts @ 31 August 2025**

<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Collections	8,439.28
Standing Orders	23,306.82
Gift Aid	12,512.64
CFB interest/bequest/income	1,776.33
Insurance/Loan	19,337.92
Other Donations/Grant	2,460.00
Donations from Church Groups	3,150.00
Coffee shop	8,000.00
Other receipts	367.80
Lettings	13,563.14
Fund Raising	6,193.16
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>99,107.09</b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>	
Circuit Assessment or Share	39,699.95
Staff salaries	8,450.00
HMRC	1,466.52
Repairs and Maintenance	22,828.92
Utilities (water charges, heating & lighting)	7,004.65
Cleaning	2,243.96
Printing & stationery	225.64
CCLI coverage	809.37
Phone/Internet	541.42
Expenses	1,666.87
Insurance	2,880.29
ADS Accountants	288.00
Payment on loan	9,200.00
Donations to other Organisations	1,010.29
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>98,315.88</b>
TRANSFERS to other bank accounts	0.00
	0.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>791.21</b>

**Notes**

- 1) Fund raising – Christmas Festival including charity donation
  - 2) Donations church groups – Lunch club £1400, Thurs Grp £400, BB £250, Monday Group £650
  - 3) Utilities – Gas payment for the last 4 months is outstanding
  - 4) Playgroup for Children with Additional Needs – Invoice not raised for 24/25
  - 5) The Insurance Claim is still outstanding plus £7k repayment of the temporary loan from LTC
  - 6} £15,400 outstanding on the LTC loan from 2016
  - 7} Other donations includes £550 towards the Sound system
  - 8) Gift add includes a late claim from 23/24
- \* BMC should have sufficient in reserves to cover running costs for the following 12 months



Name of Church ...Birstall Methodist Church..... No ...1128974.....

### 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

*Danielle Cecchini*

Name of independent examiner

DANIELLE CECCHINI

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner

ACMA

Name of firm (where appropriate)

N/A

Address

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SYSTON

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Date

6 OCTOBER 2025

delete or circle as appropriate