

# Tavistock Methodist Church

## Minutes of the Annual Church Meeting held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Ref	Minutes	Actions
	Rev Paul Smith opened the meeting at 7.30 p.m. Paul was chairing as Rev Chris Brown was on Sabbatical	
1.	<b>Welcome</b> Rev Paul Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the format of the evening. Business matters to be done first and then have time to reflect on how churches grow. Paul to lead: principles which emerge when thinking about growing churches.	
2.	<b>Opening Devotions</b> Paul stressed that when thinking of the future of the church we need think about the beginning of the church. He read from Acts 2. This showed what the first Christians did, immediately after Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit, Peter's talk to the crowd and how 3,000 people responded. "They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayer". This is a blueprint for us.  Paul then opened the meeting proper with prayer.	
3.	<b>Approval of members of the meeting</b> A list of members of the meeting was distributed as part of the calling papers.	
4.	<b>Apologies</b> Apologies were received from:  Trudi Massey, Tracy Harding, Rene Chambers, David and Valerie Norman, Iris Wright, Jackie Palmer, Anna Dodd, Joan Gosling, Peter Rowe, Ruth Newman, Nick and Mary Clarke, Jackie Shillabeer, Robert Oxborough, Marion Playle	
5.	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b> Minutes were approved and signed by Paul.	
6.	<b>Matters Arising</b> None	
7.	<b>Notification of Any Other Business incl. conflict of interest</b> None	
8.	<b>Correspondence</b> None received	
9.	<b>Appointments which won't come up in reports</b>  <b>To be voted on by Church Council members only:</b>  Paul brought names to the meeting of those who will be brought into membership at the 10:45 service on Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> July.  These are:  Marion Playle, Jennifer Hawkins, Ian Rogers, Robert Oxborough and Tracey Oxborough  <b>This was agreed by those Church Council members present and eligible to vote</b>  Pauline Sawyer was presented to the meeting as next year's Senior Steward.  <b>This appointment was agreed by all those present and eligible to vote</b>  <b>The existing stewards were also re-elected by those present and eligible to vote.</b>	

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	<p>They are:</p> <p>Jennifer Youé John Wright Iris Wright Rene Chambers Andy Marsh Kathy Watts Liz Rowe</p> <p>Two new congregational reps to the Church Council are needed. John Wright agreed to stand again <b>and this appointment was agreed by all those present and eligible to vote</b></p> <p>No-one else came forward, but please let Paul know if you or anyone else is interested.</p> <p>Presently, the Senior Steward and Treasurer are ex-officio representatives from TMC to the Circuit meeting, along with two Church Council reps.</p> <p>There is a vacancy for two additional reps, plus two substitutes if the main reps are unable to attend.</p> <p>No-one came forward to fill these vacancies.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Connexional, District and Circuit matters</b></p> <p>Rev Paul Smith reported that Conference met recently. The annual summary of Conference business is due soon.</p> <p>District - from 1<sup>st</sup> Sept Tavistock Circuit will now be part of the new South West Peninsula District. Rev Dan Haylett will still be the Chair. This new District will stretch from Bridgwater to the Isles of Scilly.</p> <p>District committees are in the process of being rehashed. District gatherings likely to be local, eg, Plymouth, Tavistock, Lifton. Paul mentioned he used to lead a support group for young ministers. At first he just covered those in the Plymouth and Exeter District, before taking on responsibility for Cornwall too: they met at Lifton Down.</p> <p>Circuit – nothing to report</p>	
11.	<p><b>Reports from the life of the Church (as distributed prior to the meeting)</b></p> <p>Reports were distributed prior to the meeting. Pauline thanked Jennifer for her 2 years as Senior Steward. Jennifer will continue as a steward. Jennifer was thanked for her diligence and dedication to the job. Paul also thanked Jennifer for her time.</p> <p>The Treasurer brought two names to the meeting for approval:</p> <p>Peter Johnston – new Chair of Finance Committee and</p> <p>Marion Playle – new Secretary of Finance Committee</p>	

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	<p><b>These appointments were approved by those present at the meeting and eligible to vote.</b></p> <p>Nothing from Safeguarding needed to be reported.</p>	
12.	<p><b>“How do Churches Grow”</b></p> <p>The meeting then got into groups. Paul did a presentation on why some churches grow. It was a bit of a mystery in the past – as people were not sure why some churches grew and others didn’t. Lots of research has been done in recent years.</p> <p>Paul shared some of the principles. There is no magic bullet as to why churches grow. When serious about growth it is really important to start by saying ‘how do we assess where we are at the moment’?</p> <p>SWOT analysis a good place to start. Each group discussed one each – looking at this church.</p> <p>S (strengths)– Premises, location, reputation in other communities, churches and town. Good service to community , i.e. Street Pastors, DATA etc. Very welcoming, Toddlers, Care Café. Diverse age profile. Reasonable engagement with tech. TMC comes high up on internet searches. Lots of opportunity to help. Prayer. Family work.</p> <p>Welcoming, lots of time given, good facilities, open approach, youth work, good preaching and teaching</p> <p>W (weaknesses) - don’t like to talk about this. Need to improve. Are we aware of wider community needs?</p> <p>O (opportunities) – buildings, market town, reasonably affluent and growing, schools work, family groups who meet here, Toddlers etc. Youth work, Catalyst. Partnership with other churches, e.g., partnership for specific needs. Arts e.g., Tavistock Passion, street theatre</p> <p>T (threats) – top heavy with older people, lack of money. Costs of running the building. Sunday distractions. Family commitments. Media, including social media. Technology, far more choice of churches or people decide not to go at all.</p> <p>Paul then went on to discuss how do we maximize the O and S and how address the W &amp; T?</p> <p>Need to recognize numerical and spiritual growth.</p> <p>Numerical – new people born to Christ and then come to Church – various paths – ‘conversion growth’.</p> <p>Some come because they are attracted to a particular church – ‘transfer growth’ . On a show of hands, this is the largest number at TMC.</p>	

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We attract from other churches. Lots of those who moved here didn't come from same denomination. Reasons include there being a junior church. This is a real challenge for some churches so young people move away. Youth work is a "selling point" for TMC.

One story was shared. The initial welcome good. Heard about TMC by word of mouth so TMC stood out - had been to Methodist church before.

Invited by others (personally)

Families who have always been in the life of the church so their children inherit – 'biological growth'.

Some churches recognize biological growth is significant as the Methodist church loses members when they move location. Change of situation makes it easy to drop through the cracks. Some churches monitor this. They set up an area programme to keep an eye on house sales – welcome new people when they move in. This puts the importance of growth on the church's map.

Conversion growth – one story shared.

Research has been carried out on conversion growth. This is difficult in most churches. What leads to most conversions is another person – the importance of relationships.

'Anatomy of local church'. Paul explained 'circles'. Small circle = those at the core of the church.

Next circle out = those who worship reasonably often. Would say they belong here, but are not core people.

Next circle out again = those who would not say this is 'their church', but come here for something, specific e.g. lunch clubs, etc.

Last and largest circle = fringe – don't see here as their church, but they are open to things: maybe they are friends with a Christian?

To grow do we need to move from outside in and vice versa? Is this the right route? Success is all circles to be bigger. Often people don't move to the core. The danger is we want more people to attend, but we don't want to give up power!

A feature of growing church is that more and more people do less and less each. They are thus free to do what they do really well. Church would recognize that as their ministry, so they are not needed to do anything else.

Declining churches see fewer people doing more and more.

Integration is how a person takes the journey through the circles.

Paul told a story of new vicar in Sheffield and his experience of going into a betting shop and being stared at. People can feel like this when they come to church the first time. There is no second chance to make a first impression.

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Does the church have a strategy to enable people to make that journey?

We have an up to date Welcome Pack, but does it have information that new people really need to have? E.g., bus timetable, details of doctors' surgeries etc.?

It was pointed out that lots of information is available already. Transition Tavistock produced an initial pack which was distributed around town. No-one has come back for more stock – lack of connection?

Think not just about churchy things.

What stood out from the above discussion?

Importance of:

- Welcome pack
- Relationships
- Relationships
- Relationships
- Do what you do really well

Bread and butter issues can be talked about. No church will grow if worship is boring. Vibrant worship, where people feel they are sharing in something, is really important and where it touches their life which makes a difference.

Pastoral care is very important. People need to feel they matter as they feel they matter less and less in the current world

Need to get out of idea that exuberant worship is the way we grow. There is lots of growth in cathedrals at the moment.

Need to decide where we sit on the spirituality spectrum. Decide what it is and do it well  
People need to know what they're going to get.

Paul handed out copies of the Engel scale: "Steps to Christ". This is one way to think about the journey to Christian commitment.

Paul mentioned the Plymouth Central Hall evangelism group which was set up at the end of his ministry there. Very few came to church as a result of this group.

All we've talked about with regards to TMC is important, but people come because the Lord brought them. God guides people to churches where He knows they will be challenged, nurtured and fed. If we get our bit right God will get His bit right.

What's important for us to know is that, normally, people don't jump steps. We need to discern where they are now and what is the next step for them? Revival might happen but usually people come in steps.

A steward was appointed to each group and they made notes from that group's discussion. The Stewards will take these discussions to their forthcoming away day, talk it over and come back to us afterwards.

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	<p>It was felt the above was a good exercise and a good start</p> <p>Thanks to Paul for this discussion.</p> <p>Paul prayed.</p> <p>In all the above discussion we have not talked about spirituality – the church needs renewal on a spiritual level too.</p>	
13.	<b>Future dates</b> Not mentioned	
14.	<b>Date of next Church Council meeting:</b> Not mentioned	
15.	<b>Closing prayer:</b> Rev Paul Smith thanked those who served refreshments, Neil for doing the sound and Mel for taking the minutes.  The meeting closed at 9:02 p.m.	

**CHURCH  
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS  
ACCOUNTS**

**THE METHODIST CHURCH  
STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS**

Tavistock Methodist	Church
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FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 August 2024

Tavistock	Circuit	Circuit no	37
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Registered Charity - Charity Registration number

1130587

If not a registered charity Her Majesty's Revenue and  
Customs Gift Aid number

(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 Chris Brown
-----------------

Church Stewards:

Rene Chambers	Jennifer Youe
John Wright	Andy Marsh
Iris Wright	Pauline Sawyer
Kathy Watts	

Treasurer:

Neil Tamblin
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SECTION A		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
		£	£	£	£
a1	RECEIPTS	Note			
a2	Offerings and Tax recovered		137,754	137,754	132,596
a3	Bank and CFB interest and Investment income		2,784	2,784	1,571
a4	Lettings		17,886	17,886	16,001
a5	Other receipts		26,443	2,500	26,598
a6	TOTAL RECEIPTS		184,867	2,500	187,367 (a7)
					176,766
SECTION B					
b1	PAYMENTS				
b2	Circuit Assessment or Share		102,325	102,325	100,000
b3	Donations		10,000	10,000	7,800
b4	Repairs and Maintenance		22,185	22,185	12,727
b5	Utilities (Insurances, water charges, heating & lighting)		11,934	11,934	13,702
b6					
b7	Other payments		34,083	34,083	29,480
b8	TOTAL PAYMENTS		180,527	180,527 (b9)	163,709
SECTION C					
c1	NET RECEIPT S/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR	(a6-b8)	4,340	2,500	6,840
c2	Total funds brought forward from last year		66,440	66,440 (c6)	53,383
c3	Sub total	(c1+c2)	70,780	2,500	73,280
c4	Transfers and adjustments		50	50 (c7)	
c5	TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR	(c3+c4)	70,830	2,500	73,330 (c8)
					66,440 (c6)
SECTION D					
FOR INFORMATION ONLY: MONEY RECEIVED AND PASSED ON TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS					
d	(these amounts are not to be included in total receipts/payments figures above)		£		£
d1	Balance brought forward from last year				
d2	Offerings/Gifts - received for external organisations		1,535		3,021
d3	Offerings/Gifts - passed to external organisations		1,535		3,021
d4	BALANCE STILL TO BE PAID (d1+d2-d3)				

## SUMMARY OF CHURCH ACCOUNTS AND INTERNAL ORGANISATION 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 ORGANISATION \$	Receipts	Payments	Net Receipts/ Payments	Adjustments	Opening balances	Closing balances
c1 Family Work Project	49,388	48,623	765		40,853	41,618
c2 Parent & Toddlers	1,436	1,028	408		1,178	1,586
c3 Network Group	435	400	35		4	39
c4						
c5						
c6						
c7						
c8 Sub total of Internal Organisations funds	51,259	50,051	1,208		42,035 (e11)	43,243 (e12)
c9 Church accounts (to take brought forward from page 2 - to take column a)	187,387 (a7)	180,627 (b6)	8,840	50 (o7)	66,440 (o8)	73,330 (o8)
c10 TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH	238,628	230,678	8,048	50	108,475 (x)	116,573 (y)
TOTAL RECEIPTS		TOTAL PAYMENTS				

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 2022	OPENING BALANCE \$	CLOSING BALANCE \$
f1 Cash in hand		
f2 Bank Current Account	25,321	18,873
f3 Bank Deposit Account		
f4 Central Finance Board	41,119	54,457
f5 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes		
f6 Other funds		
f7 SUB TOTAL - Church accounts	66,440 (c6)	73,330 (c8)
f8 Total funds held by Internal Organisations (the closing balance total from above) (e12)	42,035 (e11)	43,243 (e12)
f9 TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH	108,475 (x)	116,573 (y)

## SECTION G

## OTHER ASSETS and LIABILITIES

	At 31 August 2023	At 31 August 2024
g1 Investments (include Endowments)		
g2 Land & Buildings (see notes re Insurance value - valuation as per Insurance document)	5,908,968	6,086,233
g3 Other Assets - Contents (valuation as per Insurance document)	201,156	207,191
g4 Loan(s) - show amount outstanding at year end		
g5 Other Liabilities		

f4 Include only Funds held at the Central Finance Board

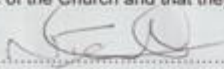
f5 Include only Funds held at Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes

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

Name of Church . Tavistock Methodist Church

### 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 .....  ..... Date ..... 6th October, 2024

Name and address of treasurer ..... Neil Tamblin ..... 23, Orchard Close, Tavistock

..... Post Code ..... PL19 8HA

### Presentation to the Church trustees

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2024 were presented to the meeting of the Church trustees held on ..... 16th October, 2024.....

Signature of the Chair of the meeting .....  .....

Name of the Chair of the meeting ..... C.P. BROWN ..... Date ..... 16/10/24.....

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

.....Church

Charity Number .....

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

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Charity Number .....

### Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the ..... Church for the year ended 31 August 2024 set out on pages ... to .... 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: Tavistock Methodist Church**

**Basis of Independent Examiner's Report**

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

**Independent Examiner's Statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below\*):

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the
- 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 accounting requirements of 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 of the accounts 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 Methodist Church Purposes ("TMCP") or held in other Trusts, Bank balances and Funds at the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church ("CFB"), which are individually in excess of £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) at the balance sheet date.

Name

Signature

Relevant Professional qualification or body

Name of firm

Address

Date

**CHURCH  
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS  
ACCOUNTS**

**THE METHODIST CHURCH  
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FOR THE YEAR ENDED

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TOTAL RECEIPTS		TOTAL PAYMENTS				

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## SECTION F

## STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

CHURCH - CASH FUNDS HELD at 31 August 2022	OPENING BALANCE \$	CLOSING BALANCE \$
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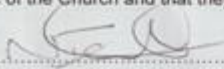
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Name of the Chair of the meeting ..... C.P. BROWN ..... Date ..... 16/10/24.....

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**Name of Church: Tavistock Methodist Church**

**Basis of Independent Examiner's Report**

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

**Independent Examiner's Statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below\*):

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the
- 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 accounting requirements of 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 of the accounts 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 Methodist Church Purposes ("TMCP") or held in other Trusts, Bank balances and Funds at the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church ("CFB"), which are individually in excess of £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) at the balance sheet date.

Name

Signature

Relevant Professional qualification or body

Name of firm

Address

Date