

Annual Report for 2023

Registered Charity Number 1131765

Address:

Kirkley Park Road

Lowestoft

Suffolk

NR33 0LQ

Trustees:

P Axon (Church Secretary)

I Davies

R Dorling

J Read

L Scott

A Smith (Church Treasurer)

F Tucker

C Emerson (appointed January 2024)

J Peacock (appointed January 2024)

Bankers:

CAF Bank Limited

The trustees present their Annual Report and financial statements for 2023.

Structure, Governance and Management

The Charity is governed by an Approved Governing Document. Members of the Church are accepted in accordance with the Constitution which requires them to be or to have been publicly baptised on the profession of faith in Jesus Christ, or following other modes of baptism to renew their public profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

The members meeting normally take place four times per year and have responsibility for the overall policy of the church. The members appoint the Trustees, who together with the Minister, Church Secretary and Treasurer (who are also appointed by the Members), are responsible for the day to day running of the church's work and witness, and the financial and legal aspects of the charity. All members are encouraged to take an appropriate part in the spiritual and practical tasks involved in the furtherance of the charitable objective. Relevant matters may be submitted to the Church meeting by the Trustees for guidance, or may be raised by members in Church meeting for further consideration by the Trustees. Though the Constitution permits decisions to be made at Church meetings by appropriate majorities, the Church seeks to work by consensus wherever possible.

Objectives and Activities

The principal purpose of the charity is the advancement of the Christian faith according to the principles of the Baptist denomination to include the advancement of education, community service and such other general charitable purposes in such parts of the United Kingdom and the world as the Church shall determine. In order to achieve the principal objective which is set out above, the Church provides a variety of activities both to its membership and to the community generally. The aim is to show the love of Jesus Christ in both word and deed and to bring people into a closer relationship with Him as living Lord. Central to the work and witness of the Church is the provision of regular public services of Christian worship. These services normally take place each Sunday at 10.30 am.

During 2023 our Youth Specialist completed her degree in Theology, Mission and Ministry (Youth Work). Also, two young people completed a young leader training course. The Church welcomed

approximately 70 young people to one or more of the weekly youth groups. The Church continued to remain in relationship with local primary schools, offering prayer spaces and support to children in year 6 supporting them through SATs and the transition to High School. Connection with local High Schools continues to grow too.

The Church operates systems to ensure that all people working with children and vulnerable adults are appropriately vetted with regard to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

The Church has read the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit, and is satisfied that the activities outlined above clearly demonstrate that the charity is providing a benefit to the public.

Achievements and Performance

The Church does not measure the success of its programmes only in numbers, including financial numbers, but also in less tangible areas like fellowship and encouragement. The Trustees recognise that these are difficult to measure, but believe that 2023 was a positive year in the life of the church. The beginning of 2023 continued with the interregnum with Rev. Danny Pritchard as moderator. Following her appointment, Rev. Lou Webber took up her position as Senior Minister in August. The Church formally welcomed Rev. Webber into the church at the induction service in September. During 2023 four people joined the membership during the year and two people left. The membership stood at 119 people at the end of 2023

In our work with Children and families, Little Fishes Toddler Groups have been busy all year with both groups being full with a waiting list. We now have approx. 55-60 families we see regularly and new volunteers who have fitted in well with the team. We have built strong relationships with our families and support some meeting for coffee. Adults and families are coming to all age services with more coming along and returning. At Kidz Church on Sunday morning, we have approx. 21 children attend. This is now split into two groups by age so we can help them personally grow in faith. The Older children have also served at all age services with refreshments, welcoming and giving out gifts. Other activities during the year included a local schools event, Music for Schools in June for two days where we created a welcome board and gave out our activity leaflets. We had three summer Family fun mornings using superheroes from the bible. We had around 60 families per session come along. In October we held another family event, Pumpkin Heroes with 150 people coming through the doors.

In 2023 the Chaplaincy merged into a wider collective being present at different occasions such as mind body spirit fairs, wellbeing events, statutory and voluntary sector events. We took a team to First Light Lowestoft and Latitude, working with the festival pastors. Weekly we continue to pop up in a cafe and deliver breakfast and support to local retailers. Our Wild Church has continued to grow with one person coming to faith and around 10 attending each time

We have had some challenging times at Whitton Life this past year but that has only made us strive harder for our goals. We have still seen growth in our groups following on from changing the signage on the front of the building. We have been building greater relationships with those we see on a regular basis. We continue to work with the local community services and the council to provide those we see with the best information and sign posting for all the issues that they come to us with. One of those has been a regular person from the Citizens Advice Bureau coming in once a term to give advice particularly to families, these can range from housing, benefit claims etc. This has been a valuable service to the community and we hope that this will continue providing the funding will remain. Our aim is the same as previous years, to help people and the community where we can, to work with local services to provide the best help that we can, to show love and care in every aspect

of the work that we do and through that showing them God's love we can bring them to a place where they themselves will be able to grow and have a personal faith themselves.

Financial Review

The Church continues to raise the funds which it needs to carry on its activities from within its own membership and congregation. No wider public appeal was made for funds during the year. The Church expressed its part in the life of the wider church by making grants to national and international Christian organisations and societies with Christian aims and objectives compatible with the church's own charitable purpose. The Church is heavily dependent on its membership working as volunteers in all aspects of the church's activities, many of which run with little or no impact on the church's expenditure, but nevertheless contribute substantially to the achievement of the church's objectives. Early in 2023, the trustees identified a potential funding deficit once our new Senior minister came to post. This issue was brought to the membership with a plan for reducing costs and hopefully increasing revenue. The flat owned by the Church received a tenant in April 23 and the rent paid contributes towards general funding. The Trustees were thankful with the numbers in the congregation increasing and general giving increasing. A review of ongoing costs continue. The financial results for the year, together with a summary of the accounting policies adopted are set out in the accompanying financial statements. The church is a participating employer within the Defined Benefit section of the Baptist Pension scheme and has been making ongoing deficit payments to cover the costs of past service of its employees within the scheme under a recovery plan.

LRBC Church Accounts for the Year 1st January - 31st December 2023

	2023	2022
<u>Assets at the start of year</u>		
Staffing Fund	13608	6,883
Maintenance Fund	1456	436
Mission Funds	32887	34,755
Legacy/Capital Fund	80325	121,964
Youth Minister Fund	10230	26,230
Total	138506	190268

Income

Legacies/Capital Gifts	0	21861
Grant Benefact Trust	1150	0
Weekly Offerings	39634	39,093
Gift Aided Offerings	81514	69,468
Income tax recovered on gift aids	24300	19,456
Other income (Lettings etc.)	15821	1,450
Directed Income	20516	30,160
Interest Received	4587	2,371
Total	187522	183859

Expenditure

Property	49901	30219
Admin	8304	7454
Staffing	90778	85065
Capital Fund	0	63500
Wider Mission	17916	18131
Mission Training	3887	9632
Local Mission	17287	21618
Total	188073	235619

Total Cash Assets at start of year	138506	190268
Plus Income	187522	183859
Less Expenditure	188073	235619
Cash Assets carried forward	137955	138508

Non Monetary Assets

Insurance Values 2023	Church buildings	£ 4,637,269.00
	Church contents	£ 172,774.00
	Manse	£ 272,199.00
	Minibus	£ -
	Whitton Life Centre	£ 404,622.00
	Whitton Life Contents	£ 98,950.00
	Total	£ 5,585,814.00

		2023	2022
Expenditure	Property		
	Property upkeep	11324	9,950
	Church utilities	8652	5,965
	Insurance	3930	3,947
	Manse Maintenance	6556	3,754
	Whitton Life utilities	5261	5,547
	Minibus	1144	1,056
	Manse refurbishment	13034	0
	Total	49901	30219
	Administration		
	General Admin	6292	6,480
	Computer Costs	1248	148
	Bank Charges	61	104
	Affiliations	703	722
	Total	8304	7454
	Staffing		
	Salaries	68874	63,682
	Staff support	6874	5,783
	Youth Minister Fund	10230	12000
	Internal Mission Fund	4800	3600
	Total	90778	85065
	Capital		
	Asbestos and Heating		53,600
	Whitton Flat Refurb		9900
	Total	0	63500
	External Mission		
	Ukraine Refugees	796	519
	Leprosy Mission	0	750
	TWAM	750	0
	BMS Appeal (Ukraine 2022)	0	1,143
	BMS Birthday Scheme	420	405
	BMS	6700	7,200
	Home Mission	6700	7,200
	Open Doors	500	750
	Tearfund Pakistan Appeal	0	165
	BMS Appeal (Syria)	1050	0
	Christian Aid Gaza Appeal	1000	0
	Total	17916	18,132
	Mission/ Training		
	Ministry Training E Day	3638	5032
	Ministry Training J Dorling	249	4600
	Total	3887	9632
	Local Mission	17287	21,618
	Total Expenditure	£ 188,073	£ 235,620

Independent Examiners report

Report of the Independent Examiner(s) to the Trustees of LONDON RD BAPTIST CHURCH
On the accounts for the year ended 31st DECEMBER 2023

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The Church's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The church's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

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 church 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

I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of [*insert named of applicable listed body*], which is one of the listed bodies.

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

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

I have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed by or on behalf of the Examiner 

Date 11/2/24

Name R W GOUDSPINK

Relevant Professional Qualification(s) or body (if any) ACCA (Part)

Address 34 Holystone way Lowestoft
Suffolk.