

Independent Wesleyan Church, High St, Rushden, Northants

Trustees' Report for the year ended Oct 31st 2024

The Trustees present their Annual Report and accounts for the 12-month period up to Oct 31st 2024.

Charitable Object

The charity is governed by a constitution. This was amended in May 1984, and again in June 2008 and September 2009. The Objects of the Church are:

To advance the Christian faith in accordance with the Confession of Faith in such ways and in such parts of the United Kingdom (or the world in the case of Mission works) as the Trustees (acting according to the will of God as discerned by the Church Members) from time to time may think fit.

To relieve sickness and financial hardship and to promote and preserve good health by the provision of funds, goods or services of any kind, including through the provision of advice and support in such parts of the United Kingdom or the world as the Trustees (acting as aforesaid) from time to time may think fit.

To advance Christian education and pursue and promote general charitable purposes consistent with the Christian faith in such ways and in such parts of the United Kingdom as the Trustees (acting as aforesaid) from time to time may think fit.

The Church occupies premises which are held by the Property Holding Trustees and the Trust is entirely compatible with the above Objects.

Public Benefit

The Trustees consider that the activities of the Charity are carried out for the public benefit. In particular, two of the charitable purposes as set out by the Charity Commission in its general guidance on public benefit are met:

The advancement of education and
The advancement of religion

An explanation of these activities is given below in the section "Objectives and Activities"

Throughout the year, our Minister (Rev Phillip Hearson) and his family have again worked hard to lead our Church-life. Services have again been recorded and put on YouTube; we understand that a number of people outside of our Church Circle have continued to tune in to watch these. We are indebted to Phil, his wife Anne and their son Martyn for their work on this and so many other aspects of our Church-life; they have worked hard as usual on behalf of our Membership.

Organisational Structure and decision-making processes

Members of the Church are accepted in accordance with our Constitution, which requires them to sincerely express their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour, and to give evidence of such faith by their life and conduct. During the year covered by this report, no new adult was accepted into membership, although we have welcomed a number of new people to our services; hopefully some of these may consider membership in the coming years.

The Members' Meeting normally takes place four times per year and has the responsibility for the overall policy of the Church. In accordance with the Constitution, the Members appoint up to 15 Leaders (Elders) who will concentrate on the spiritual side of Church life, and up to 8 Officers (Deacons) who will concentrate on the administrative and financial aspects of the Church (acting under the authority of the Trustees).

Our membership remained unchanged at 39 as at Oct 31st 2024.

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 Members meeting by the Trustees for guidance, or may be raised by Members for consideration. The Constitution permits decisions to be made at Members' meetings by appropriate majorities.

The Church, although independent, is attached to the Wesleyan Reform Union of Churches.

Objectives and Activities

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. Our Mission Statement is "Seeking to love God, each other, and the wider community - through worship, discipleship, fellowship, service, and outreach"

Central to the work and witness of the Church is the provision of regular public services of Christian worship. These take place each Sunday at 10.45am. There are also occasional services at other times which are advertised both in the Church and online.

The Church has a website at www.weschurchrushden.org.uk. A children's programme operates during the morning services. The Church seeks to be a friendly and welcoming community and anybody is free to attend any of these services.

Regular Church - based meetings: -

A men's home-group meeting to plan events for men of all ages and study the Bible on alternate Sunday evenings. During the year these meetings have also focused on topical discussions and checking what The Bible says about big questions that all people are asking.

Zoom Prayer Meeting has continued on alternate Monday evenings. This was introduced as a way to increase our church's reliance on prayer with our Lord God through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Numbers have fluctuated but it has been good to pray more regularly, including with some Members who are unable to attend our Tuesday morning prayer group due to their work.

The Tuesday morning prayer group - where Members join together in one of three homes to pray for the work of the Church, and for situations & people in particular need - has been running for many years now and is a valuable vehicle for praying for those in need, both locally and in the world as a whole. Regular attendance is up to eight.

A house group meets on Wednesday evenings and this seeks to encourage Members to explore together how to live a Biblically-based Christian life, and to spend time in prayer together.

The Church also runs the following activities: -

A short-mat bowls group meets on Tuesday afternoons.

A youth club on Thursday evenings (school years 7 to 11). These have a faithful core attendance, with the young people joining in discussion times about the Christian faith during their evening and as a break in the games played.

Coffee mornings on Saturdays

The Wednesday morning activity "Take a Break" still meets and numbers – whilst varying week-on-week, have maintained overall numbers. New friendships between our Members and those outside of our Church have continued to be formed.

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

Achievements and Performance

The Church does not seek to measure its success solely by headcounts of those attending, nor by financial performance, but also in less tangible areas such as fellowship and encouragement. It is appreciated that these are difficult to measure, but the Trustees consider that 2023/24 was another positive period as far as the life of the Church is concerned.

In addition to our Minister continuing to play a key part in leading and guiding the Church through the year, he has also been involved in taking assemblies at local primary schools on a regular basis. The Trustees consider the Church very fortunate to have had such a caring and hard-working person as our spiritual leader since 2006. We look forward to the years ahead with him still serving as our Minister.

Harvest celebrations took place in September 2024, and gifts of produce from this day were given to The Rushden Food Bank, with monetary gifts to The Leprosy Mission.

The Church has active Overseas and Home Missions funds – this money being made available by allocating 5% of church collections to each of these. Gifts from these funds have been sent to various deserving causes during the year, including – from Home Missions – a number of local people who were finding the cost-of-living situation particularly difficult.

A church Away-Day was held during September, with a good attendance of Members and friends. This will be repeated next summer (June 2025)

Financial Review

The Church continues to raise the funds which it needs to carry out its activities from within its own membership and congregation. No wider public appeal was made for funds during the year.

The financial results for the year, together with a summary of the accounting policies adopted, are set out in the accompanying statements/accounts.

Income

Overall income increased to £93,047 compared to the previous year (£76,019).

Weekly offerings averaged £767 compared to £674 last year.

Income from hiring out our hall to a number of local groups increased from £14,500 in 2022/23 to £16,464 in 2023/24, reflecting the growth of regular daytime hirers

£2500.00 was received from the deposit paid by the prospective purchasers of the church, when the sale failed to materialise, as agreed.

The Investment Fund again contributed £2,160 this year towards the Minister's stipend.

Exceptional Items of Expenditure

There were a number of items of exceptional items of expenditure this year, including re-laying the slabbed walkway, new fencing and associated works at the Minister's house. This amounted to £8,076.00. Gas costs of £2,494 and Electricity of £1,785 reflected the large increases in energy costs during the year, but with a milder winter, so keeping gas costs in check.

From July 2024 the church has employed a part-time cleaner (approx. 5 hours each week).

Financial Reserves Policy

The Church currently has no Reserves Policy.

Sale of Church building / Future Hall Extension Plans

The Trustees and Officers have continued to meet to discuss the sale of the church building. The company who made the accepted offer (as included in the Trustee Annual Report for the last two years) were unable to obtain planning permission for their proposed conversion of our church building and this sale accordingly has had to be abandoned. However, another local body have expressed an interest in purchasing the old Church building and discussions/negotiations are ongoing.

The scheme to change and extend the church hall to provide additional meeting rooms and storage space has not yet been put into action due to a lack of finance to pay for the work.

The Year Ahead – Although the earlier Church Sale agreement ultimately came to nothing, we are hopeful of the current prospective purchasers confirming their intentions to buy soon.

A number of buffet meals in our hall have been held during the year, with a good majority of the membership attending. A full year of activities is planned for 2024/25.

Contacts with the surrounding population is difficult with our premises now being off the High Street, but ideas on overcoming this – probably with banners on the church building frontage are currently being planned.

Independent Examiner's Report

to the

Trustees and members of Rushden Independent Wesleyan Church

This report on the accounts for the year ended 31 October 2024, which are set out on the attached pages.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As trustees of the Church Council you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The 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;
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act) and
- state whether particular matters come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commission. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Church Council and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matters have come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the 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.

Hannah Rawlings

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H R Rawlings

Denton Tavera Ltd
61a High Street South
Rushden
Northants
NN10 0RA

20 January 2025

Rushden High St Independent Wesleyan Church
Receipts and Payments Account for the year ending 31st October 2024

RECEIPTS

Offerings	39,865.30		Weekly avge £767.00
Thankofferings - Church	2,865.00		
Thankofferings - Illuminate	<u>40.00</u>	42,770.30	
Donations:			
Funeral	114.00		
General donations	<u>444.60</u>	558.60	
Legacies & Memorials		120.00	
From Investment Fund			
Stipend	2,160.00		
S.Sch. Prizes/costs	106.32		
Audit Fee	<u>72.00</u>	2,338.32	
Hall income		16,464.35	
Sundry receipts		27.15	
Take a Break donations		160.02	
Easyfundraising		0.00	
Gift Aid			
Church	16,028.86		
Hall Extension Fund	<u>1,191.12</u>	17,219.98	
Interest - Redwood Bank			
Church	1,925.26		
Hall Extension Fund	<u>978.00</u>	2,903.26	
3rd Party receipts			
Mind	206.20		
Christingle (Children's Society)	104.05		
ENCCS	117.17		
Whitefriars Church	<u>55.47</u>	482.89	
Donations to Hall Extn Fund		206.71	
Deposit returned from failed church sale		2,500.00	
Pantomime ticket sales		705.50	
Overseas Missions receipts		2,512.70	
Home Missions receipts		2,217.37	
Kitchen Fund receipts		1,185.00	
My Christmas Wish receipts		555.50	
Bowls Club receipts		120.00	
Total Receipts		<u><u>93,047.65</u></u>	

PAYMENTS

Minister		
Stipend	22,466.61	
Expenses	1,446.00	
Sundry costs (MPS)	12.00	
Pension costs	<u>1,625.24</u>	25,549.85
Manse costs		
Council Tax	2,719.11	
Water	659.55	
Insurance	336.04	
Window repairs	290.40	
Boiler service & safety check	102.00	
Replacement radiator valves	750.00	
Outside property repairs	8,076.00	
Tap repairs	<u>60.00</u>	12,993.10
Hall & Church Property Costs		
Gas	2,494.33	
Electricity	1,785.45	
Water	627.12	
Insurance	2,778.81	
Heating repair	116.00	
Boiler servicing and repairs	270.00	
Outside works	356.97	
Skip hire	240.00	
Gutter cleaning	80.00	
Fire extinguisher service	103.80	
Rotowash contract	119.40	
Rotowash spares	11.03	
Cleaner salary	876.00	
Cleaning materials etc.	183.00	
Waste disposal	<u>86.70</u>	10,128.61
New hall curtains		2,337.00
Wesleyan Reform Union costs		
Assessment	1,119.25	
Conference fee	<u>210.00</u>	1,329.25
Visiting Ministers		325.00
Donations from church funds		
Wesleyan Reform Union	428.00	
Illuminate	<u>2,088.15</u>	2,516.15
3rd Party payments		
Mind	81.50	
Whitefriars Church	55.47	
WRU Pension	<u>370.64</u>	507.61
Sundry items		
Misc Sundry	400.71	
Good News papers	285.00	
Away Day	105.00	
Zionworx fee	114.00	
Christmas banners	105.79	
Software costs	328.10	
Audit fee	240.00	
CCLI	384.72	
Mics, headset and aerial	<u>409.55</u>	2,372.87

Sale of church costs		1,248.00
Catering & food costs:		388.37
5% Offerings to Home Missions	1,993.37	
5% Offerings to Overseas Missions	<u>1,993.37</u>	3,986.74
Pantomime ticket purchases		812.50
Sunday School costs		106.32
Kitchen Fund withdrawals		911.60
Home Missions fund withdrawals		3,372.37
Overseas Missions fund withdrawals		2,011.00
Youth Club fund withdrawals		219.64
My Christmas Wish withdrawals		248.01
Total Payments		<u><u>71,363.99</u></u>
Total Receipts		93,047.65
Total Payments		<u>71,363.99</u>
Excess of Income		<u><u>21,683.66</u></u>

Excess of income	21,683.66
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Balances Brought Forward:

Nat West	17,290.93	
Redwood Bank	<u>75,001.00</u>	92,291.93

Timing Difference in Pymt made to HMRC	-10.10
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<u>113,965.49</u>

Balances @ 31st October 2024

Nat West	28,964.49	
Redwood Bank	<u>85,001.00</u>	<u>113,965.49</u>

Bank Balances as above	113,965.49	
Curtains to be refunded from Inv Fund	2,337.00	
Unpaid Invoices @ 31st October 2024	2,003.50	
Due from WRU	370.64	
WRU Assessment due	-360.75	
Due to MIND	-124.70	
Due to ENCCS	-117.17	
Due to Children's Society (Christingle)	-104.05	
Due to HMRC	<u>-234.17</u>	<u>117,735.79</u>

Main Church Account	68,674.26	Increase of £13,579.89
Legacies & Memorials Fund	14,253.17	Increase of £120.00
Hall Development Fund	31,130.23	Increase of £4700.83
Home Missions Fund	469.83	Decrease of £318.21
Overseas Missions Fund	501.70	Increase of £501.70
Bowls Club	720.00	Increase of £120.00
Kitchen Fund	872.14	Increase of £273.40
Youth Club Fund	806.97	Decrease of £219.64
My Christmas Wish	307.49	Increase of £307.49
Benevolent Fund (closed during the year)	0.00	Decrease of £836.79
Grand total funds	<u>117,735.79</u>	Increase of £18228.67

Church' Funds	114,057.66	Increase of £18400.72
Department Funds	<u>3,678.13</u>	Decrease of £172.05
	<u>117,735.79</u>	

Rushden Independent Wesleyan Church

Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31st October 2024

Bank Balances

Nat West Bank	28,964.49	
Redwood Bank	<u>85,001.00</u>	113,965.49

Debtors	Unpaid invoices	2003.50	
	Curtains to be refunded by Investment Fund	2337.00	
	Pension due from Wesleyan Reform Union	<u>370.64</u>	<u>4,711.14</u>
			118,676.63

Creditors	HMRC	234.17	
	Assessment due to Wesleyan Reform Union	360.75	
	MIND	124.70	
	ENCCS	117.17	
	The Children's Society (Christingle)	<u>104.05</u>	<u>940.84</u>
			<u>117,735.79</u>

General Church Funds	68,674.26	
Legacies & Memorial Fund	14,253.17	
Hall Development Fund	31,130.43	
Home Missions Fund	469.83	
Overseas Missions Funds	501.70	
Bowls Club Funds	720.00	
Kitchen Fund	872.14	
Youth Club Fund	806.97	
My Christmas Wish Fund	<u>307.49</u>	<u>117,735.79</u>

Other Assets

Church Investment Fund (Accounts shown separately)

Property

Church & Church Hall – High Street and Queen Street Rushden, Northants

Manse – 11 South Park, Rushden, Northants

Equipment

Church organ	Projectors
Electric piano	Folding tables and chairs
Loop system	Upholstered chairs
PA system in the church	Dishwasher
Portable PA system	Cooker
Portable & wall-mounted screens	Rotowash floor cleaner

**Independent Examiner's Report
to the
Trustees and members of Rushden Independent Wesleyan Church**

This report on the accounts of the Investment Fund for the year ended 31 October 2024, which are set out on the attached pages.

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Hannah Rawlings

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Denton Tavara Ltd
61a High Street South
Rushden
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NN10 0RA

20 January 2025

Church Investment Fund as at 31st October 2024

<u>Investments held :</u>	<u>At Cost £</u>	<u>Nominal Value £</u>	<u>Market Value £</u>
Short-term	29599.03	24404.39	24482.30
Medium-term	18420.37	16555.90	16484.43
Long-term	987.36	732.04	727.87
Lilian Freeman Trust fund (all short-term)	1466.67	1207.77	1208.13
Total Stock	50473.43	42900.10	42902.73
Cash at Bank	7155.45	7155.45	7155.45
(A)	57628.88	50055.55	50058.18

Comprising :

Donations (incl Gift-Aid) - prior years	16034.71
this year (Incl Gift-Aid refund)	0.00
Total	16034.71

Distribution of interest, dividends and investment gains this year

Interest / dividends received (incl £60.38 L.F.Fund)	2266.81
Gains/losses on maturity of investments	0.00
Interest Purchased	0.00
Contributions to minister's stipend	-2160.00
Auditor	-72.00
Sunday School expenditure	-133.47 (-79.17+(-27.15*2))
Undistributed this year	-98.66

NB - All undistributed losses this year to be absorbed by the main/general Fund

	<u>Investments matured / purchased / sold</u>		
<u>Sold</u>	<u>proceeds £</u>	<u>Cost £</u>	<u>Gain/Loss</u>
No stock matured during the year	0.00	0	0.00
	0.00	0.00	0.00
<u>Purchased</u>			
No stock was purchased during the year	0.00	0.00	0.00

Note 1 for below * - L.F.Fund costs include duplicate spend on S.School books
(i.e.cost of "-£54.30; refund of +27.15 included in Income - (Investment gain/loss))

Note 2 for below * - "Less Interest Purchased" at end of year 2022/23 included -£87.06 in final column in error;
this should not have been shown as a cost balance at year end.
The 1/11/23 start balance has been amended to correct this.

NB! Creditor - new hall curtains - £2,337 to be repaid to Church A/C on maturity of 5% Treasury Stock 2025

<u>Allocation of Funds:</u>	<u>Start of Yr 1/11/2023</u>	<u>Donations, Gift-Aid etc received</u>	<u>Investment gain</u>	<u>Interest received</u>	<u>Payments made</u>	<u>End of yr 31/10/2024</u>
General Fund	45267.77	0.00	0.00	2179.28	-2232.00	45215.05
Less Interest Purchased	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Lilian Freeman Fund (Notes 1 & 2 above)	8200.99	0.00	27.15	60.38	-133.47	8155.05
Special Purposes Fund	3928.12	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3928.12
Youth Holiday Fund	504.78	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	504.78
Totals	57901.66	0.00	27.15	2239.66	-2365.47	57803.00