

Preston Baptist Church, Paignton Trustees Annual Report Year ended 31st December 2020

Alms and Purposes

The principle aim of Preston Baptist Church is the advancement of the Christian faith in general and within our local area in particular. We are an open and accessible community that is committed to welcoming and assisting all who wish to worship and learn more about God. We offer spiritual help and support and find opportunities for service within the church fellowship and local community. We support missionary and charitable works in the U.K. and various parts of the world.

Activities

The church is open throughout the week to the community, and hosts a variety of activities for all ages —including. For example, Sunday worship, Monday lunches, Bible study groups, ladies fellowship, a Mums & Toddlers group, along with quarterly Church meetings, monthly Leaders' meetings and Messy Church. Holy Communion is observed once a month and weddings, baptisms, dedications and funerals are conducted on request. Our local M.P. holds regular surgeries on site and our rooms are used regularly by a variety of local community groups. Christian festivals are celebrated and attended by many who do not normally worship regularly. Our halls are used every weekday by Preston Community Pre-school which operate as a separate charity and pays a commercial rent to the church for the hire of the halls. We continue to enjoy close ties with the Pre-school. All of this changed in 2020 because of the Covid-19 pandemic as described below in the minister's report to the 2021 AGM.

Achievements

Many times people have said to me over the last 18th months or so, 'This wasn't quite what you signed up for, was it?'

When I came to Preston as the Associate Minister to work with Jez Brown there was an idyllic 18 months when life was full of fun but neither of us knew then that he was about to be called to another post as Lead Chaplain for DPT.

Jez's departure created one level of challenge but none of us could have foreseen, just as Jez was leaving, the emergence of a virus from China that would grow to be a global pandemic; the effects of which we are still living through.

It's hard to believe that the last time we were able to meet for a Church Members Meeting was back in March 2020 and our last AGM was the year before that in April 2019.

What I think is amazing is that, not only are we still standing, but we are now waiting to welcome James Brown to join us in Ministry here at Preston in just 10 weeks' time.

Clearly what has impacted our life as a church family more than anything else over the last two + years has been living through lockdown and trying to adapt to what quickly became known as the 'new normal'.

Whilst lockdown has severely curtailed our activities, I am amazed at how much we have achieved together.

Zoom, whilst being exhausting, has enabled us to have regular Leaders' Meetings and Prayer Meetings. Over last summer we were able to have a weekly service at 6.00 on Sundays and without Zoom we wouldn't have been able to meet any of the Ministers who sent us their profiles and we wouldn't have been able to 'meet' with James at all. So it has had its place.

Daphne and Val have continued to make the church look beautiful on Livestream and it has been a real joy to welcome Sue Brown back to enable us to have live worship once more.

And mentioning Sue reminds me of David Williams' faithful service with us and how, when Sue and Jez left in November 2019, David stepped in to provide music for our services right through Christmas that year and on through to March, until we weren't able to meet any longer.

We had to adapt our Christmas programme last year but what a stunning presentation Debra and her team put on with the Nativity Tableau and Christine Newman with the Easter Garden Tableau. Suddenly we discovered that things could be done in a new way and, whilst we all love our traditions, it was wonderful to discover what talent and creativity lies within our family.

During lockdown it has felt vital to me to keep the church connected and we have been able to do that through the weekly Family Newsletter. When restrictions are lifted I will hand that back to David Reddaway, who will once again produce his Preston weekly newsletter.

I was also concerned in those early days back in April and May last year that we didn't just mark time but that we kept learning as disciples and so we produced study notes for people to follow at home. Most of this material has been sent out by email, once I had winkled out everyone's email address, but I quickly discovered that a fair number of people don't have access to a computer at all and so we have made great use of snail mail, sending out 30 letters each week since Easter 2020. Thank you to Peggy and Wendy Finch who have helped each week with the mailing.

Over the months many of our folk have found lockdown distressing and isolating. The Pastoral Care team have been invaluable, keeping in touch with people over the phone while visits were not allowed. And I know that many of you have undertaken a similar role, showing kindness and love to one another with a loving call.

We also formed the Community Care team, led by Bob and Debbie Baker. We haven't really explored the full potential of this team yet but it is in place to swing into action when needed.

As restrictions have lifted a little, Richard has taken the opportunity to start a midweek meeting at church. In some ways this has the potential to become a midweek housegroup if we can continue it into the future. It's been really well attended, with a DVD followed by packed lunch in the garden and discussion of the DVD.

Another area that might go unnoticed is that Julie Matthews has provided Praise Buckets in the foyer for any children who might attend our services in the times when we've been allowed to meet. I think that James' boys were delighted to play with these the other Sunday when James was preaching.

Through 2019-20 Debra was our Church Secretary and she worked incredibly hard to produce important policies that we needed to have in place. Marion Harper took over from her last summer and has had to create her role in the most unusual of seasons, when nothing has been normal. However, her hands are really full now as she has been communicating with James and dealing with the process of settling him in here.

Another person I must mention is Alison Baker, who has become our bookings secretary. Did anyone think that we would ever need that but she's doing a brilliant job taking bookings each week for our services and she has also become our membership registrar, taking over from Barbara Heath. Barbara, I want to thank you for all your years of faithful service. And thinking of Barbara reminds me of Colin, who stepped down from the Leadership team last summer when we held postal votes for new leaders. We want to thank you also Colin for going beyond the call of duty and staying in place until we were able to take a vote.

A role that we still need to fill is the role of minutes secretary for Church Meetings as it is incredibly hard to take the minutes at the same time as being part of the meeting. If someone felt they could take this on, I know that Marion would find this an invaluable help.

What I haven't mentioned yet is Livestream.

We all know what a massive venture this has been and I want to publicly thank Alistair Harper tonight for his enthusiasm and willingness to learn this new skill, particularly as he has carried it largely on his own.

Since September last year, Livestream has gone from literally livestreaming through last autumn when we had a hybrid season with 30 people in church, then to prerecorded services in January during Lockdown 2, with no one in church and we're back now to another hybrid style with 40 people in church.

The prerecorded services, whilst easier in one sense to put together, sometimes took Alistair 9 hours to upload onto YouTube. It's no wonder that he now needs a break.

We had hoped that government restrictions would be lifted from yesterday, June 21st, and that from next Sunday we would be able to encourage everyone out of their pyjamas and off their sofas back into church. However, we know that that's not going to be for another 4 weeks and so, for some, our current hybrid version of church does offer some sort of connection with a live service here.

David Reddaway has offered to fill the gap with a team of people. How long we continue to make use of Livestream for our Sunday services is not certain. Whilst it has been a useful tool that has helped us enormously through a difficult time, many churches are finding that it doesn't serve the needs of their church for the long-term future.

At the music team's jam night last week, the members expressed very clearly their feeling that Livestream had served a purpose but had strong reservations about a need for it into the future. Some of the reservations expressed were that watching a service, even one taking place in our own church, was no longer a satisfying or fulfilling experience and didn't compare to the joy of being part of a live service.

Our desire is to provide a service for those who are housebound or unable to get to church for some reason, but, actually, the viewing figures tell us that there aren't a huge number watching the service and we know that quite a lot of those who aren't able to leave their home, the ones we're trying to reach, don't actually have the technology to watch the service.

So, we have to ask ourselves what we are trying to achieve and the important thing is that we do what is right for our church. Covid- 19 and lockdown have done one very important thing for churches. It has caused us to stop what we were doing and before we start everything back up as before we've got an unprecedented opportunity to ask why we do what we do.

As we look to the future, we must take the opportunity and the time to listen first to God and ask what he is saying to us about the future of our church and then listen to each other to ask what we want our church to look like as we come back together.

My concern is that Livestream should never again be the responsibility of just one person. That is not a healthy situation, especially as we have seen the impact it has had on Alistair. I have therefore asked David to create a team of people who will work together and in future we will ensure that Livestream of our services will only continue on that basis.

However, there are other possible uses of Livestream that it might make sense to consider, other than for our Sunday services and we intend to review all the possibilities in September, once James is here and can be part of the discussion. To that end it might be a good idea to create an interest group who would like to look into possible uses of Livestream that would help us to take our church into our community around us here.

I know that for James, taking the time to listen first to God, then to one another and also to the voices in the community is his first priority.

Building a strong team together with the leadership team is also going to be a priority and working for a harmonious unity within the church where we learn to respect one another's different views.

I'm really looking forward to sharing in ministry with James. Of course I'm looking forward to having someone to share the load with but I'm also excited to discover God's will and His direction for us. Both James and I sense that God is on the move, things are beginning to happen and it's just wonderful to see God's hand at work and to be part of His work.

That's God's calling for all of us. No one should be sitting on the sidelines as a viewer only. James and I have been having a weekly prayer call together since March, asking that the ground might be prepared for all that God wants to do amongst us. And you can be praying that too, seeking God's will for your part in the work here at Preston.

I do want to take this opportunity to say that even though we've been through tough times over the last 18 months, I have really enjoyed ministering here and especially being able to grow in my own preaching style, but, however slowly, we're coming out of that now and we all need to be ready to roll our sleeves up and join the action. A fresh, new season lies ahead.

Tricia Barrett

Messy Church

This popular event reaches out to families with young children on a Friday after school once a month. Crafts, games and activities are themed on a particular story from the bible and parents are invited to take part. Following a brief act of worship, a hot meal is provided and we all eat as a family. This event is free and serviced by volunteers from the church. It is attended by 30-40 people and greatly appreciated as it allows time, space and facilities for families to enjoy doing creative things together in a Christian environment free from domestic pressures.

Community Garden

This outreach is well used and provides pleasure to people in the community —many of whom are flat dwellers without gardens. The individual raised planters are appreciated by people in wheel chairs and those finding it hard to bend. This project, started 9 years ago, is a recognised success as it has become a meeting place where friendships are formed and loneliness avoided. The gardeners share a common interest and the garden provides a pleasant spot, just to sit and relax.

Befriending

Church members are encouraged to make a difference in our community by personally reaching out to family, friends and work colleagues, and strangers, with the Christian Gospel. This can be a costly thing to do —in terms of time and energy —but has the potential to be hugely rewarding. Financial support of missions and community groups The church members decide at the start of each financial year which mission agencies and community groups to support financially, from 10% of our church offerings. In addition, the church will occasionally have a Retiring Offering - special opportunities for church members and friends of the church to give to a particular cause. We also look to financially support members and friends of the church who are going through difficult times. To fund such gifts, the church takes up a special offering at our monthly communion service and members are also invited to give to this Pastoral Fund as and when they are able to.

Financial Accounts

Our offerings were lower than the previous year because of the church not meeting together throughout lockdown. Direct giving to the church bank account did increase which helped to support the church through a difficult year. There was an excess of expenditure over income of £666. The gift of £15,000 received in the previous year was spent on essential roof repairs during 2020. During the year the church purchased a camera and laptop for livestreaming, both of which were paid for from a generous donation from a member of the church.

Reserves Policy

The trustees have a policy to maintain reserves of at least three months overhead expenditure, At the end of the year the church had free reserves of £28,487 which would more than cover expected expenditure for three months.

Church Trustees

To be eligible for election, Trustees must be church members nominated by other members. Church leaders were called deacons, but, during the year were renamed as members of the church leadership team. Each leader's period of service is for a three year term, which may be extended for a further term, if nominated, but they may serve no longer than two terms before stepping down for at least a year. The Church Officers (Secretary and Treasurer) are elected annually at the AGM and can serve for as many terms as the members decide.

Trustees (Church Leadership team) who served from 1st January 2020 and the date of this report were:

Ministers

Revd Tricia Barrett

Revd James Brown (from 11th September 2021)

Secretary

Debra Barton (annual appointment -to AGM April 2020)
Marion Harper (from 2020 AGM)

Treasurer

Ian Barrett (annual appointment)

Leadership Team

Susan Gibbons
Colin Heath (until AGM 2020)
Richard Barton (until AGM 2021)
Andrew Collis (until AGM 2021)
David Baker
Marion Harper
Dave Matthews (from AGM 2020)
Wendy Jeffs (from AGM 2021)
Bob Baker (from AGM 2021)

Administrative Information

Preston Baptist Church is situated in Old Torquay Road, Preston, Paignton, TQ3 2RB
Charity Registration number: 1133521
The Church's current Constitution is dated July 2016

On behalf of the Trustees

Preston Baptist Church, Paignton
Receipts and Payments Account for the
Year Ended 31st December 2020

Charity no. 1133521

		2020		2019
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
Receipts				
Offerings & donations	48349	6220	54569	79991
Gift aid	0		0	0
Legacy	0		0	0
Use of church premises	18174		18174	24060
Sundry Income	565	0	565	337
Rental income	17531		17531	9083
	84619	6220	90839	113471
Payments				
Stipend and pension	19541		19541	45392
Telephone	2132		2132	1742
Travel	151		151	953
Conferences	200		200	176
Music & worship	1746		1746	1091
Teaching resources	354		354	278
Visiting speakers	550		550	690
Advertising & publicity	203		203	310
Subscriptions	569		569	557
Social events	0		0	777
Mission & community giving	2000	1598	3598	666
Pastoral gifts	0	793	793	2048
Evangelistic projects	103		103	49
Ladies fellowship	0		0	0
Youth & children	0		0	189
Flowers	0	0	0	112
Catering	195		195	607
Church expenditure	43698		43698	29529
Manse expenditure	5437		5437	6075
Office expenditure	2174		2174	1954
Investment property expenditure	3736		3736	60
Professional fees	288		288	500
Finance	60		60	60
Sundry expenditure	148		148	1822
Fixtures, fittings & equipment		1434	1434	1659
Memorial loan repayment	2000		2000	2000
	85285	3825	89110	99296
Excess of Expenditure over Income	-666	2395	1729	14175
Cash at 1st January 2020	29153	3963	33116	18941
Cash at 31st December 2020	28487	6358	34845	33116

Preston Baptist Church, Paignton
Statement of Assets and Liabilities
At 31st December 2020

Charity no. 1133521

	<i>Unrestricted</i>	<i>2020 Restricted</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>2019 Total</i>
<i>Cash Funds</i>				
Cash at bank	28457	6358	34815	33086
Cash in hand	30		30	30
<i>Total</i>	<i>28487</i>	<i>6358</i>	<i>34845</i>	<i>33116</i>
<i>Debtors</i>				
Gift Aid	10000		10000	10000
<i>Other assets</i>				
Church - insurance value	2400000		2400000	2400000
Manse - market value	380000		380000	380000
Investment property-market value	165000		165000	165000
Church fittings & equipment	150000		150000	150000
	<i>3095000</i>		<i>3095000</i>	<i>3095000</i>
<i>Creditors</i>				
Memorial loan from SWBA	12000		12000	14000
BU Pension deficit	91600		91600	150000
	<i>103600</i>		<i>103600</i>	<i>164000</i>

Approved by the trustees 22nd June 2021

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Preston Baptist Church, Paignton
Charity no. 1133521**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Preston Baptist Church, Paignton (the Church) for the year ended 31st December 2020.

Responsibilities and basis of the report

As the charity trustees of the church 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 2011 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.

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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of the church as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. The accounts do not accord with those 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.



David Rudall FMAAT
Greenwood Accountancy Ltd
5 & 7 Pellew Arcade
Teignmouth TQ14 8EB

Dated: 25 October 2021