

**22/23 Sherwood Forest Circuit**  
Charity Registration Number: 1133801

**Trustees' Report**  
and  
**Financial Statement**  
for the year ended  
**31 August 2024**

# **Administrative Information**

## **Circuit Ministers**

Rev Stuart Ellis (Superintendent)

Rev Debbie Keegan

Deacon Dave Keegan

## **Children & Families Coordinator**

Mrs Danni Coles

## **Circuit Stewards**

Mr Keith Bonsall

Mr Matt Cullen

Mrs Wendy Ince

Rev Bob Jones (Circuit Treasurer)

## **Independent Examiner:**

Mr Geof Lawton

# Trustee Report

## Governance & Management

The Circuit is governed by the Methodist Church Act 1976, the Deed of Union and the Model Trust Deeds of the Methodist Church.

The purposes of the Methodist Church are, and shall be deemed to have been since the date of Union, the advancement of:

- a. The Christian faith in accordance with the doctrinal standards and the discipline of the Methodist Church, and
- b. Any charitable purpose for the time being of any Connexional, District, Circuit, local or other organisation of the Methodist Church, and
- c. Any charitable purpose for the time being of any society or institution or subsidiary or ancillary to the Methodist Church.

The Circuit is a group of local churches. Circuits combine to form 30 Districts in Great Britain. Although there is some autonomy, all Methodist organisations in Great Britain are governed by the statutes determined by the Methodist Conference and which are published in the Constitution, Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church. Conference is the supreme body within the church: it delegates much of its authority to the Methodist Council. Both Conference and Council consist of lay and ordained members.

In setting objectives and planning activities, the Circuit Meeting, held three or four times a year has given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and, in particular, to its supplementary public benefit guidance on advancing our objectives as set out above.

During the year, the Circuit Leadership Team (consisting of the Circuit Stewards, Ministers and Circuit Treasurer) met regularly to keep the life of the Circuit under review and to take forward the decisions of the Circuit Meeting.

## Activities

Our mission is

*"To equip the people of God for works of mission and service so that they can hear, tell and be the Good News of Jesus Christ"*

We aim to achieve this through encouraging Christian discipleship individually and collectively through the following of the Methodist Way of Life in order to follow Our Calling:



#### **Worship**

The Church exists to increase awareness of God's presence and to celebrate God's love

#### **Learning and Caring**

The Church exists to help people to grow and learn as Christians, through mutual support and care



#### **Service**

The Church exists to be a good neighbour to people in need and to challenge injustice

#### **Evangelism**

The Church exists to make more followers of Jesus Christ



Our Annual Mission Plan sets out aims and objectives under these headings for the Circuit and its member churches to aim to and is regularly reported to and evaluated by the Circuit Meeting and the Circuit Leadership Team.

# Organisational Structure

1. Overall control rest with the Methodist Conference
2. The Connexional Office implements decisions made by Conference and is also responsible for the stationing of Ministers in the individual Circuits
3. Connexional decisions are passed to the Chair of the District and the appropriate Officers of the District for regional implementation
4. The Districts pass down the control to Circuit level for local implementation by the Superintendent minister, ministerial staff, Circuit stewards and others. Authority can be delegated by the Connexion and District to the Circuit Meeting for certain matters.
5. The Circuit Meeting passes down control to church councils for local implementation by the Minister, the church stewards and other officers. The church councils act as managing trustees.
6. The Circuit Superintendent chairs meetings of the Circuit Leadership Team (CLT) and the Circuit Meeting, which trustees are expected to attend. Policy decisions are taken at the Circuit Meeting which is the supreme body for deciding matters at Circuit Level. Some powers are delegated by the Circuit Meeting to the CLT and other groups.
7. Churches, Circuits and Districts are able to pass matters upwards for consideration, ultimately to the Conference, for consideration and implementation where appropriate.
8. The Methodist Connexional year runs annually from 1 September to 31 August.

## Charity Registration

The Sherwood Forest Methodist Circuit is registered charity whose registration number is 1133801

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty under the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

Specifically:

- Many churches make their premises available to other organisations that need somewhere to meet
- Some churches have long term tenants
- Uniformed organisations (such as beavers, cubs, scouts, rainbows, brownies, guides) are affiliated to some of our churches and meet at church premises
- Other outreach activities
- Raising money for other charities

# Trustees

The following Trustees (some with dual roles) were listed as current as at August 2022. Records are held of Trustees in post and attending meetings during the course of the 2021-22 Connexional Year.

## Members of Circuit Meeting at 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023

<u>Name</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Appointed by</u>
Rev Stuart Ellis	Chair	Methodist Conference
Rev Barry Smith		Circuit
Rev Chris Briggs		District
Rev Debra Keegan		Methodist Conference
Deacon Dave Keegan		Methodist Conference
Rev Robert Jones	Interim Circuit Treasurer	Circuit
Rev Linda Williams	Worship Leaders Secretary	Methodist Conference
Rev John Williams		Methodist Conference
Mr Keith Bonsall	Property	Circuit Meeting
Mr Andrew Shewen	Connexional Giving	Circuit Meeting
Mrs Joyce Cree	Minutes Secretary	Circuit Meeting
Mrs Wendy Ince	Circuit Steward	Circuit Meeting
Mr Matt Cullen	Circuit Steward	Circuit Meeting
Mr Barrie Richmond	Local Preachers Secretary	Circuit Meeting
Mr Philip Shead	Circuit Safeguarding	Circuit Meeting
Mrs Ann Jones		MMC Nottingham Raod Church Council
Mrs Pam Clarke		MMC BBL Church Council
Mr Colin Baird		MMC BBL Church Council
Mrs Maz Allsop		MMC BBL Church Council
Mr Alan Darlington		MMC BBL Church Council
Mrs Anne Clayton		M/W Church Council
Mr Steve Cree		M/W Church Council
Mr Robert Vickers		Bilsthorpe Church Council
Mrs Michelle Shead		The Meden Church Council
Mr Neil Younger		The Meden Church Council
Mrs Anne Ayodele		The Meden Church Council
Mrs Doreen Jackson		Ollerton Church Council
Dr S Head		Ollerton Church Council
Mr Simon Crane		Blidworth Church Council
Mrs Elizabeth Crane		Blidworth Church Council
Mr Alan Mosley		Rainworth Church Council
Mrs Enid Marsh		Farnsfield Church Council

Mrs Maggie Westby		Farnsfield Church Council
Mr David Wilmot		Farnsfield Church Council
Miss Ann Griffiths		CRS Church Council
Mr John Berrington		CRS Church Council

# Safeguarding

The Church of England and the Methodist Church work in partnership with other Christian Churches and other agencies in delivering safeguarding. The Circuit supports the following statement of principles agreed by the denominations:

We share a commitment to:

- The care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and all adults
- The safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and all adults
- The establishment of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where victims of abuse can report or disclose abuse and where they can find support and best practice that contributes to the prevention of abuse.

Each church in the Circuit is required to appoint a safeguarding representative and the Circuit appoints a Safeguarding Officer to coordinate policies, practices and training which promotes safe practice amongst children and vulnerable adults.

## Staff Responsibilities & Changes

Rev Stuart Ellis became the Superintendent Minister on 1 September 2021 and held pastoral oversight of the following churches:

- Mansfield Methodist Church, Big Barn Lane
- Mansfield Methodist Church, Nottingham Road (formerly known as Bethel)
- Blidworth Methodist Church
- Rainworth Methodist Church
- Chesterfield Road South Methodist Church\*
  - o Shirebrook Methodist Church (Class of Chesterfield Road South)

Rev Debbie Keegan joined the Circuit on 1 September 2016 and held pastoral oversight over the following churches

- Ollerton Methodist Church
- Meden Vale Methodist Church
- Trinity, Mansfield Woodhouse Methodist Church
- Bilsthorpe Methodist Church
- Farnsfield Methodist Church
  - o Ompton Methodist Church (Class of Farnsfield)

Deacon Dave Keegan joined the Circuit on 1 September 2016 and is responsible for outreach and pioneer projects within the Circuit area and was particularly focused on supporting work within the Meden Vale community.

Mrs Danni Coles, joined the Circuit on 1 September 2020 and is employed as a Children and Families Coordinator supporting the outreach and pioneer work within the Circuit area. She was involved in a range of projects focused on children and families, including toddler groups, bespoke outreach and school chaplaincy.

A new project led by Rev Debbie & Deacon Dave Keegan - "The Sanctuary - Christian Spirituality & Wellbeing Centre was started, being housed at Trinity Methodist Church, Mansfield Woodhouse.

## **Risk Management**

Through its CLT, risks faced by the Circuit have been considered and ongoing mitigation strategies discussed and enacted where possible. Where possible appropriate risks are insured – currently with the Methodist Insurance Company. The security and safety of our churches is largely for local churches to determine and to mitigate, taking advice from Circuit Officers and Insurers as appropriate.

All churches and manses are subject to quinquennial inspections and the reports on each are reviewed at a Circuit Level as well as by local trustees. Action is taken to maintain premises and reduce health and safety risks to all who have a legitimate purpose to be on those premises.

All churches have been surveyed for the presence of asbestos and reports made available to local churches for appropriate action if and when required.

We have considered the resilience of churches and the risk that they will not meet their assessments payments to cover central and staffing costs. We put together a financial plan for the Circuit and judge that there are sufficient resources to cover possible shortfalls in the foreseeable future.

The Circuit operates within a statutory framework of regulation and seeks to ensure that it follows Methodist Standing Orders. It relies on the Connexional Office to provide guidance on changes that could affect the Circuit and its churches.

## Trustees' Expenses

With the exception of ministerial staff, supernumerary staff and staff employed by the Circuit, who can claim for travel and out-of-pocket expenses, members of the Circuit Meeting received neither payment or reimbursement of their expenses in connection with their role as trustees.

## Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the Circuit's financial activities during the year and of its financial position at the end of the year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees have:

- Selected suitable accounting policies and applied them consistently using the receipts and payment method
- Made judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- Followed applicable accounting standards
- Prepared the financial statements on a going concern basis

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Circuit and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the law. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Circuit and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention of fraud and other irregularities.

Trustees have a right to advise the independent examiner of their concerns but none has done so. The CLT concludes, therefore, that there are no issues to be advised to the independent examiner.

## Financial Review

The Circuit prepares receipts and payment accounts. They are not a consolidation of the accounts of the accounts of the churches in the Circuit. The Circuit budget is prepared by first anticipating the expenditure for the forthcoming year and then by determining how that sum will be raised.

The Circuit adopted the following policy principles for the reserves in the 2022-3 Connexional Year:

- *Churches would be expected to meet their assessment payments based on the staffing commitments agreed by the Circuit Meeting (for ministers, until 2026)*
- *Spending from reserves would not exceed £35,000 per annum and would cover staff costs over and above achievable levels of income*
- *The assumptions are that reserves will be replenished once the sale of the Bridge Street site is complete.*

## Capital Assets

The proceeds of sale of the premises of any Methodist Church or manse within the Circuit is generally credited to the Circuit. There is, however, a substantial levy paid to the Connexion (the Methodist Church in GB) so not all proceeds are received by the Circuit. The sale of manses requires proceeds to be spent on new manses or capital improvements to existing manses. No capital assets were bought or sold during the year.

The Circuit received rent for the use of Forest Town Methodist Church by the Redeemed Church of God and from two unused manses within the Circuit boundaries.

## Funding of the Circuit's Costs

This is achieved primarily by making an assessment on each church within the Circuit using a determinative formula agreed by the Circuit Meeting. If any church were to close, that church's assessment would not be paid to the Circuit during the remainder of that year, unless it had liquid assets to do so. The Circuit's costs, principally stipends, salaries, housing and insurance costs would continue and there may be a need to draw upon reserves to meet the shortfall in income.

## Annual Costs

The Circuit believes that it should ensure that it has income and reserves sufficient to cover its current staffing of three ministers (including one deacon) and a lay employee. The CLT and Circuit Meeting ensure that spending from reserves is kept at a sustainable level.

# Approvals

This report and the Financial Statements of the Circuit were approved by the Circuit Meeting held on 5 June, subject to inspection by the independent examiner. The examiner signed the Financial Statements in [June 2024] to confirm that they had completed the inspection satisfactorily.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:

*Stuart Ellis*

.....

Rev Stuart Ellis  
Superintendent Minister

.....

Rev R Jones  
Circuit Treasurer

Name of Circuit

Sherwood Forest Methodist Circuit

## Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted) £	Circuit Model Trust (Unrestricted) £
<b>Income</b>			
1 Donations and legacies		1,762	
2 Income from monetary investments		241	11,642
3 Income from investment properties		29,331	
4 Assessments on Churches		179,679	
5 Capital Receipts			
6 Grants received			
7 Other charitable income		29,812	
<b>8 Total income</b>		<b>240,825</b>	<b>11,642</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
9 Grants and donations		9,878	
10 Salaries and associated costs		152,554	
11 Property maintenance		47,856	
12 Connexional assessment & model trust levy			
13 District Assessment & Levy		59,517	8,824
14 Depreciation			
15 Office expenses			
16 Other outgoings		24,049	646
<b>17 Total charitable expenditure</b>		<b>293,854</b>	<b>9,470</b>
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments			
19 Gains/(losses) on investment properties			
<b>20 Net income/(expenditure)</b>		<b>-53,029</b>	<b>2,172</b>
21 Transfers between funds		30,213 -	30,000
22 Other gains/(losses)			564
<b>23 Net movement in funds</b>		<b>-22,816</b>	<b>-27,264</b>
24 Total funds brought forward		<b>782,399</b>	<b>226,488</b>
<b>25 Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>759,583</b>	<b>199,224</b>

Circuit No 22/23

d 31 August 2024

Designated Funds (unrestricted) £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2023-24 £
		229	1,762
			12,112
			29,331
			179,679
			0
			0
-	-	229	252,696
			9,878
			152,554
			47,856
			0
			68,341
			0
			0
		16	24,711
0	0	16	303,340
			0
0	0	213	-50,644
	-	213	0
		270	834
0	0	270	-49,810
-	-	5,629	1,014,516
-	-	5,899	964,706

## Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these accruals-based accounts for the year to 31 August 2024 have been prepared from the records of the Circuit and that they include all funds under the control of the Circuit meeting.

Signature of treasurer .....R H Jones..... Date: 10.02.24..

Name and address of treasurer ...Revd. Robert Howard Jones

HEDDWCH, 9, Blakeney Drive, Mansfield. .... Post Code NG18 4DN

### Presentation to the Circuit meeting

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2024 were presented to the Circuit meeting held on: 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Signature of the Chair of the meeting: Revd. S W Ellis.....

Name of the Chair of the meeting: Revd, Stuart Ellis..... Date: 19.02.25  
.....

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

### Sherwood Forest Methodist Circuit

Charity Number 1133801

### Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the .....  
Circuit for the year ended 31 August 2024 set out on pages ... to .... As the Circuit'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 Circuit'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

## Independent Examiner's Statement

[The Circuit's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of (*insert name of applicable listed body*)]. *Delete [ ] if not applicable.*

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; or
- 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 *Delete if not applicable i.e. all R&P accounts*
- the trustees' annual report is not consistent with the accounts *Delete if not applicable i.e. all R&P accounts.*

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 G Lawson.....

Name of independent examiner: Mr. Geoff Lawson.....

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner: .....

Name of firm (where appropriate): .....

Address: 2, Second Avenue, Forest Town, Mansfield. Notts... Post Code: Ng19 0BG.....

Date: 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025.....

\* delete or circle as appropriate