

# Upper Stratton Baptist Church (Swindon)



## TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended  
31st December 2023

## STATUTORY INFORMATION

**Name of Charity:** Upper Stratton Baptist Church (sometimes shortened to USBC)

**Registered Charity Number:** 1133910

### Registered Address

Upper Stratton Baptist Church  
Green Road  
Upper Stratton  
Swindon  
SN2 7JA

### Trustees

Rev Simon Govier (Minister)  
Mr Trevor Morkham (Treasurer)  
Mr David Alderson  
Mrs Mary Palmer  
Mr John Simmonds

### Property Trustees of the Church at Green Road and of 127 Argyle Street, Swindon

West of England Baptist Trust Company Limited  
Little Stoke Baptist Church  
Kingsway  
Little Stoke  
Bristol  
BS34 6JW

### Property Trustees of the Manse at 62 Farrfield, Swindon

The Baptist Union Corporation Limited  
Baptist House  
129 Broadway  
Didcot  
Oxfordshire  
OX11 8RT

### Bankers

The Co-operative Bank p.l.c.  
1 Balloon Street  
Manchester  
M60 4EP

### Independent Examiner

Mr Ian Wakeham (FCMA, CGMA)  
17 Nuthatch Road  
Calne  
SN11 9SH

## ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements of the Charity for the year ended 31st December 2023. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the Charity. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the Charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland published in October 2019.

### (a) Structure, Governance and Management

The Charity is governed by an approved governing document (the Constitution) which was adopted at a Church Members' Meeting on 22nd September 2009. Resolutions to the Constitution were made by the Church Members' meeting on 23rd May 2017, 26th September 2017, 26th January 2021, 16th November 2021 and 17th May 2022.

Those seeking Church membership are accepted into membership in accordance with the Constitution. Church Members' Meetings are held on at least four occasions in the year. In 2023 we held six hybrid meetings, that is to say in-person and with the option of joining on Zoom. At these meetings, the members seek to discern the mind of God for the overall policy and affairs of the Church.

In accordance with the Constitution the Members appoint Trustees, both Elders and Heads of Ministry. These, together with the Minister and Treasurer (who are also appointed by the Members) are responsible for the day to day running of the Church's work and ministry, and the financial and legal aspects of the Charity. Trustees, both men and women, must be baptised Church Members securing the support of at least 75% of the Members voting by secret ballot at a Church Members' Meeting. Apart from the Minister, they are appointed for a period of three years, subject to the ongoing support of the Church Members' Meeting. Trustees meet at least monthly to consider the affairs of the Church. All Members are encouraged to take an appropriate part in the spiritual and practical tasks involved in the furtherance of the charitable objectives. Relevant matters may be submitted to the Church Meeting by the Trustees for consideration or may be raised by Members in advance of the Church Meeting. Though the Constitution permits decisions to be made at Church meetings by appropriate majorities, the Church seeks to work by consensus wherever possible.

The Trustees confirm that the major risks have been reviewed and systems or procedures have been established to manage those risks. They also confirm that there have been no incidents or irregularities during 2023 which required reporting to the Charities Commission.

The remuneration package for the Minister (classed as key management personnel of the Charity) is based upon the Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB) guidelines and national agreements made between BUGB and HMRC. It also takes account of existing historic arrangements with individuals. Remuneration will be reviewed annually each October/November for inclusion in the budget. Recommendations are made by the finance team and are approved by the members at a Church Members' Meeting.

The major risks to which the Church is exposed have been identified by the Trustees as follows, and systems have been established to manage these risks:

- Governance Risks - the Church Constitution adopted at a Church Members' Meeting on 22nd September 2009 (and subsequent Resolutions) outlining the procedures for Church Members' Meetings; Nominations for the role of Charity Trustee, other than a Minister, including the

reappointment of a Charity Trustee (Clause 15.12.1). A consultation process is to be considered before March 2025.

- Operational Risks - Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are in place (in line with Baptist Union model policies); Health and Safety Management Plan and accompanying policies and procedures are under review.
- Financial Risks - Reserves Policy is in place and regularly reviewed.
- External Risks - Regular updates and advice on Government policy is received from the Baptist Union, West of England Baptist Association and the Charity Commission.
- Statutory Compliance - Employers liability, public liability and Charity Trustee indemnity insurance is in place and reviewed annually.

## **(b) Objectives and Activities**

The principal purpose of the Charity is the advancement of the Christian faith according to the principles of the Baptist denomination. The Church may also advance Christian education and carry out other charitable purposes in the United Kingdom and other parts of the world. The Church occupies premises that are held by the West of England Baptist Trust Company Limited and the Baptist Union Corporation Limited, in trusts which are entirely compatible with the above objectives.

In order to achieve the charitable objectives which are set out above, the Church provides a variety of activities both to its Membership and to the community generally. The Trustees of the Church have considered and have regard to the Charities Commission guidance on public benefit.

The principal activities of the Church may include, but are not restricted to:

- Regular public worship, prayer, Bible study, preaching and teaching;
- Baptism, as defined in the Baptist Union's Declaration of Principle;
- The communion of the Lord's Supper, which is normally observed at least once a month;
- Evangelism and mission, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally;
- The teaching, encouragement, welcome and inclusion of young people;
- Nurture and growth of Christian disciples;
- Education and training for Christian and community service;
- Giving and encouraging pastoral care;
- Supporting and encouraging charitable social action in the United Kingdom and abroad;
- Encouraging relationships with and supporting Baptist and other Christian communities.

To undertake activities as a means of achieving the charitable objectives, the Church works on its own, or with other Churches or groups. The aim is to show the love of Jesus Christ in both word and deed; to bring people into a closer relationship with Him as living Lord; to support and encourage charitable social action; and to encourage relationships with other Christians.

Central to the work and ministry of the Church is the provision of regular public services of Christian worship. These services take place on each Sunday morning and occasionally on Sunday evening. There are also occasional services at other times which are advertised within the Church and its website at [www.usbc.org.uk](http://www.usbc.org.uk). Services of a special nature are advertised more widely in Upper Stratton and Swindon. There is a full programme for children and young people during the 10.30am service on Sundays. Occasional all-age worship services provide a choice of involvement and activity for all ages. Each service has its own style to suit the differing preferences of the Church

and community. The Church seeks to be a friendly and welcoming community, and anybody is free to attend any of these gatherings.

The services were also available on Zoom during the whole of the year for people to safely view and engage with. This was due to a significant effort from a small team of volunteers and Trustees. It has been successful and inclusive, with good numbers of people 'attending' these services including some who are either new to the Church or have not been able to physically attend worship at USBC for a number of years.

Through the further use of Zoom, the Church was also able to organise gatherings on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning to provide opportunities to meet, reflect and pray together on issues facing the Church, our Members, our local community and our world. With biblical reflection at the heart of each meeting, these gatherings were regularly attended and have become important in the life of the Church family. We also operated an email/telephone prayer chain through which Members could request prayer when needed, which connected well with these gatherings.

Simply Social coffee morning - a midweek group providing a fellowship opportunity for anyone in our local community - afforded a means of encouragement and support for those able to attend, particularly those more senior in years. There was a pleasing overall increase in regular attendance.

The Church runs a series of small groups and prayer meetings for friendship, the growth of faith, pastoral care and relationship with the local community. During 2023 there were six such groups, comprising some sixty people meeting online and in various homes each week (or every other week) within the catchment area of the Church. The Bible study element of these groups follows the Sunday service or independent teaching arranged by the groups. All who consider themselves part of the Church are encouraged to integrate into the life of a small group. Details of these groups are regularly advertised in the Church notices. A significant amount of time and effort has been given by the small group leaders in maintaining contact with those people in their groups and nurturing their spirituality.

The small groups met together, along with anybody else in the Church family that wanted to come, at the Church 'Away Day' in November at the Harnhill Centre of Christian Healing. The purpose of the day was to inspire the Church Community on its journey of faith as individuals and as a church, while exploring the central missional theme of 'blessing' seen throughout Scripture. We recognised that if we are not careful the church may be approaching a turning point in its history when there is a danger of no longer fulfilling our God given purpose to be 'a means of blessing' to the community and particularly when it comes to the younger families inside and outside the church. Have we settled into a 'new normal' (after Covid) and set up camp too soon? We concluded that the need to shape our values must continue to inspire a more missional culture that flows through the Church; in shaping ministry, guiding decision making and setting priorities. We live in challenging times and ongoing change to the culture of the Church may become imperative to its future ministry and success.

The Church is privileged to have contact with children and young people through various outreach and teaching opportunities with the local schools (particularly at Easter and Christmas), ministry opportunities to the families in the wider community, and with those families that worship at USBC on a regular basis. Groups for children and young people are run during our Sunday services, tailored to the specific needs of each age group, which are called Kidzone.

We were able to continue with Messy Church, which provides 'alternative' Church for families who are less keen on the formality of Sunday worship. It is also a good way to invite friends and extended family who have never been to Church before as its style is relaxed and activity based, which is much appreciated by those who attend. Easter Messy Church attracted 40-50 people from the community (including 18 children), Harvest Messy Church produced slightly higher numbers with

50-60 people attending (23 children), and the Messy Light Party in collaboration with Make Lunch was a great success at the end of October. We are very grateful to those who have volunteered with this ministry and find that Messy Church links well with our different ministries.

Make Lunch, which seeks to bring hope to struggling children and their families through a holiday lunch club, continued to impact the community by helping to address the problems of holiday hunger. Each session provided free, hot and healthy meals to local families, gave support to some of the most vulnerable children in our community and, in addition, built relationships with those in need of the loving care of the Church family. The Make Lunch team was also able to deliver 'bags of hope' (food and other urgent supplies) to many of the registered families that regularly use the club, along with some additional families that were signposted to the Church. The highlights included 8 sessions throughout the year, serving 76 different children and 42 different adults (excluding volunteers) a total of 320 meals. In addition, and through the kitchen store/delivery of the 'bags of hope', a further 1,992 portions of food were supplied. It also celebrated its 5th anniversary of ministry at the Church. Thank you to everyone involved and well done!



We were also able to resume our annual week-long holiday club called 'Summershine' at the beginning of the summer school holidays. The theme of the event was 'Twists & Turns' and for the first time the holiday club was led without a mission team from a Church in USA. With the support of the local schools and community we were greatly blessed. During the course of the week we engaged with over 120 children (and their families) - many of whom were new to the Church and some of which have since attended our other family based activities e.g. Messy Church and Make Lunch.

As part of our continued efforts to reach out to the local community, in the week leading up to Easter, USBC in partnership with other local Churches ran a 'Pop-Up' Café next to the local shops and library. This was done with the purpose of promoting the real meaning of Easter amongst the people of Upper Stratton. Each passer-by was offered a free hot drink and a hot cross bun, explaining the importance of Easter. Free literature including a Hope magazine was available to take away and a listening ear provided to anyone who wanted to chat. Invitations to our Church gatherings were provided along with prayer requests, which were responded to by some people. Over 650 hot cross buns were given away! The event was repeated at Christmas, offering mince pies with similar success in seeking to share 'the reason for the season'. We also enjoyed joint services with the other local Churches at Easter and Christmas, which were considered a great achievement by those in attendance. We remain grateful to everyone involved.

The Church supports the wider work of the Baptist denomination through our membership of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the West of England Baptist Association (trading as Webnet), and through our financial contribution to the Home Mission scheme. We also support BMS World Mission financially and offer other support to our link missionaries, Paul and Sarah Brown in Thailand.

The Church has close connections with several local charities, notably Swindon Youth for Christ and Willows Counselling Service, both of which received regular financial support. Links with other charitable organisations are maintained predominantly through individuals within the Church who have a particular heart for them. These include The Filling Station, a local Charity that provides food and provisions to those in need on the streets of Swindon; Samaritan's Purse, which distributes Christmas gifts to needy children in deprived areas of the world via the Shoebox scheme; and Compassion UK, which administers our financial provision for a Sponsored Child in Mexico. An overview of donations made in 2023 is in Note 8 to the financial statements.

The Church expresses its part in the wider Christian community by making grants to national and international Christian organisations and societies with aims and objectives compatible with the Church's own charitable purpose.

The Trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in deciding what activities the Charity should undertake. The Trustees consider that they have acted in the public benefit.

### **(c) Achievements and Performance**

The Church does not only measure the success of its programmes in numbers, including financial numbers, but also in less tangible areas like fellowship, support and encouragement. The Trustees recognise that these are difficult to measure but believe that 2023 was a good year in the life of the church, especially in that we were able to impact and make a positive difference to so many people's lives through our activities in the community.

We should be able to pursue our mission and vision purposes in 2024 with faith and enthusiasm.

- Two more people entered into Church membership.
- One of our Members resigned from Church membership (to attend a church closer to home).
- One of our Members sadly died during the year.
- We were delighted that a new couple could be married at the Church.

On 31st December 2023 the membership roll stood at 93, which was a net increase of 1 over the year.

The numbers worshipping at USBC were slightly higher than during 2022 as we re-established the mission and purposes of the Church following the impact of Covid on church life. It will continue to take time to integrate new people into the family of the Church. That said, there has been a good measure of spiritual formation and growth in discipleship across the Church family.

Towards the end of 2023 those who volunteer within the life of the Church numbered at least 25 and this says nothing of those who are also serving elsewhere in their local communities. This is a measure of the activities and enthusiasm of the congregation.

The small groups in the Church play an important part in the life of the Church community. The leadership team has invested in training and encouraging the leaders of these groups who have become increasingly important in the pastoral ministry of the Church. Leaders of pastoral ministries meet regularly, under the influence of our Minister and the Head of Ministry for pastoral care, to ensure we are serving and caring for everyone in the Church. The mainstays of our pastoral care continue to be the pastoral care team, small groups and interpersonal relationships.

The Vision Statements for 2024 detailing the specific goals for all of our charitable activity, were produced by the Trustees in December and should be formally approved at the Church's Annual General Meeting in 2024.

#### (d) Financial Review

In accordance with the Constitution an annual budget is compiled for both income and expenditure and approved by members in November of the preceding year.

The Church raises the bulk of the funds needed for it to carry on its activities from within its own membership and congregation, together with grants obtained for specific projects or activities from time to time. Income is also raised from hiring out rooms on our premises. During 2023 the average weekly offering once again reduced, to £815 (compared with £845 in 2022 and £885 in 2021). However, when the donations made at our annual Gift Day are taken into account, the overall weekly average increases to around £938 which is not too far removed from the comparable figure for the previous year (£950). This continues to exemplify the ongoing generosity and sustained financial commitment demonstrated by members and attenders of USBC, whilst the fact that offerings are now increasingly given either by means of standing order or via the weekly offering envelope scheme contributes significantly to the Church's financial stability and resilience.

Our principal General Fund expenditure during 2023, as in previous years, arose from staffing costs, notably the stipend and expenses for our minister. However, after coming to the recognition that we were no longer in a position to support the stipend for a full-time minister, the Members took the difficult and painful decision to reduce the minister's hours – and hence his stipend – by 50% from January 2023 onwards. We are grateful for the fact that our minister, Revd Govier, was willing to continue with us on this basis, despite the obvious and inevitable impact this would have on his personal financial circumstances. The decision to continue without a paid administrator following the post holder's resignation in mid-2022 has also served to ease some of the pressure arising from staffing costs, which amounted to a little over 41% of total General Fund expenditure compared with about 55% in the previous year. After taking account of budgeted donations (almost 16% of total expenditure), the remaining 43% is attributed to costs associated with local ministry and running expenses.

The largest single item of capital expenditure in 2023 involved re-surfacing part of the roadway approach to the church car park, which had degraded badly over the years and had long needed attention. The cost of this work – around £13,000 – was met partly from the proceeds of our annual Gift Day and partly by drawing on reserves in the Memorial Fund which is specifically intended to enable the Church to undertake capital projects of this kind.

The Church makes donations to local, national and international organisations and charities with Christian aims and objectives compatible with the Church's own charitable purpose. Through these donations the Church expresses its commitment and support for organisations such as BMS and Home Mission as well as locally based charities which have a Christian ethos. Individuals within the Church also support a wide variety of charitable causes with personal financial donations as listed in the notes to the accounts.

The Church is heavily dependent on its membership working as volunteers in all aspects of its activities, many of which run with little or no impact on the Church's expenditure but nevertheless contribute substantially to the achievement of its objectives. There were no significant 'gifts in kind', although some members cover minor costs personally. No payments were made to Trustees for goods or services, other than for the reimbursement of expenses properly incurred on behalf of the Church.

The Church has a Reserves Policy intended to ensure that there are sufficient funds to meet its anticipated general running costs for six months, which for 2024 has been calculated as a minimum of £29,000. This policy is reviewed annually by the Trustees. Money is also set aside to finance specific projects and future strategic development, as agreed by members, and this is held in the Memorial Fund. The Church is supported by a steady stream of income from the congregation,

much of it by standing order, whilst together with its significant reserves the Church's financial position is such that the Trustees do not view financial funding in the short-to-medium term as a significant risk.

The Trustees have noted the year-end General Fund balance of £74,193 representing an increase of more than £6000 compared with 2022. After assessing this against the level of potential commitments for 2024 and beyond, they have concluded this is not excessive. The Trustees have made an assessment of the major risks facing the Church, and are satisfied that there are policies and insurance in place to mitigate these risks. These policies include internal financial controls with advance approval thresholds set at Treasurer and Trustee levels; items costing in excess of £500 (other than where already included in the budget) require Members' approval.

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

### Fundraising Standards Information

- The Charity does not employ a professional fundraiser/commercial participator.
- The Charity or any person acting on behalf of the Charity was not subject to an undertaking to be bound by any voluntary scheme for regulating fundraising, or voluntary standard for fundraising in respect of activities on behalf of the Charity.
- We did not directly monitor activities carried on by any person on behalf of the Charity for the purpose of fundraising.
- No complaints were received by the Charity or a person acting on its behalf about activities by the Charity or by a person on behalf of the Charity for the purpose of fundraising.
- We do not actively fundraise outside of our Church building, although we do from time to time apply for - and have been successful in obtaining - grants to support specific charitable activities undertaken by the Church.
- It is stressed that offerings at each service are to be on a purely voluntary basis and are primarily directed at members and regular attendees.

### **(e) Future Plans for 2024**

- To continue to engage with the Reimagine leadership cycle and its application in the Church community.
- To continue to develop spirituality, discipleship, friendship, hospitality and care among our Members.
- To welcome new people into the life of the Church, and to reach out to our local communities with the good news of Jesus.
- To continue to offer online services and gatherings.
- To maximize the opportunities of our Church building to welcome and serve the local community in sharing the gospel.
- To seek opportunities to serve those in need in the local community.
- To strengthen our supportive relationships with other local Churches in the area.
- To make changes to the organisation of our Elders and Heads of Ministry (Trustees) to reflect changes in the life of the Church.
- To review and develop the Church's ministry to children and young people.
- To influence and strengthen the role of the local cluster of Baptist Churches in Swindon.

#### **(f) Trustees' responsibilities statement**

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year in order to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the Charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102);
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on an ongoing basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

#### **(g) Independent Examiner**

The examiner, Mr Ian Wakeham, will be proposed for re-appointment when the 2023 accounts are presented to the membership.

#### **(h) Declaration**

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Report above.

Signed on behalf of the Charity's Trustees.



**Rev Simon Govier**  
**Minister**

14th May 2024



**Mr Trevor Morkham**  
**Treasurer**

14th May 2024

# INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

## TO THE TRUSTEES OF UPPER STRATTON BAPTIST CHURCH

I report to the Charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Charity for the period ended 31st December 2023.

### **Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner**

As the Charity's Trustees (and also its Trustees for the purposes of Charity law) they are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

In particular, as explained more fully in the Trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 10, the Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your Charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act').

It is my responsibility to

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have 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. 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 you as 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**

Since the gross income for the year exceeds the amount provided in section 145(3) of the Act, I confirm that I am qualified to act as Independent Examiner under the provisions of that section of the Act and that my qualification is as shown below.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

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 2011 Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the 2011 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Wakeham', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Ian Wakeham, FCMA CGMA**  
**Independent Examiner**

17 Nuthatch Road  
Calne  
SN11 9SH

# UPPER STRATTON BAPTIST CHURCH

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

### ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

#### (a) Basis of Accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), Financial Reporting Standard 102 and the Charities Act 2011. Upper Stratton Baptist Church is a registered charity, no. 1133910, and meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102.

#### (b) Preparation of the financial statements on a going concern basis

The Trustees consider that there are sufficient reserves held at year end to manage any foreseeable downturn in the economy in the UK. The Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The charity has therefore continued to adopt the going concern basis in preparing its financial statements.

#### (c) Funds Accounting

- Unrestricted Funds: General unrestricted funds represent funds which are expendable at the discretion of the Church in the furtherance of the objects of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.
- Designated Funds: These represent amounts set aside by the Church for specific purposes as set out in note 11. They may be returned to General Funds at the discretion of the members.
- Restricted Funds: These represent amounts which have been restricted by the donors for use for specific purposes as set out in note 10.

#### (d) Income

Income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met.

- Donations are accounted for gross when received.
- Legacies are accounted for at the earlier of the Estate accounts being finalised and notified, and cash received.
- Investment Income is accounted for in the year in which it is received.

#### (e) Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities on a receipts and payments basis.

- Costs of raising funds represents publicity material and promotion of the Church.
- Charitable activities represent expenditure in the furtherance of the object of the Church.
- Grants payable are made to other charitable organisations whose objects compliment the Church's work and objects. They are accounted for when the recipient has been notified of the grant and payment is unconditional and paid.
- Support costs represent computer facilities, insurance and stationery, together with the office administrator's salary costs, and other office costs.

Support costs are allocated to charitable activities in proportion to the direct charitable expenditure on that activity, where the charity considers that support costs are incurred as part of the delivery of that activity.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

#### (f) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes notice deposits and short-term deposits.

#### (g) Assets Held for Church's own Use

Assets held relate to the property of

- Church building and out-buildings
- Manse
- Rental property
- Minor equipment (IT equipment etc)

The value stated is the rebuild costs for property, or insurance value for other assets.

#### (h) Employee benefits

The charity operates a defined contribution plan for its employees. A defined contribution plan is a pension plan under which the charity pays fixed contributions into a separate entity. Once the contributions have been paid the charity has no further payment obligations. The contributions are recognised as an expense when they are due. Amounts not paid are shown in liabilities in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities. Assets of the plan are held separately from the charity in independently administered fund.

#### (i) Taxation

The Charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010 and therefore meet the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part II Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purpose.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

## RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

|                                               | Note | Unrestricted<br>2023<br>£ | Designated<br>2023<br>£ | Restricted<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2022<br>£  |
|-----------------------------------------------|------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Receipts</b>                               |      |                           |                         |                         |                    |                     |
| Donations and Legacies                        | 2    | 54,895.87                 | 1,181.22                | 10,203.00               | 66,280.09          | 75,411.87           |
| Income from charitable activities             | 3    | 2,675.00                  | 10,809.40               | -                       | 13,484.40          | 7,260.00            |
| Investments                                   | 4    | 1,919.03                  | -                       | -                       | 1,919.03           | 800.23              |
| <b>Total Receipts</b>                         |      | <b>59,489.90</b>          | <b>11,990.62</b>        | <b>10,203.00</b>        | <b>81,683.52</b>   | <b>83,472.10</b>    |
| <b>Payments</b>                               |      |                           |                         |                         |                    |                     |
| Expenditure on charitable activities          | 5    | 52,522.70                 | 10,186.85               | 17,616.70               | 80,326.25          | 262,155.88          |
| Other expenditure                             | 6    | -                         | -                       | -                       | -                  | -                   |
| Governance Costs                              |      | 600.40                    | -                       | -                       | 600.40             | 100.00              |
| <b>Total Payments</b>                         |      | <b>53,123.10</b>          | <b>10,186.85</b>        | <b>17,616.70</b>        | <b>80,926.65</b>   | <b>262,255.88</b>   |
| <b>Net receipts / (payments) for the year</b> |      | <b>6,366.80</b>           | <b>1,803.77</b>         | <b>- 7,413.70</b>       | <b>756.87</b>      | <b>- 178,783.78</b> |
| Transfers to / (from) funds                   |      | -                         | -                       | -                       | -                  | -                   |
| Cash balance at 1 January                     |      | 67,825.89                 | 13,360.36               | 22,591.89               | 103,778.14         | 282,561.92          |
| <b>Cash balance at 31 December</b>            |      | <b>74,192.69</b>          | <b>15,164.13</b>        | <b>15,178.19</b>        | <b>104,535.01</b>  | <b>103,778.14</b>   |

## UPPER STRATTON BAPTIST CHURCH

## STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

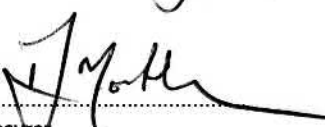
|                                  | TOTAL<br>2023<br>£  | TOTAL<br>2022<br>£  |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Assets</b>                    |                     |                     |
| Bank and other Cash balances     | 104,535.01          | 103,778.14          |
| Assets Held for Church's own use | 2,626,514.00        | 2,623,244.00        |
| <b>Total Assets</b>              | <b>2,731,049.01</b> | <b>2,727,022.14</b> |

**Liabilities - amounts falling due after more than one year**

|                                  |   |   |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Defined Pension scheme liability | - | - |
|                                  | - | - |

The notes on the following pages form an integral part of these accounts.

These accounts were approved by the Trustees on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024 and signed on their behalf.

  
Treasurer

  
Minister

**UPPER STRATTON BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**

**2. Donations and legacies**

|                                     | Unrestricted<br>2023<br>£ | Designated<br>2023<br>£ | Restricted<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2022<br>£ |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Weekly Offerings                    | 42,369.18                 | -                       | -                       | 42,369.18          | 43,923.95          |
| Donations                           | 3,798.71                  | -                       | 880.00                  | 4,678.71           | 11,780.41          |
| Gift Aid                            | 8,727.98                  | 1,181.22                | -                       | 9,909.20           | 19,707.51          |
| Legacies                            | -                         | 3,009.40                | -                       | 3,009.40           | -                  |
| Memorial Fund                       | -                         | -                       | 6,423.00                | 6,423.00           | -                  |
| <b>Total Donations and Legacies</b> | <b>54,895.87</b>          | <b>4,190.62</b>         | <b>7,303.00</b>         | <b>66,389.49</b>   | <b>75,411.87</b>   |

**3. Income from charitable activities**

|                                                | Unrestricted<br>2023<br>£ | Designated<br>2023<br>£ | Restricted<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2022<br>£ |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Lettings                                       | 2,675.00                  | 7,800.00                | -                       | 10,475.00          | 5,710.00           |
| Grants                                         | -                         | -                       | 2,900.00                | 2,900.00           | 1,550.00           |
| <b>Total Income from Charitable Activities</b> | <b>2,675.00</b>           | <b>7,800.00</b>         | <b>2,900.00</b>         | <b>13,375.00</b>   | <b>7,260.00</b>    |

**4. Investment Income**

|                                | Unrestricted<br>2023<br>£ | Designated<br>2023<br>£ | Restricted<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2022<br>£ |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Bank interest                  | 1,919.03                  | -                       | -                       | 1,919.03           | 800.23             |
| Trust income                   | -                         | -                       | -                       | -                  | -                  |
| Other investment income        | -                         | -                       | -                       | -                  | -                  |
| <b>Total Investment Income</b> | <b>1,919.03</b>           | <b>-</b>                | <b>-</b>                | <b>1,919.03</b>    | <b>800.23</b>      |

**5. Expenditure on charitable activities**

|                                                   | Unrestricted<br>2023<br>£ | Designated<br>2023<br>£ | Restricted<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2022<br>£ |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Ministry                                          | 26,470.79                 | 6,758.93                | -                       | 33,229.72          | 233,368.94         |
| Mission                                           | 10,924.66                 | -                       | 980.00                  | 11,904.66          | 13,443.75          |
| Premises                                          | 14,997.38                 | 3,427.92                | 16,636.70               | 35,062.00          | 15,217.09          |
| Income Generation                                 | 129.88                    | -                       | -                       | 129.88             | 126.10             |
| <b>Total Expenditure on Charitable Activities</b> | <b>52,522.70</b>          | <b>10,186.85</b>        | <b>17,616.70</b>        | <b>80,326.25</b>   | <b>262,155.88</b>  |

**6. Total Resources expended**

|                   | Charitable<br>Activities<br>£ | Grant Funding<br>(note 8)<br>£ | Support<br>Costs<br>(Note 7)<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2022<br>£ |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Ministry          | 31,253.26                     | -                              | 1,976.46                          | 33,229.72          | 233,368.94         |
| Mission           | 19,550.26                     | 8,756.00                       | 235.10                            | 28,541.36          | 13,443.75          |
| Premises          | 17,305.51                     | -                              | 1,119.79                          | 18,425.30          | 15,217.09          |
| Income Generation | 129.88                        | -                              | -                                 | 129.88             | 126.10             |
|                   | <b>68,238.91</b>              | <b>8,756.00</b>                | <b>3,331.34</b>                   | <b>80,326.25</b>   | <b>262,155.88</b>  |

**UPPER STRATTON BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**

**7. Support Costs**

|                                | Unrestricted<br>2023<br>£ | Designated<br>2023<br>£ | Restricted<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2022<br>£ |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Church Administrator           | -                         |                         |                         | -                  | 4,909.49           |
| IT                             | 470.49                    |                         |                         | 470.49             | 549.63             |
| Postage, Printing , Stationery | 555.16                    |                         |                         | 555.16             | 699.11             |
| Phone                          | 745.80                    |                         |                         | 745.80             | 782.92             |
| Other Office Costs             | 946.01                    |                         |                         | 946.01             | 1,257.95           |
| Other Costs                    | 613.88                    |                         |                         | 613.88             | -                  |
|                                | <b>3,331.34</b>           | <b>-</b>                | <b>-</b>                | <b>3,331.34</b>    | <b>8,199.10</b>    |

Support Costs have been allocated to the Charitable Activities in the General Fund of the church in proportion with their other expenses included in Note 8, as follows

|          | TOTAL<br>2023   | TOTAL<br>2022   |
|----------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Ministry | 1,976.46        | 6,217.16        |
| Mission  | 235.10          | 255.09          |
| Premises | 1,119.79        | 1,726.85        |
|          | <b>3,331.34</b> | <b>8,199.10</b> |

**8. Grants made to other charities**

|                                      | Unrestricted<br>2023<br>£ | Designated<br>2023<br>£ | Restricted<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2022<br>£ |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Baptist Union of Great Britain       | 2,676.00                  | -                       | -                       | 2,676.00           | 2,796.00           |
| Bethany Project, Zimbabwe            | 282.00                    |                         |                         | 282.00             | -                  |
| Bibles for Ukraine                   |                           |                         |                         | -                  | 254.00             |
| BMS World Mission                    | 2,676.00                  | -                       | 50.00                   | 2,726.00           | 3,068.50           |
| Christian Aid                        | -                         | -                       | 150.00                  | 150.00             | 168.20             |
| Compassion UK                        | -                         | -                       | 30.00                   | 30.00              | 200.00             |
| Harbour Project                      |                           |                         | 268.00                  | 268.00             | -                  |
| Operation Agri                       | -                         | -                       | 213.00                  | 213.00             | 172.70             |
| Royal British Legion                 |                           |                         | 269.00                  | 269.00             | -                  |
| Safer Families                       | 270.00                    |                         |                         | 270.00             | -                  |
| Swindon Food Collective              | -                         | -                       | -                       | -                  | 449.40             |
| Swindon Youth for Christ             | 1,338.00                  | -                       | -                       | 1,338.00           | 1,272.00           |
| The Harbour Project                  |                           |                         |                         | -                  | 254.00             |
| Willows Counselling                  | 534.00                    | -                       | -                       | 534.00             | 504.00             |
| <b>Total Raised for Other causes</b> | <b>7,776.00</b>           | <b>-</b>                | <b>980.00</b>           | <b>8,756.00</b>    | <b>9,138.80</b>    |

**9. Staff Costs**

|                       | TOTAL<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2022<br>£ |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Salaries              | 14,574.96          | 31,932.71          |
| Social Security Costs | -                  | -                  |
| Pension Costs         | 1,826.16           | 5,764.70           |
| Other Costs           | 4,016.95           | 3,473.23           |
|                       | <b>20,418.07</b>   | <b>41,170.64</b>   |

The average number of staff in the year was 1 (2020:2).  
No employee received emoluments in excess of £60,000 during the year (2022:None)

Rev Simon Govier as minister acted as one of the church's trustees in accordance with the church constitution and received a stipend of £14,575 (2022 £27,225). He also received out of pocket expenses and mileage of £514 (at the HMRC approved rate (2022: £270) and a book allowance of £58 (2022: £25). Contributions of £1,814 (2022: £3,371) were made to the defined contribution element of the Baptist Pension Scheme.

UPPER STRATTON BAPTIST CHURCH  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023  
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

10. Restricted Fund Analysis

|                                       | Balance<br>01-Jan<br>£ | Income<br>2023<br>£ | Payments<br>2023<br>£ | Transfers<br>2023 | TOTAL<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2022<br>£ |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Make Lunch                            | 2,387.67               | 2,925.00            | -2,573.50             |                   | 2,739.17           | 2,387.67           |
| Memorial Fund                         | 20,079.22              | 6,423.00            | -14,063.20            |                   | 12,439.02          | 20,079.22          |
| Funds raised for Other Outside Causes | 125.00                 | 855.00              | -980.00               |                   | -                  | 125.00             |
| <b>Total Restricted Funds</b>         | <b>22,591.89</b>       | <b>10,203.00</b>    | <b>-17,616.70</b>     | <b>-</b>          | <b>15,178.19</b>   | <b>22,591.89</b>   |

11. Designated Fund Analysis

|                               | Balance<br>01-Jan<br>£ | Income<br>2023<br>£ | Payments<br>2023<br>£ | Transfers<br>2023 | TOTAL<br>2023<br>£ | TOTAL<br>2022<br>£ |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Ann Davis Legacy Fund         | 3,777.39               | 10,809.40           | -5,590.21             |                   | 8,996.58           | 3,777.39           |
| Property Fund: Church         | 5,254.69               | 1,181.22            | -2,969.40             |                   | 3,466.51           | 5,254.69           |
| Property Fund: Manse          | 1,676.10               | -                   | -458.52               |                   | 1,217.58           | 1,676.10           |
| Pastoral Care Fund            | 1,196.18               | -                   | -388.72               |                   | 807.46             | 1,196.18           |
| Bursary Fund                  | 1,456.00               | -                   | -780.00               |                   | 676.00             | 1,456.00           |
| <b>Total Designated Funds</b> | <b>13,360.36</b>       | <b>11,990.62</b>    | <b>-10,186.85</b>     | <b>-</b>          | <b>15,164.13</b>   | <b>13,360.36</b>   |