NORTH HERTS METHODIST CIRCUIT

England & Wales · Charity number 1133930

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	Previously excepted
Registered	2010-02-01
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	109 Pixmore Way Letchworth Garden City SG6 3TR
Phone	07557128067
Email	administrator@nhmethodist.org.uk
Website	www.nhmethodist.org.uk

Activities

Objects: 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;(b) any charitable purpose for the time being of any Connexional, district, circuit, local or other organisation of the Methodist Church;(c) any charitable purpose for the time being of any society or institution subsiduary or ancillary to the Methodist Church;(d) any purpose for the time being of any charity being a charity subsidiary or ancillary to the Methodist Church.

Activities: Our mission is to be a powerful spiritual influence in the community and a visible expression of God's inclusive love. We aim to achieve this by encouraging, through the churches in our Circuit, the worship, social, and outreach activities that currently exist, and seeking new ways to extend to others the fellowship of the Church family.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** Religious Activities
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

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Geography

- **Area of benefit:** UNDEFINED. IN PRACTICE, LOCAL
- Central Bedfordshire
- Hertfordshire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-08-31	£461,014	£302,953	-	-
2024-08-31	£264,052	£458,117	-	-
2023-08-31	£715,780	£247,758	£2,358,831	4
2022-08-31	£216,080	£248,046	-	-
2021-08-31	£589,644	£278,551	£1,923,111	7
2020-08-31	£257,032	£265,391	-	-

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Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Allison Ffinch		2015-03-19
Barbara Cook		2014-09-01
Catherine Edmonds		2019-04-10
Chandrika Perera		2014-05-24
DAVID LATTER MA		
Deacon M Knowles		2014-01-01
Dr SARA CROWLEY		2022-09-01
Georgina Offei		2018-09-12
Gill Hughes		2026-04-19
IAN BRAKENBURY		
JOHN WILLIAM SHARMAN		
Janet Tackley		2011-05-23
Jeremy Sawyerr		2025-09-10
Jonathan Lindsay Battarbee MA CPFA		2019-07-07
Kenneth Sharpe		2016-11-01
MRS SUE CHASTNEY		
PETER DAVIES		2013-03-12
PETER DRON BED		
REV JULIAN BLAKEMORE BA, ACIB		
Rev Emmanuel Onabanjo		2023-09-02
Rev JOHN WHITTLE BD MPHIL		
Rev Jacob Donkoh		2024-09-01
Rev Zdzisiu Hendzel		2023-09-02
Victor Evans		2019-06-01

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NORTH HERTS METHODIST CIRCUIT

England & Wales - Charity number 1133930

Accounts

The Methodist Church

34/15 North Hertfordshire Circuit

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

and

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended

31 AUGUST 2025

Charity registration number: 1133930

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Administrative Information

Circuit Ministers

Rev Zdzisiu Hendzel	Superintendent from 1 September 2023
Rev Emmanuel Onabanjo	Minister from 1 September 2023
Rev Jacob Donkoh	Minister from 1 September 2024
Rev Julian Blakemore	(Sector Minister – Banking)
Rev Chandrika Perera	(Anglican – Authorised Minister)
Rev Peter Orton	(Anglican – Authorised Minister)
Rev John Whittle	Supernumerary Minister
Rev N Young	Supernumerary Minister
Rev R Forrest	Supernumerary Minister
Deacon Malcolm Knowles	Supernumerary Deacon

Circuit Stewards

Allison Ffinch	Joint Senior Steward
Janet Tackley	Joint Senior Steward
Vic Evans	
Sara Crowley	
Sue Chastney	
Jeremy Sawyer	
Nikki Williams	
Dothlyn Brown	

Circuit Meeting Secretary

Jasmine Hilfer

Circuit Administrator

Jasmine Hilfer
Central Methodist Church
Pixmore Way
Letchworth Garden City
Herts
SG6 3TR

Circuit Finance Officer

Alistair Jenkins
finance.northhertscircuit@gmail.com

Circuit Web Site Address

www.nhmethodist.org.uk, now https://www.northhertscircuit.org/

Bankers
Lloyds Bank PLC
PO Box 1000
BX1 1LT

Investment Adviser
Central Finance Board of the
Methodist Church
9 Bonhill Street
Ridge Road
London
EC2A

Independent Examiner
Sandeep Shah FCCA
Leadermans
St Christopher's House
Letchworth Garden City
HERTS
SG6 1PT

Trustees' Report

Governance and 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 some of which are Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs) with other denominations. Circuits combine to form about 30 districts in Great Britain. Although there is some autonomy, all Methodist organisations in Great Britain are governed by statutes determined by the Methodist Conference and which are published in the Constitution, Practice and Discipline (CPD) 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 clerical members.

In setting our objectives and planning our activities the Circuit Meeting, held at least twice in each 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 (CLT) - the Circuit Ministerial Staff and Circuit Stewards - met every two months to review the life of the Circuit and to take forward the decisions of the Circuit Meeting.

The Trustees and members of the Circuit Meeting are one and the same. They are also Managing Trustees for the property (manses) in the Circuit and for the Circuit Investments. The Trustees have no responsibility for individual churches in the Circuit.

Activities

OUR MISSION IS: to encourage and support each church fellowship within our Circuit to know and share God's love through Christ within their local community.

What this means:

1. We want each church to be seen and known as the people of God in their locality.

2. Each church within the Circuit is unique and diverse, and we express our worship in the tradition of different Christian denominations.

3. We are committed to work in partnership with other Christian churches in our local communities.

4. We encourage each fellowship to seek to understand God's unique invitation/calling for the next decade, to be led by the Spirt and to prioritise being and doing what is most important for this in their local situation.

5. We expect each fellowship to:
   - continue to grow in their faith and worship
   - love and serve those around them
   - share their stories of God's grace with new people
   - develop and communicate their own mission statement
   - change as their community grows
   - be forward-looking and open to new ways of working
   - do some things in partnership with others
   - commit to working towards carbon net zero by 2030
   - be open to increasing their presence and activity in the digital space
   - regularly share with the circuit how God is working in their location

6. We expect each fellowship to think creatively about their property, whether it is well used to fulfil their calling, or whether the burden of maintenance is getting in the way of mission.

7. As a circuit we will support and facilitate this work in each church fellowship.

Organisational Structure

- The governing document for the circuit is the Deed of Union (1932) and Methodist Church Act (1976)
- Detailed governance arrangements are outlined within the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church by order of the annual conference (CPD).
- Day to day management of the circuit is undertaken by the Circuit Leadership team along with the Local Preachers meeting, and the Circuit Meeting.
- The Districts pass the control down to Circuit level for local implementation by the Superintendent Minister, Ministerial staff and Circuit Stewards and authority is delegated to the Circuit Meeting for certain matters
- The Circuit meeting passes control down to Church Councils for local implementation by the Minister, the Church Stewards and other officers and authority is delegated to Church Councils acting as Managing Trustees.
- 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.
- The Methodist Connexional year runs from 1 September to the following 31 August.

Charity Registration

The North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit was registered as a charity (registration number 133930) in February 2010.

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 (*eg* choral and drama groups, The National Trust)
- some churches have long term tenants (e.g. a playgroup at Trinity)
- uniformed organisations (scouts, cubs, beavers, guides, brownies and rainbows) are affiliated to many of our churches
- lunch clubs are provided for the housebound
- other outreach activities

- opening some of our churches most days of the week to the homeless
- raising money for charities and activities locally and overseas (*eg* the annual Good Friday sponsored walk raises over £2500 for charities)

Safeguarding

The Circuit follows the Connexional policy on safeguarding as detailed in *Creating Safer Space.* Each church has a safeguarding representative and there are two safeguarding officers in the circuit to ensure the adoption of safe practice amongst children and vulnerable adults.

Trustees

The following people served as trustees of the Circuit during the year 2024-25.

Trustees name	**Appointed**	**Office**	**Appointing Body**
Rev Zdzisiu Hendzel	Sep-23	Superintendent Minister	Ex officio
Rev Emmanuel Onabanjo	Sep-23	Minister	Ex officio
Rev Julian Blakemore		Minister	Ex officio
Rev John Whittle		Supernumerary Minister	Ex officio
Rev Chandrika Perera		Minister	Ex officio
Deacon Malcolm Knowles		Supernumerary Deacon	Ex officio
Circuit Meeting			
Allison Ffinch	Sep-19	Circuit Steward	Circuit Stewards
Barbara Cook	Sep-14	Worship Leader	Circuit Meeting
Cath Edmonds	Sep-19	Church Representative	Christchurch Church Mtg
David Latter	Sep-08	Local Preacher (Tutor)	Local Preachers Mtg
Georgina Offei	Sep-18	Church Representative	All Saints Joint PCC
Ian Brakenbury	Sep-09	Church Representative	Pirton Church Council
J Alan Burrell	Mar-16	Church Representative	St Paul's Church Council
Janet Tackley	Mar-11	Circuit Steward/Church Representative	Pirton Church Council
John Sharman	Mar-08	Church Representative	Central Church Council
Jonathan Battarbee	Sep-19	Church Representative	Central Church Council
Ken Sharpe	Nov-16	Church Representative	High St
Peter Davies	Mar-11	Church Representative	Benington Church Council
Peter Dron	Sep-08	Church Representative	All Saints Joint PCC
Sara Crowley	Sept-22	Circuit Steward	Circuit Meeting
Sue Chastney	Sep-09	Safeguarding Advisor	Circuit Meeting
Victor Evans	Sep-19	Circuit Steward	Circuit Stewards

Review of Objectives set for the Year ended 31 August 2025

The two Methodist ministers remaining in the Circuit acted as joint-superintendents. They focused on four key areas of Circuit life:

1. Creating small groups of Circuit stewards/ministers/paid Circuit staff to take shared responsibility for tasks, so that no-one is on their own with big decisions.
2. Building up and supporting the team of Circuit ministers (Methodist and Anglican) and Local Preachers.
3. Ensuring that safeguarding good practice is shared and Circuit records are up to date.
4. Ensuring that necessary property work on churches and manses is undertaken and properly recorded.

We have continued to provide support for the congregations of the two churches in the Circuit where worship has ceased. We are currently managing the sale of one of these churches and will also support the sale of another church where the congregation remains active.

We created a Circuit Vision Statement and a new web site. Baldock church is for sale, having ceased to worship and Stotfold church sold.

Objectives set for the Year ended 31 August 2026

We will also look to provide support to our churches in discerning and following their mission. We intend to review the policies and procedures in place and to update or establish policies as necessary. We will seek to strengthen ecumenical co-operation with churches and organisations within our Circuit boundary.

Churches in the Circuit

All Saints Church Pin Green Stevenage Herts (LEP* with Church of England)
Benington Methodist Church
Central Methodist Church Letchworth Garden City Herts
Christchurch Hitchin Herts (LEP* with United Reformed Church)
High Street Methodist Church Stevenage Herts
Norton Methodist Church, Letchworth Garden City Herts
Pirton Methodist Church Herts
St Hugh & St John Church, Chells Stevenage Herts (LEP* with Church of England)
St Paul's Methodist Church Broadwater Stevenage Herts
Trinity Church Knebworth Herts (LEP* with United Reformed Church)

*LEP = Local Ecumenical Partnership

Financial Report

Risk Management

Through its CLT risks faced by the Circuit have been considered. Where appropriate, risks have been transferred by paying insurers to take the risks. Security and safety of our churches is largely for those churches to determine and to mitigate following advice from Circuit Officers.

All churches and manses are the subject of quinquennial inspections and the reports on each are reviewed by the circuit as well as the local trustees. Action is taken to reduce the risks of injury to all who have a legitimate purpose to be on those premises.

We have considered the resilience of churches and the risk that they will not meet their quarterly financial assessments. We judge that there are sufficient resources to cover any probable shortfall in the following year.

The Circuit operates within a statutory framework of regulation and seeks to ensure that it follows Methodist standing orders. It relies on the Methodist Council to provide guidance on changes that could affect the Circuit.

Trustees' Expenses

Members of the Circuit Meeting received no payment and no expense reimbursement in connection with their function as trustees. The only expenses paid were to Circuit staff in the course of their paid job roles.

Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year that 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 accruals method
- made judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- followed applicable accounting standards
- prepared the financial statements on the 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 and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

Following advice from Connexion the Trustees have produced a Health and Safety policy for the Circuit that will be regularly reviewed.

Financial Review

The Circuit's annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2025 have been prepared in accordance with:

- the Charities Act 2011, and
- the Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice 2015 as applicable to the Financial Reporting Standard 102

The Circuit prepares accruals accounts, but do not consolidate accounts of Circuit churches.

The Circuit budget is prepared by first anticipating the expenditure for the forthcoming year and then deriving suitable assessments that churches can meet. Around 75% of the income for the year came from the individual churches within the circuit, with a total of £200,995 being received (2024: £199,214). The Circuit is grateful for the individual churches continuing to meet their assessment during the year.

In 2024-25 the Circuit experienced an unrestricted surplus (after transfers) of £33,899 (2024: deficit of £193,837). Designated funds (for closed or for sale churches) showed a deficit of £31,347.

The Circuit Model Trust Fund finished the year with a surplus of £155,509. The sales of proceeds for Stotfold Methodist church of 197,168 (net of levy charge) benefitted CMTF. In most years, the Fund returns a deficit, because the amounts levied on the Circuit and District are greater than the income generated by investments. In turn the District then uses these funds to award grants we can access.

The Circuit makes a number of grants each year. These are for projects which are part funded by the Bedfordshire Essex and Hertfordshire District. The District part of the funding is paid directly to the church concerned and does not pass through the Circuit accounts. The Circuit usually matches the amount received from the District. In 2024-25 a total of £12,867 Circuit grants were awarded (2023-24 £14,822), with a further £16,210 committed at year end.

The expenditure during the year on manses was written off and not capitalised (as it generally represented expenditure of a maintenance nature rather than significant capital enhancement). During the year two manses were let commercially for the full year, the Trustees are keen to be responsible landlords.

At 31 August 2025, the total value of manses held is £1,709,562 (2024: £1,709,562). Reserves excluding manses assets total £613,493 (2024: £455,432). No funds are restricted.

Reserves Policy

Background

The Circuit seeks to use its financial resources wisely and to predict future needs for capital expenditure on churches, manses and projects. Many of our churches are local ecumenical projects (LEPs) where two or more denominations work together, often sharing the same premises and usually worshipping together.

Grant Support

By way of annual or one-off grant, North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit supports several churches within the Circuit by contributing to the cost of specific projects, especially for mission, sometimes for as long as five years. The Circuit does not generally support the normal running costs of any church.

Before committing to a grant, the Circuit believes that it is prudent to ensure that it has sufficient resources to pay for all instalments of the grant. This is because the Circuit's annual income and expenditure budget does not normally seek to make a surplus. There is, therefore, no intended annual increase in the reserves.

Priority given to projects which:

- share the good news of God's love in Christ.
- help us to reach out to our communities in fresh and imaginative ways.
- have relevance for children and young people.
- develop and equip our buildings for worship and mission in the 21st century which is in line with our Circuit policy and strategy.

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 of the proceeds are received by the Circuit. This levy is then used by the Connexion to fund other innovative property and mission focussed schemes all over the country.

Funding of the Circuit's costs

This is achieved by making an assessment on each church within the Circuit. If any church were to close, that church's assessment would not be paid to the Circuit. The Circuit's costs – principally the stipends of the ministers – would continue and there may be a need to draw on reserves to meet the shortfall in income.

Existing Commitments

As at 31 August 2025 the Circuit has committed £16,210 in grants out of its funds.

Reserves in Excess of Policy Requirement

The new Reserves Policy is to hold reserves to cover both:

- Six months of all costs
- Grant commitments

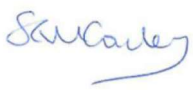
At 31 August 2025, the total of these costs is estimated to be £167k and current reserves exceed that amount.

Taxation

It is the view of the trustees that none of the activities of the Circuit during the year should attract taxation. Where VAT has been incurred, none has been, or will be, recovered and costs are shown gross of relevant VAT.

Approvals

The Trustees' Report and the Financial Statements have been ratified by the Circuit Leadership Team Meeting. The financial statements have been approved on behalf of the Circuit by:



Sara E M Crowley **Date: 25 March 2026**

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2025

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund	Designated Funds	Circuit Model Trust	Total 2025	Total 2024
		£	£	£	£	£
Income						
1 Donations and legacies		-		-	-	-
2 Income from monetary investments	4	1,167		22,541	**23,708**	10,170
3 Income from investment properties	5	38,253		-	**38,253**	36,467
4 Assessments on Churches		200.995		-	**200,995**	199.214
5 Grants received		0		-	**0**	0
6 Other charitable income		890		-	**890**	18,201
7 Surplus on disposal	6			197,168	**197,168** -	165,358
8 **Total income**		**241,305**	**0**	**219,709**	**461,014**	98,694
9 **Expenditure**						
10 Grants and donations		12,867		-	**12,867**	14,822
11 Salaries and associated costs	9	143,838		-	**143,838**	138,105
12 Property maintenance		30,435	10,218	-	**40,653**	32,511
13 Model trust levy		-		24,653	**24,653**	24,653
14 District Assessment & Levy		48,728		-	**48,728**	45,690
15 Depreciation		-		-	**0**	-
16 Office expenses		22,722	6,713	0	**29,435**	32,870
17 Other outgoings		1,332		1,447	**2,779**	4,108
18 **Total charitable expenditure**		**259,922**	**16,931**	**26,100**	**302,953**	292,759
19 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments		-				228
20 **Net income/(expenditure)**		**(18,617)**	**(16,931)**	**193,609**	**158,061**	(193,837)
21 Transfers between funds		**52,516**	**(14,416)**	**(38,100)**	**0**	-
22 Other gains/(losses)		-		-	-	-
23 **Net movement in funds**		**33,899**	**-31,347**	**155,509**	**158,061**	(193,837)
24 Total funds brought forward		1,722,719	21,549	420,726	2,164,994	2,358,831
25 **Total funds carried forward**		**1,756,618**	**-9,798**	**576,235**	**2,323,055**	**2,164,994**

Balance sheet as at 31 August 2025

	Notes to the Accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted) £	Designated £	Circuit Model Trusts (Unrestricted) £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Fixed Assets						
Circuit Manses & Equipment	10	1,709,562			1,709,562	1,709,562
Investments	11	7,176		576,235	583,411	420,725
Total fixed assets		**1,716,738**		**576,235**	**2,292,973**	**2,130,287**
Current Assets						
Debtors	12	455		-	455	4,690
Central Finance Board Deposits		25,466		-	25,466	17,466
Cash at Bank and in hand		34,269		-	34,269	37,901
Total current assets		**60,190**		-	**60,190**	**60,057**
Current liabilities						
Creditors (due in under 1 year)	13	4,100	9,798	-	13,898	240
Grants payable		16,210		-	16,210	25,110
Total current liabilities		20,310	9,798	-	**30,108**	**25,350**
Net current assets/liabilities		**39,880**	**9,798**	-	**30,082**	**34,706**
Long term liabilities						
Creditors (due in more than 1 year)						0
Total assets less total liabilities		**1,756,618**	**-9,798**	**576,235**	**2,323,055**	**2,164,994**
Net Assets		**1,756,618**	**-9,798**	**576,235**	**2,323,055**	**2,164,994**
Funds of the Circuit						
General Fund (Unrestricted)		1,756,618			1,756,618	1,722,719
Designated Fund (Unrestricted)			-9,798		-9,798	21,549
Circuit Model Trust Fund (Unrestricted)				576,235	576,235	420,726
Designated Funds (Unrestricted)		-		-	-	-
Total Unrestricted Funds		1,756,618		576,235	**2,323,055**	**2,164,994**
Restricted Funds		-		-	-	-
Total Funds		**1,756,618**	**-9,798**	**576,235**	**2,323,055**	**2,164,994**

Approved by: **Sara E M Crowley** **Date: 25 March 2026**

Notes to the accounts

1. Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 in accordance with the 2015 version of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard 102 - the Charities SORP – in replacement for the SORP's 2005 version specified in its related 2008 Regulations and in accordance with the 'true and fair override' provision contained therein.

2. Funds

The funds held constitute:

- General Funds are unrestricted and are held for any purpose of the Circuit.
- The Circuit Model Trust Fund has wide purposes defined in Standing Orders and is categorised as unrestricted.

Restricted funds are funds which are held for a narrower purpose. The Circuit does not hold any restricted or endowment funds. Any funds may be represented by more than just cash.

3. Accounting policies

Basis

These accounts have been prepared on the basis of historical cost, except that investments are shown at their market value at the end of the year, on the accruals basis to show a true and fair view of the Circuit's financial position and activities.

Incoming resources

Income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the Circuit becomes entitled to the resources, and the trustees are reasonably certain they will receive the resources; and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred, or a constructive obligation arises, that results in the payment being unavoidable. Liabilities are recognised as soon as an outflow of economic benefit is considered more likely than not under the legal or constructive obligation committing the Circuit to pay out resources.

Grants

Grants made by the Circuit from its own funds are recognised in full at the time of agreement or when the Circuit accepts that there is a legal or operational obligation to make the payment. When the grant is recurrent over more than one year the balance payable in future years is treated as a provision for future commitments in the Balance Sheet against the appropriate fund, the provision being released in future years as instalments are paid in accordance with the originally agreed terms.

VAT

Since the Circuit is not VAT registered, all input VAT is charged with the expenses to which it refers.

Tangible fixed assets for use by the circuit

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and individually cost at least £1,000. They are valued at cost, or a reasonable value on receipt. We do not regard the value as being less than the cost, have carried out an impairment review and decided no depreciation is necessary.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

Investment property

In addition to the manses, the circuit owns two ex manses, let as investment properties. Since the value of all manses, including this investment property, is frozen at £1,349,962, the value attributed to the newly defined 'investment property' is *pro rata* to the insured values of the total real estate.

Investments

Investments are valued in the balance sheet at market value at the year end. Investment income is included in the accounts when receivable and any gains or losses on revaluation at the year end are shown in the SOFA.

Debtors and prepayments

Debtors are amounts owed to the Circuit. Prepayments include payments made by the Circuit for services yet to be received. This includes the payment in August of the September Stipends which are debited at the end of August.

Creditors

Creditors include both sundry expenses and also any amounts received by Circuit in advance of when income is actually due.

4. Investment income	**Unrestricted**	**Circuit Model Trust Fund**	**2025**	**2024**
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Lloyds Interest	1,167	-	1,167	1,146
Circuit Model Trust Fund income	-	22,541	22,541	9,024
Total	**1,167**	**22,541**	**23,708**	**10,170**

5. Property Income	**Unrestricted**	**Circuit Model Trust Fund**	**2025**	**2024**
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Lettings income	**38,253**	-	**38,253**	**36,467**

6. Surplus on disposal of Stotfold Methodist Church

Stotfold Methodist Church was disposed of during the year and upon sale realised proceeds of £ 288,613 less District Levy of £91,445, give a surplus on disposal of £197,168 within CMTF Fund

Notes to the accounts (continued)

7. Payment to Trustees

	2025	2024
	£	£
Payments made to trustees for additional services provided to the Circuit by agreement with the Circuit Meeting	NIL	NIL
Number of trustees who were paid expenses	4	4
Total amount paid	4,005	6,474

No trustees undertook additional services on behalf of the Circuit.

8. Fees for examination or audit of the accounts

	2025	2024
	£	£
Independent examiner's or auditors' fees for annual accounts	750	750

9. Paid employees

Staff Costs paid during the year were:	2025	2024
	£	£
Gross wages, salaries and benefits in kind	106,742	103,499
Employer's National Insurance costs	13,111	10,117
Pension costs	19,556	24,489
Self employed staff paid	4,429	0
Total staff costs	143,838	138,105
Average number of staff employed during the year were:	3	4

The finance officer is now self employed and does not count in the 3 stated

10. Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets comprise manses at deemed cost of £1,709,562 (2024: £1,709,562). We do not regard the value as being less than cost and hence no depreciation is necessary.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

11. Investments

The funds that support the Circuit Model Trust Fund are held by TMCP in Trustees Interest Funds on which interest is credited to the accounts each month. These are regarded as medium and long term investments.

TMCP is the Custodian Trustee of all Methodist Model Trust property and is held for and on behalf of local Managing Trustees who are responsible for the day to day management of trust property. TMCP ensures that, through providing guidance and acting under their direction, the Managing Trustees comply with charity law and Methodist law and polity as determined by the Methodist Conference.

	2025	2024
	£	£
Investments listed on a recognised Stock Exchange	3,176	3,169
Investments held in common investment funds	580,235	417,556
	583,411	**420,725**

Change in investment values	2025	2024
	£	£
Carrying (market) value at beginning of year	420,725	162,138
Add: additions to investments at cost		9,024
Property proceeds net of Levy / costs	197,168	286,142
Less: disposals at carrying value		(25,132)
Net income for year	20,518	227
Transfers in/(out)	(55,000)	(11,674)
Carrying (market) value at end of year	583,411	420,725

12. Analysis of current assets

Debtors and prepayments	2025	2024
	£	£
Prepayments	455	1,570
Other debtors	-	3,120
Total debtors and prepayments	**455**	**4,690**

13. Analysis of current liabilities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Accruals	13,898	240
Other creditors	-	-
	13,898	240
Grants payable	16,210	25,110
Total Current Liabilities	**30,108**	**25,350**

14. Capital Commitments and Contingent Liabilities

At the 31 August 2025, the Circuit has no capital commitments.

No Contingent liabilities were identified at 31 August 2025.

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit
This Report is on the Circuit Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2025.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The Circuit's trustees are responsible for ensuring that the annual report and accounts for the year to 31 August 2025 present a true and fair view of the Circuit's income and expenditure for the year and of its assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date. The trustees consider that an audit is not necessary for this year under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

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

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
- to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the Charities Act.
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act

have not been met, or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

(3) I 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.

Name of independent examiner	Sandeep Shah
Signature of independent examiner	S Mshh

Relevant Professional qualification of independent examiner

FCCA

Name of firm (where appropriate)

Leadermans

Address	St Christopher's House Ridge Road Letchworth Garden City SG6 1PT
Date	30/03/2026

NORTH HERTS METHODIST CIRCUIT

England & Wales - Charity number 1133930

Accounts

The Methodist Church

34/15 North Hertfordshire Circuit

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

and

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended

31 AUGUST 2024

Charity registration number: 1133930

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Administrative Information

Circuit Ministers

Rev Graham Claydon-Knights	(Joint-Superintendent from 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023)
Rev Val Reid	(Joint-Superintendent from 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023)
Rev Zdzisiu Hendzel	Superintendent from 1 September 2023
Rev Emmanuel Onabanjo	Minister from 1 September 2023
Rev Julian Blakemore	(Sector Minister – Banking)
Rev Melanie Crowley	(Anglican – Authorised Minister)
Chandrika Perera	
Rev Peter Orton	
Rev John Whittle	Supernumerary Minister
Rev N Young	Supernumerary Minister
Rev R Forrest	Supernumerary Minister
Deacon Malcolm Knowles	Supernumerary Deacon

Circuit Stewards

Allison Ffinch	Joint Senior Steward
Janet Tackley	Joint Senior Steward
Gill Hughes	
Vic Evans	
Sara Crowley	
Sue Chastney	

Circuit Meeting Secretaries

Jasmine Hilfer

Circuit Administrator

Jasmine Hilfer
Central Methodist Church
Pixmore Way
Letchworth Garden City
Herts
SG6 3TR

Custodian Trustees
(for Property and Investments)
Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes
Central Buildings
Oldham Street
Manchester
M1 1JQ

Circuit Web Site Address

www.nhmethodist.org.uk

Bankers
Lloyds Bank PLC

PO Box 1000
BX1 1LT

Investment Adviser
Central Finance Board of the

Methodist Church
9 Bonhill Street
London
EC2A

Independent Examiner
Sandeep Shah FCCA
Leadermans
St Christopher's House
Ridge Road
Letchworth Garden City, Herts
SG6 1PT

Trustees' Report

Governance and 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 some of which are Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs) with other denominations. Circuits combine to form about 30 districts in Great Britain. Although there is some autonomy, all Methodist organisations in Great Britain are governed by statutes determined by the Methodist Conference and which are published in the Constitution, Practice and Discipline (CPD) 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 clerical members.

In setting our objectives and planning our activities the Circuit Meeting, held at least twice in each 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 (CLT) - the Circuit Ministerial Staff and Circuit Stewards - met every two months to review the life of the Circuit and to take forward the decisions of the Circuit Meeting.

The Trustees and members of the Circuit Meeting are one and the same. They are also Managing Trustees for the property (manses) in the Circuit and for the Circuit Investments. The Trustees have no responsibility for individual churches in the Circuit.

Activities

OUR MISSION IS: to show and share God's love in Christ, that the community of faith may grow.

OUR POLICY: is to encourage and support the churches in the circuit to:

.

- Grow in our faith and numbers as communities and God's people.
- Show God's love in our worship and being; as church and as individuals.
- Share the good news of 'God with us' and the story of our faith.

Organisational Structure

- The governing document for the circuit is the Deed of Union (1932) and Methodist Church Act (1976)
- Detailed governance arrangements are outlined within the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church by order of the annual conference (CPD).
- Day to day management of the circuit is undertaken by the Circuit Leadership team along with the Local Preachers meeting, and the Circuit Meeting.
- The Districts pass the control down to Circuit level for local implementation by the Superintendent Minister, Ministerial staff and Circuit Stewards and authority is delegated to the Circuit Meeting for certain matters
- The Circuit meeting passes control down to Church Councils for local implementation by the Minister, the Church Stewards and other officers and authority is delegated to Church Councils acting as Managing Trustees.
- 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.
- The Methodist Connexional year runs from 1 September to the following 31 August.

Charity Registration

The North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit was registered as a charity (registration number 133930) in February 2010.

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 (*eg* choral and drama groups, The National Trust)
- some churches have long term tenants (e.g. a playgroup at Trinity)
- uniformed organisations (scouts, cubs, beavers, guides, brownies and rainbows) are affiliated to many of our churches
- lunch clubs are provided for the housebound
- other outreach activities
- opening some of our churches most days of the week to the homeless
- raising money for charities and activities locally and overseas (*eg* the annual Good Friday sponsored walk raises over £2500 for charities)

Safeguarding

The Circuit follows the Connexional policy on safeguarding as detailed in *Creating Safer Space.* Each church has a safeguarding representative and there are two safeguarding officers in the circuit to ensure the adoption of safe practice amongst children and vulnerable adults.

Trustees

The following people served as trustees of the Circuit during the year 2023-24.

Trustees name	Appointed	Office	Appointing Body
Rev Zdzisiu Hendzel	Sep-23	Joint Superintendent Minister	Ex officio
Rev Val Reid		Joint Superintendent Minister	Ex officio
Rev Emmanuel Onabanjo	Sep-23	Minister	Ex officio
Rev Julian Blakemore		Minister	Ex officio
Rev Melanie Crowley		Minister	Ex officio
Rev Chandrika Perera		Minister	Ex officio
Rev John Whittle		Supernumerary Minister	Ex officio
Deacon Malcolm Knowles		Supernumerary Deacon	Ex officio
Circuit Meeting			
Allison Ffinch	Sep-19	Circuit Steward	Circuit Stewards
Andrew Surry	Sep-09	Church Representative	St Faith's Joint PCC
Barbara Cook	Sep-14	Worship Leader	Circuit Meeting
Bob Hamilton	Oct-20	Church Representative	SHSJ
Brian Burgess	Sep-08	Church Representative	Benington Church Council
Cath Edmonds	Sep-19	Church Representative	Christchurch Church Mtg
David Latter	Sep-08	Local Preacher (Tutor)	Local Preachers Mtg
Diane Graham	Sep-13	Church Representative/Connex. Funds	Christchurch Church Mtg
Georgina Offie	Sep-18	Church Representative	All Saints Joint PCC
Gill Francis	Sep-18	Church Representative	Baldock Church Mtg
Helen Hofton	Sep-15	Church Representative	Pirton Church Council
Ian Brakenbury	Sep-09	Church Representative	Pirton Church Council
J Alan Burrell	Mar-16	Church Representative	St Paul's Church Council
Janet Tackley	Mar-11	Circuit Steward/Church Representative	Pirton Church Council
Jennifer Rogers	Sep-10	Safeguarding Advisor	Circuit Meeting

John Sharman	Mar-08	Church Representative	Central Church Council
Jonathan Battarbee	Sep-19	Church Representative	Central Church Council
Julie Mills	Sep-20	Church Representative	Christchurch Church Mtg
June R Simpson	Mar-08	Church Representative	Stotfold Church Council
Ken Sharpe	Nov-16	Church Representative	High St
Margaret Turner	Mar-11	Church Representative	Stotfold Church Council
Nirmal Chopde	Sep-19	Church Representative	High St
Norman Kiddle	Sep-15	Church Representative	All Saints Joint PCC
Peter Davies	Mar-11	Church Representative	Benington Church Council
Peter Dron	Sep-08	Church Representative	All Saints Joint PCC
Robert Driver	Sep-20	Church Representative	Baldock Church Mtg
Roy Robinson	May-21	Church Representative	Baldock Church Mtg
Sara Crowley	Sept-22	Circuit Steward	Circuit Meeting
Sue Chastney	Sep-09	Safeguarding Advisor	Circuit Meeting
Valerie Triplow	Sep-15	Church Representative	Stotfold Church Council
Victor Evans	Sep-19	Circuit Steward	Circuit Stewards
Vivien Storey	Mar-08	Church Representative	Central Church Council

Staff changes

Rev Zdzisiu Hendzel joined the Circuit in September 2023 as Superintendent. Rev Emmanuel Onabanjo also joined the Circuit in September 2023.

In March 2023, Jenny Wright retired as the Circuit Administrator, Jasmine Hilfer was successfully recruited to this position.

Review of Objectives set for the Year ended 31 August 2024

We were a member of staff short during the year 2022/23 due to the ongoing stationing issues within the Methodist Church.

The two Methodist ministers remaining in the Circuit acted as joint-superintendents. They focused on four key areas of Circuit life:

1. Creating small groups of Circuit stewards/ministers/paid Circuit staff to take shared responsibility for tasks, so that no-one is on their own with big decisions.
2. Building up and supporting the team of Circuit ministers (Methodist and Anglican) and Local Preachers.
3. Ensuring that safeguarding good practice is shared and Circuit records are up to date.
4. Ensuring that necessary property work on churches and manses is undertaken and properly recorded.

We have continued to provide support for the congregations of the two churches in the Circuit where worship has ceased. We are currently managing the sale of one of these churches and will also support the sale of another church where the congregation remains active.

Objectives set for the Year ended 31 August 2025

We have welcomed a new Superintendent Minister and a new MOCC (Ministers from Other Churches and Conferences) Minister in September 2023 and we look forward to working together.

We are planning a Circuit awayday in 2024 with the objective of creating a Circuit Vision Statement.

We will also look to provide support to our churches in discerning and following their mission.

We intend to review the policies and procedures in place and to update or establish policies as necessary.

We will seek to strengthen ecumenical co-operation with churches and organisations within our Circuit boundary.

Further ahead we will be welcoming a new minister into the Circuit following the planned sitting down of Rev Val Reid in August 2024.

Churches in the Circuit

All Saints Church Pin Green Stevenage Herts (LEP* with Church of England)
Arlesey Methodist Church Beds
Baldock Methodist Church Herts
Benington Methodist Church
Central Methodist Church Letchworth Garden City Herts
Christchurch Hitchin Herts (LEP* with United Reformed Church)
High Street Methodist Church Stevenage Herts
Norton Methodist Church, Letchworth Garden City Herts
Pirton Methodist Church Herts
St Faith's Church Hitchin Herts (LEP* with Church of England)
St Hugh & St John Church, Chells Stevenage Herts (LEP* with Church of England)
St Paul's Methodist Church Broadwater Stevenage Herts
Stotfold Methodist Church Beds
Trinity Church Knebworth Herts (LEP* with United Reformed Church)

*LEP = Local Ecumenical Partnership

Financial Report

Risk Management

Through its CLT risks faced by the Circuit have been considered. Where appropriate, risks have been transferred by paying insurers to take the risks. Security and safety of our churches is largely for those churches to determine and to mitigate following advice from Circuit Officers.

All churches and manses are the subject of quinquennial inspections and the reports on each are reviewed by the circuit as well as the local trustees. Action is taken to reduce the risks of injury to all who have a legitimate purpose to be on those premises.

We have considered the resilience of churches and the risk that they will not meet their quarterly financial assessments. We judge that there are sufficient resources to cover any probable shortfall in the following year.

The Circuit operates within a statutory framework of regulation and seeks to ensure that it follows Methodist standing orders. It relies on the Methodist Council to provide guidance on changes that could affect the Circuit.

Trustees' Expenses

Members of the Circuit Meeting received neither payment nor reimbursement of their expenses in connection with their function as trustees. The only expenses paid were to the staff of the Circuit in connection with fulfilling their roles.

Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year that 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 accruals method
- made judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- followed applicable accounting standards
- prepared the financial statements on the 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 and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

Following advice from Connexion the Trustees have produced a Health and Safety policy for the Circuit that will be regularly reviewed.

Financial Review

The Circuit's annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2024 have been prepared in accordance with:

- the Charities Act 2011, and
- the Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice 2015 as applicable to the Financial Reporting Standard 102

The Circuit prepares accruals accounts, but do not consolidate accounts of Circuit churches.

The Circuit budget is prepared by first anticipating the expenditure for the forthcoming year and then determining how that sum will be raised. Around 75% of the income (excluding St Pauls items, see below) for the year came from the individual churches within the circuit, with a total of £199,214 being received (2023: £181,552). The Circuit is grateful for the individual churches continuing to meet their assessment during the year.

In 2023-24 the Circuit experienced an unrestricted deficit of £452,424 (2023: surplus £467,892). The closure and subsequent sale of St Paul's Stevenage generated £451,500 of this deficit (2022-23: £471,549 of surplus).

The Circuit Model Trust Fund finished the year with a surplus of £258,587 (2023: deficit £28,756). The surplus of St Pauls proceeds less levy charge of £286,142 goes into CMTF. In most years, the Fund returns a deficit, because the amounts taken by the Circuit and District are greater than the income generated by investments. The Circuit may benefit indirectly from this as the District uses these funds to award grants.

The Circuit makes a number of grants each year. These are for projects which are part funded by the Bedfordshire Essex and Hertfordshire District. The District part of the funding is paid directly to the church concerned and does not pass through the Circuit accounts. The Circuit usually matches the amount received from the District. In 2023-24 a total of £14,822 grants were awarded (2022-23 £24,145), with a further £25,240 committed over the next 2 years.

The expenditure during the year on manses was written off and not capitalised (as it generally represented expenditure of a maintenance nature rather than significant capital enhancement). During the year two manses were let commercially for the full year, the Trustees are keen to be responsible landlords.

At 31 August 2024, the total value of manses held is £1,709,562 (2023: £1,709,562).

Reserves not tied up in fixed assets show a surplus at the year end of £34,707 (2023: £37,131). This is primarily due to the cash balances transferred to the Circuit on the closure of St Pauls and also the continuing reduction of the balance owed to Trinity Church which is included in Other Creditors

At no time during the year was the Circuit insolvent either in terms of its assets or in terms of its ability to pay its debts as they became due. All funds are unrestricted.

Reserves Policy

Background

The Circuit seeks to use its financial resources wisely and to predict future needs for capital expenditure on churches, manses and projects. Many of our churches are local ecumenical projects (LEPs) where two or more denominations work together, often sharing the same premises and usually worshipping together.

Grant Support

By way of annual or one-off grant, North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit supports several churches within the Circuit by contributing to the cost of specific projects, especially for mission, sometimes for as long as five years. The Circuit does not generally support the normal running costs of any church.

Before committing to a grant, the Circuit believes that it is prudent to ensure that it has sufficient resources to pay for all instalments of the grant. This is because the Circuit's annual income and expenditure budget does not normally seek to make a surplus. There is, therefore, no intended annual increase in the reserves.

Priority given to projects which:

- share the good news of God's love in Christ.
- help us to reach out to our communities in fresh and imaginative ways.
- have relevance for children and young people.
- develop and equip our buildings for worship and mission in the 21st century which is in line with our Circuit policy and strategy.

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 of the proceeds are received by the Circuit. This levy is then used by the Connexion to fund other innovative property and mission focussed schemes all over the country.

Funding of the Circuit's costs

This is achieved by making an assessment on each church within the Circuit. If any church were to close, that church's assessment would not be paid to the Circuit. The Circuit's costs – principally the stipends of the ministers – would continue and there may be a need to draw on reserves to meet the shortfall in income.

Existing Commitments

As at 31 August 2024 the Circuit has committed £25,240 in grants out of its funds.

Annual costs

At the Circuit meeting in March 2023, a change to the Circuit's Reserves Policy was approved. The new Reserves Policy is to hold reserves to cover:

- Six months of all costs
- Grant commitments

At 31 August 2024, the total of these costs is estimated to be £146k and current reserves (including fixed assets) exceed that amount.

Taxation

It is the view of the trustees that none of the activities of the Circuit during the year should attract taxation. Where VAT has been incurred, none has been, or will be, recovered and costs are shown gross of relevant VAT.

Finance Officer

I confirm that these accrual based accounts for the year ended 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 Finance Officer

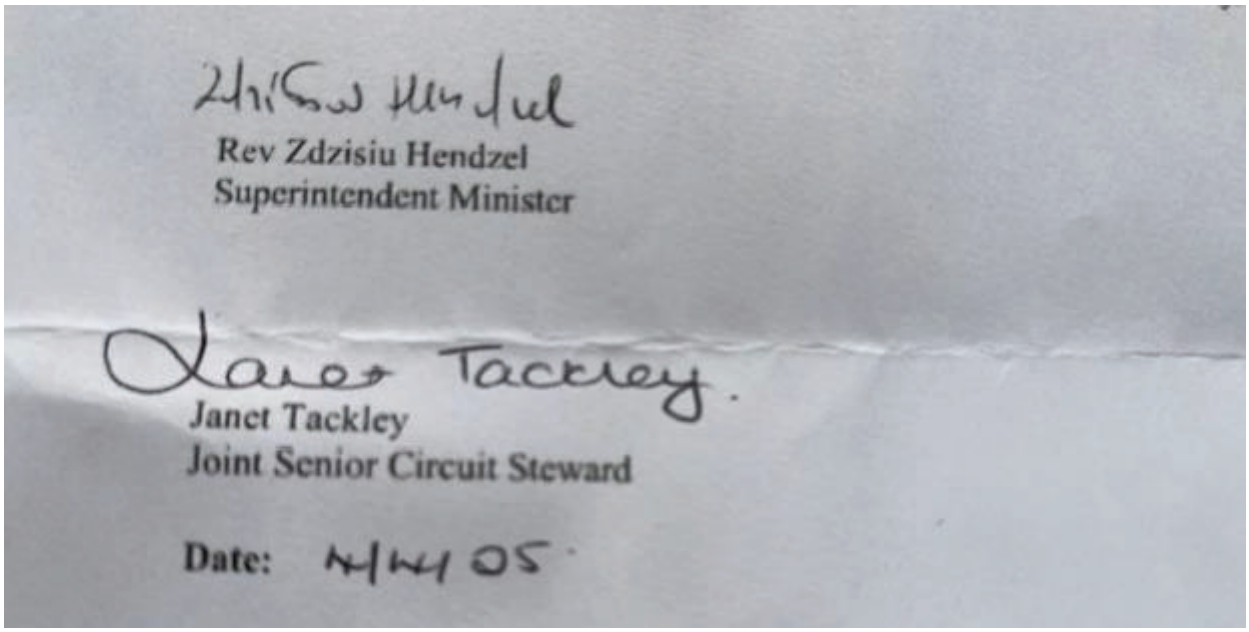


Name of Finance Officer Mr Alistair Jenkins

Address 14 Shiels Drive BRISTOL BS32 8EA

Approvals

The Trustees' Report and the Financial Statements have been ratified by the Circuit Leadership Team Meeting. The financial statements have been approved on behalf of the Circuit by:



Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2024

		Notes to the accounts	General Fund	Circuit Model Trust	Total 2024	Total 2023
			£	£	£	£
	Income					
1	Donations and legacies		-	-	-	-
2	Income from monetary investments	4	1,146	9,024	**10,170**	6,972
3	Income from investment properties	5	36,467	-	**36,467**	43,424
4	Assessments on Churches	17	199,214	-	**199,214**	181,552
5	Grants received	6	0	-	**0**	10,768
6	Other charitable income		18,201	-	**18,201**	1,515
7	Deficit on disposal of St Pauls	7	-451,500	286,142	**-165,358**	471,549
8	**Total income**		**-196,472**	**295,166**	**98,694**	715,780
9	**Expenditure**					
10	Grants and donations		14,822	-	**14,822**	24,145
11	Salaries and associated costs	10	138,105	-	**138,105**	89,034
12	Property maintenance		32,511	-	**32,511**	53,698
13	Model trust levy		-	24,653	**24,653**	5,902
14	District Assessment & Levy		45,690	-	**45,690**	44,996
15	Depreciation		-	-	-	-
16	Office expenses		32,391	479	**32,870**	27,125
17	Other outgoings		4,108	-	**4,108**	2,858.00
18	**Total charitable expenditure**		**267,627**	**25,132**	**292,759**	247,758
19	Gains/(losses) on monetary investments		-	228	**228**	(130)
20	**Net income/(expenditure)**		**(464,099)**	**270,262**	**(193,837)**	467,892
21	Transfers between funds		**11,674**	**(11,674)**	-	-
22	Other gains/(losses)		**-**	**-**	-	-
23	**Net movement in funds**		**-452,425**	**258,588**	**(193,837)**	467,892
24	Total funds brought forward		2,196,693	162,138	2,358,831	1,890,939
25	**Total funds carried forward**		**1,744,268**	**420,726**	**2,164,994**	**2,358,831**

Balance sheet as at 31 August 2024

	Notes to the Accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Circuit Model Trusts (Unrestricted)	Total 2024	Total 2023
		£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets					
Circuit Manses & Equipment	11	1,709,562		1,709,562	1,709,562
Church	11	0		0	450,000
Investments	12		420,725	420,725	162,138
Total fixed assets		**1,709,562**	**420,725**	**2,130,287**	**2,321,700**
Current Assets					
Debtors	13	4,689	1.00	4,690	1,613
Central Finance Board Deposits		17,466	-	17,466	36,267
Cash at Bank and in hand		37,901	-	37,901	40,951
Total current assets		**60,056**	1.00	**60,057**	**78,831**
Current liabilities					
Creditors (due in under 1 year)	14	240	-	240	15,462
Grants payable		25,110	-	25,110	26,238
Total current liabilities		**25,350**	-	**25,350**	**41,700**
Net current assets/liabilities		**34,706**	-	**34,706**	**37,131**
Long term liabilities					
Creditors (due in more than 1 year)		-		-	0
Total assets less total liabilities		**1,744,268**	**420,726**	**2,164,994**	**2,358,831**
Net Assets		**1,744,268**	**420,726**	**2,164,994**	**2,358,831**
Funds of the Circuit					
General Fund (Unrestricted)		1,722,719		1,722,719	2,175,144
General Fund St Pauls (Unrestricted)		21,549		21,549	21,549
Circuit Model Trust Fund (Unrestricted)			420,726	420,726	162,138
Designated Funds (Unrestricted)		-	-	-	-
Total Unrestricted Funds		1,744,268	420,726	**2,164,994**	**2,358,831**
Restricted Funds		-	-	-	-
Total Funds		**1,744,268**	**420,726**	**2,164,994**	**2,358,831**

Notes to the accounts

1. Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 in accordance with the 2015 version of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard 102 - the Charities SORP – in replacement for the SORP's 2005 version specified in its related 2008 Regulations and in accordance with the 'true and fair override' provision contained therein.

2. Funds

The funds held constitute:

- General Funds are unrestricted and are held for any purpose of the Circuit.
- The Circuit Model Trust Fund has wide purposes defined in Standing Orders and is categorised as unrestricted.

Restricted funds are funds which are held for a narrower purpose. The Circuit does not hold any restricted or endowment funds. Any funds may be represented by more than just cash.

3. Accounting policies

Basis

These accounts have been prepared on the basis of historical cost, except that investments are shown at their market value at the end of the year, on the accruals basis to show a true and fair view of the Circuit's financial position and activities.

Incoming resources

Income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the Circuit becomes entitled to the resources, and the trustees are reasonably certain they will receive the resources; and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred, or a constructive obligation arises, that results in the payment being unavoidable. Liabilities are recognised as soon as an outflow of economic benefit is considered more likely than not under the legal or constructive obligation committing the Circuit to pay out resources.

Grants

Grants made by the Circuit from its own funds are recognised in full at the time of agreement or when the Circuit accepts that there is a legal or operational obligation to make the payment. When the grant is recurrent over more than one year the balance payable in future years is treated as a provision for future commitments in the Balance Sheet against the appropriate fund, the provision being released in future years as instalments are paid in accordance with the originally agreed terms.

VAT

Since the Circuit is not VAT registered, all input VAT is charged with the expenses to which it refers.

Tangible fixed assets for use by the circuit

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and individually cost at least £1,000. They are valued at cost, or a reasonable value on receipt. We do not regard the value as being less than the cost, have carried out an impairment review and decided no depreciation is necessary.

Investment property

In addition to the manses, the circuit owns one house which it holds as an investment property. Since the value of all manses, including this investment property, is frozen at £1,349,962, the value attributed to the newly defined 'investment property' is *pro rata* to the insured values of the total real estate.

Investments

Investments are valued in the balance sheet at market value at the year end. Investment income is included in the accounts when receivable and any gains or losses on revaluation at the year end are shown in the SOFA.

Debtors and prepayments

Debtors are amounts owed to the Circuit. Prepayments include payments made by the Circuit for services yet to be received. This includes the payment in August of the September Stipends which are debited at the end of August.

Creditors

Creditors include both sundry expenses and also any amounts received by Circuit in advance of when income is actually due.

4. Investment income	**Unrestricted**	**Circuit Model Trust Fund**	**Total 2024**	**Total 2023**
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Lloyds Interest	1,146	-	1,146	1,172
Circuit Model Trust Fund income	-	9,024	9,024	5,800
Total	**1,146**	**9,024**	**10,170**	**6,972**

5. Other trading activities	**Unrestricted**	**Circuit Model Trust Fund**	**Total 2024**	**Total 2023**
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Lettings income	**36,467**	-	**36,467**	**43,424**

6. Grants received	**Unrestricted**	**Circuit Model Trust Fund**	**Total 2024**	**Total 2023**
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Bedfordshire Essex and Hertfordshire District	**0**		**0**	**10,768**
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme Grant	-	-	-	
Total	**0**	**-**	**0**	**10,768**

7. Deficit on disposal of St Pauls Church Stevenage

St Paul's Stevenage was disposed of during the year and upon sale realised proceeds of £ 436,903 less District Levy of £150,761, fees of £1,500 and loss on disposal of £13,097.

This is split between a deficit in unrestricted of £451,500 and a surplus in CMTF of £268,142.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

8. Payment to Trustees	2024	2023
	£	£
Payments made to trustees for additional services provided	NIL	NIL
Number of trustees who were paid expenses	4	4
Total amount paid	6,474	5,385

No trustees undertook additional services on behalf of the Circuit.

9. Fees for examination or audit of the accounts	2024	2023
	£	£
Independent examiner's or auditors' fees for reporting on the accounts	750	624
Other fees (eg: advice, accountancy services) paid to the independent examiner or auditor	NIL	NIL

10. Paid employees Staff Costs paid during the year were:	2024	2023
	£	£
Gross wages, salaries and benefits in kind	103,499	67,698
Employer's National Insurance costs	10,117	6,157
Pension costs	24,489	15,179
Total staff costs	138,105	89,034
Average number of staff employed during the year were:	4	4

11. Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets comprise manses at deemed cost of £1,709,562 (2023: £1,709,562). This does not include St Pauls Church Stevenage (disposed of during the year - Note 7).

We do not regard the value as being less than cost and hence no depreciation is necessary.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

12. Investments

The funds that support the Circuit Model Trust Fund are held by TMCP in Trustees Interest Funds on which interest is credited to the accounts each month. These are regarded as medium and long term investments.

TMCP is the Custodian Trustee of all Methodist Model Trust property and is held for and on behalf of local Managing Trustees who are responsible for the day to day management of trust property. TMCP ensures that, through providing guidance and acting under their direction, the Managing Trustees comply with charity law and Methodist law and polity as determined by the Methodist Conference.

	2024	2023
	£	£
Investments listed on a recognised Stock Exchange	3,169	2,941
Investments held in common investment funds	417,556	159,197
	420,725	**162,138**

Change in investment values	2024	2023
	£	£
Carrying (market) value at beginning of year	162,138	190,894
Add: additions to investments at cost	9,024	5,800
Property proceeds net of Levy / costs	286,142	
Less: disposals at carrying value	(25,132)	(6,467)
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation	227	(130)
Transfers in/(out)	(11,674)	(27,959)
Carrying (market) value at end of year	420,725	162,138

13. Analysis of current assets

Debtors and prepayments	2024	2023
	£	£
Prepayments	1,569	1,613
Other debtors	3,120	-
Total debtors and prepayments	**4,689**	**1,613**

14. Analysis of current liabilities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Accruals	240	9,946
Other creditors	-	5,516
	240	15,462
Grants payable	25,110	26,238
Total Current Liabilities	**25,350**	**41,700**

15. Capital Commitments and Contingent Liabilities

At the 31 August 2024, the Circuit has no capital commitments.
No Contingent liabilities were identified at 31 August 2024.

16. Related Party Transactions

2024

Name of related party	Relationship	Description of transaction	Income from related party during year	Payments to related party during the year	Amounts owed by /(to) related party as on 31-Aug-2024
			£	£	£
Bedford, Essex and Hertfordshire District	District	Assessment		(45,690)	
All Saints Church, Pin Green Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	5,148	(330)	
Arlesey Methodist Church, Beds	Circuit Church	Assessment	-		
Baldock Methodist Church, Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,667		(254)
Benington Methodist Church,	Circuit Church	Assessment	2,269	(1,500)	(1,500)
Central Methodist Church, Letchworth	Circuit Church	Assessment	60,429	(3,120)	
Christchurch, Hitchin Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	68,589		(15,211)
High Street Methodist Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	25,170	(7,400)	(7,400)
Norton Methodist Church, Letchworth	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	7,683		
Pirton Methodist Church, Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,904		
St Hugh and St John Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	6,103		
St Faith's Church, Hitchin Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	3,474		(745)
St Paul's Methodist Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	-		
Stotfold Methodist Church, Beds	Circuit Church	Assessment	5,676		
Trinity Church, Knebworth Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	5,102	(2,472)	
Total			**199,214**	**(60,512)**	**(25,110)**

Notes to the accounts (continued)

17. Related Party Transactions
2023

Name of related party	Relationship	Description of transaction	Income from related party during year	Payments to related party during the year	Amounts owed by /(to) related party as on 31-Aug-2023
			£	£	£
Bedford, Essex and Hertfordshire District	District	Assessment		44,996	
All Saints Church, Pin Green Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,680		
Arlesey Methodist Church, Beds	Circuit Church	Assessment	-		
Baldock Methodist Church, Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	7,932		(11,754)
Benington Methodist Church,	Circuit Church	Assessment	2,004		
Central Methodist Church, Letchworth	Circuit Church	Assessment	53,232		
Christchurch, Hitchin Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	60,420		(15,211)
High Street Methodist Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	21,924		
Norton Methodist Church, Letchworth	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	6,768		
Pirton Methodist Church, Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,320		
St Hugh and St John Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	5,376		
St Faith's Church, Hitchin Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	5,398		(745)
St Paul's Methodist Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	-		
Stotfold Methodist Church, Beds	Circuit Church	Assessment	5,004		
Trinity Church, Knebworth Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,494		1,472
Total			**181,552**		**(26,238)**

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit.

This Report is on the Circuit Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2024.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The Circuit's trustees are responsible for ensuring that the annual report and accounts for the year to 31 August 2024 present a true and fair view of the Circuit's income and expenditure for the year and of its assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date. The trustees consider that an audit is not necessary for this year under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

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

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention

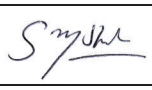
(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:

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

have not been met, or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

(3) I 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.

Name of independent examiner	Sandeep Shah
Signature of independent examiner	

Relevant Professional qualification of independent examiner

FCCA

Name of firm (where appropriate)

Leadermans

Address

St Christopher's House
Ridge Road
Letchworth Garden City
SG6 1PT

Date 25/04/2025

NORTH HERTS METHODIST CIRCUIT

England & Wales - Charity number 1133930

Accounts

The Methodist Church

34/15 North Hertfordshire Circuit

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

and

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended

31 AUGUST 2023

Charity registration number: 1133930

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Administrative Information

Circuit Ministers

Rev Graham Claydon-Knights	(Joint-Superintendent from 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023)
Rev Val Reid	(Joint-Superintendent from 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023)
Rev Zdzisiu Hendzel	Superintendent from 1 September 2023
Rev Emmanuel Onabanjo	Minister from 1 September 2023
Rev Julian Blakemore	(Sector Minister – Banking)
Rev Melanie Crowley	(Anglican – Authorised Minister)
Chandrika Perera	
Rev Peter Orton	
Rev John Whittle	Supernumerary Minister
Rev N Young	Supernumerary Minister
Rev R Forrest	Supernumerary Minister
Deacon Malcolm Knowles	Supernumerary Deacon

Circuit Stewards

Allison Ffinch	Joint Senior Steward
Janet Tackley	Joint Senior Steward
Gill Hughes	
Vic Evans	
Sara Crowley	
Sue Chastney	

Circuit Meeting Secretaries

Jenny Wright	Administration to 31 March 2023
Jasmine Hilfer	Administration from 1 April 2023

Circuit Administrator

Jasmine Hilfer
Central Methodist Church
Pixmore Way
Letchworth Garden City
Herts
SG6 3TR

Custodian Trustees
(for Property and Investments)
Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes
Central Buildings
Oldham Street
Manchester
M1 1JQ

Circuit Web Site Address

www.nhmethodist.org.uk

Bankers
Lloyds Bank PLC

PO Box 1000
BX1 1LT

Investment Adviser
Central Finance Board of the

Methodist Church
9 Bonhill Street
London
EC2A

Independent Examiner
Sandeep Shah FCCA
Leadermans
St Christopher's House
Ridge Road
Letchworth Garden City, Herts
SG6 1PT

Governance and 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 some of which are Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs) with other denominations. Circuits combine to form about 30 districts in Great Britain. Although there is some autonomy, all Methodist organisations in Great Britain are governed by statutes determined by the Methodist Conference and which are published in the Constitution, Practice and Discipline (CPD) 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 clerical members.

In setting our objectives and planning our activities the Circuit Meeting, held at least twice in each 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 (CLT) - the Circuit Ministerial Staff and Circuit Stewards - met every two months to review the life of the Circuit and to take forward the decisions of the Circuit Meeting.

The Trustees and members of the Circuit Meeting are one and the same. They are also Managing Trustees for the property (manses) in the Circuit and for the Circuit Investments. The Trustees have no responsibility for individual churches in the Circuit.

Activities

OUR MISSION IS: to show and share God's love in Christ, that the community of faith may grow.

OUR POLICY: is to encourage and support the churches in the circuit to:

- Grow in our faith and numbers as communities and God's people.
- Show God's love in our worship and being; as church and as individuals.
- Share the good news of 'God with us' and the story of our faith.

Organisational Structure

- The governing document for the circuit is the Deed of Union (1932) and Methodist Church Act (1976)
- Detailed governance arrangements are outlined within the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church by order of the annual conference (CPD).
- Day to day management of the circuit is undertaken by the Circuit Leadership team along with the Local Preachers meeting, and the Circuit Meeting.
- The Districts pass the control down to Circuit level for local implementation by the Superintendent Minister, Ministerial staff and Circuit Stewards and authority is delegated to the Circuit Meeting for certain matters
- The Circuit meeting passes control down to Church Councils for local implementation by the Minister, the Church Stewards and other officers and authority is delegated to Church Councils acting as Managing Trustees.
- 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.
- The Methodist Connexional year runs from 1 September to the following 31 August.

Charity Registration

The North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit was registered as a charity (registration number 133930) in February 2010.

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 (*eg* choral and drama groups, The National Trust)
- some churches have long term tenants (e.g. a playgroup at Trinity)
- uniformed organisations (scouts, cubs, beavers, guides, brownies and rainbows) are affiliated to many of our churches
- lunch clubs are provided for the housebound
- other outreach activities
- opening some of our churches most days of the week to the homeless
- raising money for charities and activities locally and overseas (*eg* the annual Good Friday sponsored walk raises over £2500 for charities)

Safeguarding

The Circuit follows the Connexional policy on safeguarding as detailed in *Creating Safer Space.* Each church has a safeguarding representative and there are two safeguarding officers in the circuit to ensure the adoption of safe practice amongst children and vulnerable adults.

Trustees

The following people served as members of the Circuit Meeting during the year 2022-23.

Trustees name	Appointed	Office	Appointing Body
Rev Graham Claydon Knights		Joint Superintendent Minister	Ex officio
Rev Val Reid		Joint Superintendent Minister	Ex officio
Rev Julian Blakemore		Minister	Ex officio
Rev Melanie Crowley		Minister	Ex officio
Rev Peter Orton		Minister	Ex officio
Rev Chandrika Perera		Minister	Ex officio
Rev Nicholas Young		Supernumerary Minister	Ex officio
Rev John Whittle		Supernumerary Minister	Ex officio
Rev Bob Forrest		Supernumerary Minister	Ex officio
Deacon Malcolm Knowles		Supernumerary Deacon	Ex officio
Jenny Wright	Jun-19	Circuit Administrator/Secretary	Ex officio
Jasmine Hilfer	Mar-23	Circuit Administrator/Secretary	Ex officio
Lydia Becket	Aug-21	Circuit Treasurer	Ex officio
Circuit Mtg			
Allison Ffinch	Sep-19	Circuit Steward	Circuit Stewards
Andrew Surry	Sep-09	Church Representative	St Faith's Joint PCC
Barbara Cook	Sep-14	Worship Leader	Circuit Meeting
Bob Hamilton	Oct-20	Church Representative	SHSJ
Brian Burgess	Sep-08	Church Representative	Benington Church Council
Cath Edmonds	Sep-19	Church Representative	Christchurch Church Mtg
David Latter	Sep-08	Local Preacher (Tutor)	Local Preachers Mtg
Diane Graham	Sep-13	Church Representative/Connex. Funds	Christchurch Church Mtg
Georgina Offie	Sep-18	Church Representative	All Saints Joint PCC
Gill Francis	Sep-18	Church Representative	Baldock Church Mtg
Gill Hughes	Sep-17	Circuit Steward	Circuit Stewards
Helen Hofton	Sep-15	Church Representative	Pirton Church Council
Ian Brakenbury	Sep-09	Church Representative	Pirton Church Council
J Alan Burrell	Mar-16	Church Representative	St Paul's Church Council
Janet Tackley	Mar-11	Circuit Steward/Church Representative	Pirton Church Council
Jennifer Rogers	Sep-10	Safeguarding Advisor	Circuit Meeting
John Sharman	Mar-08	Church Representative	Central Church Council
Jonathan Battarbee	Sep-19	Church Representative	Central Church Council
Julie Mills	Sep-20	Church Representative	Christchurch Church Mtg

June R Simpson	Mar-08	Church Representative	Stotfold Church Council
Ken Sharpe	Nov-16	Church Representative	High St
Margaret Turner	Mar-11	Church Representative	Stotfold Church Council
Nirmal Chopde	Sep-19	Church Representative	High St
Norman Kiddle	Sep-15	Church Representative	All Saints Joint PCC
Peter Davies	Mar-11	Church Representative	Benington Church Council
Peter Dron	Sep-08	Church Representative	All Saints Joint PCC
Robert Driver	Sep-20	Church Representative	Baldock Church Mtg
Roy Robinson	May-21	Church Representative	Baldock Church Mtg
Sara Crowley	Sep-22	Circuit Steward	Circuit Stewards
Stephanie Breker	Sep-13	Church Representative	Christchurch Church Mtg
Sue Chastney	Sep-09	Safeguarding Advisor	Circuit Meeting
Val Triplow	Sep-15	Church Representative	Stotfold Church Council
Vic Evans	Sep-19	Circuit Steward	Circuit Stewards
Vivien Storey	Mar-08	Church Representative	Central Church Council

Staff changes

Rev Graham Claydon-Knights and Rev Val Reid were appointed Joint Superintendents throughout the year ended 31 August 2023. Rev Claydon-Knights left the Circuit in August 2023.

Rev Zdzisiu Hendzel joined the Circuit in September 2023 as Superintendent. Rev Emmanuel Onabanjo also joined the Circuit in September 2023.

In March 2023, Jenny Wright retired as the Circuit Administrator, Jasmine Hilfer was successfully recruited to this position.

Review of Objectives set for the Year ended 31 August 2023

We were a member of staff short during the year 2022/23 due to the ongoing stationing issues within the Methodist Church.

The two Methodist ministers remaining in the Circuit acted as joint-superintendents. They focused on four key areas of Circuit life:

1. Creating small groups of Circuit stewards/ministers/paid Circuit staff to take shared responsibility for tasks, so that no-one is on their own with big decisions.
2. Building up and supporting the team of Circuit ministers (Methodist and Anglican) and Local Preachers.
3. Ensuring that safeguarding good practice is shared and Circuit records are up to date.
4. Ensuring that necessary property work on churches and manses is undertaken and properly recorded.

We have continued to provide support for the congregations of the two churches in the Circuit where worship has ceased. We are currently managing the sale of one of these churches and will also support the sale of another church where the congregation remains active.

Objectives set for the Year ended 31 August 2024

We have welcomed a new Superintendent Minister and a new MOCC (Ministers from Other Churches and Conferences) Minister in September 2023 and we look forward to working together.

We are planning a Circuit awayday in February 2024 with the objective of creating a Circuit Vision Statement.

We will also look to provide support to our churches in discerning and following their mission.

We intend to review the policies and procedures in place and to update or establish policies as necessary.

We will seek to strengthen ecumenical co-operation with churches and organisations within our Circuit boundary.

Further ahead we will be welcoming a new minister into the Circuit following the planned sitting down of Rev Val Reid in August 2024.

Churches in the Circuit

All Saints Church Pin Green Stevenage Herts

Arlesey Methodist Church Beds
Baldock Methodist Church Herts
Benington Methodist Church(LEP* with Church of England [2 churches], United Reformed Church)
Central Methodist Church Letchworth Garden City Herts
Christchurch Hitchin Herts (LEP* with United Reformed Church)
High Street Methodist Church Stevenage Herts
Norton Methodist Church, Letchworth Garden City Herts
Pirton Methodist Church Herts
St Faith's Church Hitchin Herts (LEP* with Church of England)
St Hugh & St John Church, Chells Stevenage Herts (LEP* with Church of England)
St Paul's Methodist Church Broadwater Stevenage Herts
Stotfold Methodist Church Beds
Trinity Church Knebworth Herts (LEP* with United Reformed Church)

*LEP = Local Ecumenical Partnership

Financial Report

Risk Management

Through its CLT risks faced by the Circuit have been considered. Where appropriate, risks have been transferred by paying insurers to take the risks. Security and safety of our churches is largely for those churches to determine and to mitigate following advice from Circuit Officers.

All churches and manses are the subject of quinquennial inspections and the reports on each are reviewed by the circuit as well as the local trustees. Action is taken to reduce the risks of injury to all who have a legitimate purpose to be on those premises.

We have considered the resilience of churches and the risk that they will not meet their quarterly financial assessments. We judge that there are sufficient resources to cover any probable shortfall in the following year.

The Circuit operates within a statutory framework of regulation and seeks to ensure that it follows Methodist standing orders. It relies on the Methodist Council to provide guidance on changes that could affect the Circuit.

Trustees' Expenses

Members of the Circuit Meeting received neither payment nor reimbursement of their expenses in connection with their function as trustees. The only expenses paid were to the staff of the Circuit in connection with fulfilling their roles.

Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year that 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 accruals method
- made judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- followed applicable accounting standards
- prepared the financial statements on the 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 and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

Following advice from Connexion the Trustees have produced a Health and Safety policy for the Circuit that will be regularly reviewed.

Financial Review

The Circuit's annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2023 have been prepared in accordance with:

- the Charities Act 2011, and
- the Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice 2015 as applicable to the Financial Reporting Standard 102

The Circuit prepares accruals accounts. They are not a consolidation of the accounts of churches in the Circuit.

The Circuit budget is prepared by first anticipating the expenditure for the forthcoming year and then determining how that sum will be raised. Around 74% of the income (excluding the gain from St Pauls, see below) for the year came from the individual churches within the circuit, with a total of £181,552 being received (2022: £195,727). The Circuit is grateful for the individual churches continuing to meet their assessment during the year.

In 2022-23 the Circuit finished the year with an overall surplus of £467,892 (2022: deficit of £32,172). This includes the gain of £471,549 from the closure of St Paul's Stevenage and the transfer of its assets to the Circuit on 1 September 2022.

The Circuit makes a number of grants each year. These are for projects which are part funded by the Bedfordshire Essex and Hertfordshire District. The District part of the funding is paid directly to the church concerned and does not pass through the Circuit accounts. The Circuit usually matches the amount received from the District. In 2022-23 a total of £24,145 (2021-22 £17,783) grants were awarded, with a further £35,140 committed over the next 2 years.

The Circuit Model Trust Fund finished the year with a deficit of £28,756 (2022: deficit £37,290). These funds are now classified as a long term investment. In most years, the Fund returns a deficit because the amounts taken by the Circuit and District are not fully compensated by the income generated by the fund. The Circuit may benefit indirectly from this as the District uses these funds to award grants.

The expenditure during the year on manses was written off and not capitalised (as it generally represented expenditure of a maintenance nature rather than significant capital enhancement). During the year two manses were let commercially for the full year, the Trustees are keen to be responsible landlords.

At 31 August 2023, the total value of manses held is £1,709,562 (2022: £1,709,562). The value of St Pauls church, ownership of which was transferred to the Circuit on the closure of the church is included at the valuation of £450,000 provided by a quantity surveyor.

Reserves not tied up in fixed assets show a surplus at the year end of £37,131 (2022: Deficit of £9,517). This arises primarily due to the cash balances transferred to the Circuit on the closure of St Pauls and also the continuing reduction of the balance owed to Trinity Church which is included in Other Creditors

At no time during the year was the Circuit insolvent either in terms of its assets or in terms of its ability to pay its debts as they became due. All funds are unrestricted.

Reserves Policy

Background

The Circuit seeks to use its financial resources wisely and to predict future needs for capital expenditure on churches, manses and projects. Many of our churches are local ecumenical projects (LEPs) where two or more denominations work together, often sharing the same premises and usually worshipping together.

Grant Support

By way of annual or one-off grant, North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit supports several churches within the Circuit by contributing to the cost of specific projects, especially for mission, sometimes for as long as five years. The Circuit does not generally support the normal running costs of any church.

Before committing to a grant, the Circuit believes that it is prudent to ensure that it has sufficient resources to pay for all instalments of the grant. This is because the Circuit's annual income and expenditure budget does not normally seek to make a surplus. There is, therefore, no intended annual increase in the reserves.

Priority given to projects which:

- share the good news of God's love in Christ.
- help us to reach out to our communities in fresh and imaginative ways.
- have relevance for children and young people.
- develop and equip our buildings for worship and mission in the 21st century which is in line with our Circuit policy and strategy.

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 of the proceeds are received by the Circuit. This levy is then used by the Connexion to fund other innovative property and mission focussed schemes all over the country.

Funding of the Circuit's costs

This is achieved by making an assessment on each church within the Circuit. If any church were to close, that church's assessment would not be paid to the Circuit. The Circuit's costs – principally the stipends of the ministers – would continue and there may be a need to draw on reserves to meet the shortfall in income.

Existing Commitments

As at 31 August 2023 the Circuit has committed £35,140 in grants out of its funds.

Annual costs

At the Circuit meeting in March 2023, a change to the Circuit's Reserves Policy was approved. The new Reserves Policy is to hold reserves to cover:

- Six months of all costs
- Grant commitments

At 31 August 2023, the total of these costs is estimated to be £169k and current reserves (including fixed assets) exceed that amount.

Upgrading of manses

The Circuit recognises its responsibility to provide adequate accommodation for its ministers. Over the last few years the Circuit has spent sums as necessary rather than as may be desirable.

As at 31 August 2023 the Circuit anticipates that it will, over the following year, spend up to £10.5k in total on capital projects across its properties.

Taxation

It is the view of the trustees that none of the activities of the Circuit during the year should attract taxation. Where VAT has been incurred, none has been, or will be, recovered and costs are shown gross of relevant VAT.

Approvals

The Trustees' Report and the Financial Statements have been ratified by the Circuit Leadership Team Meeting.
The financial statements have been approved on behalf of the Circuit by:

Rev Zdzisiu Hendzel
Superintendent Minister

Allison Ffinch
Joint Senior Circuit Steward

Janet Tackley
Joint Senior Circuit Steward

Date: 22 05 24

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2023

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund	Circuit Model Trust	Total 2023	Total 2022
		£	£	£	£
Income					
Donations and legacies		-	-	-	-
Income from monetary investments	4	1,172	5,800	**6,972**	1,099
Income from investment properties	5	43,424	-	**43,424**	16,057
Assessments on Churches	17	181,552	-	**181,552**	195,727
Grants received	6	10,768	-	**10,768**	866
Other charitable income		1,515	-	**1,515**	2,331
Gain from St Pauls	7	471,549	-	**471,549**	-
Total income		**709,980**	**5,800**	**715,780**	216,080
Expenditure					
Grants and donations		24,145	-	**24,145**	17,783
Salaries and associated costs	10	89,034	-	**89,034**	132,176
Property maintenance		53,698	-	**53,698**	21,514
Model trust levy		-	5,902	**5,902**	7,416
District Assessment & Levy		44,996	-	**44,996**	42,448
Depreciation		-	-	-	-
Office expenses		26,560	565	**27,125**	26,709
Other outgoings		2,858	-	**2,858**	-
Total charitable expenditure		**241,291**	**6,467**	**247,758**	248,046
Gains/(losses) on monetary investments		-	(130)	**(130)**	(206)
Net income/(expenditure)		**468,689**	**(797)**	**467,892**	(32,172)
Transfers between funds		**27,959**	**(27,959)**	-	-
Other gains/(losses)		-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		**496,648**	**(28,756)**	**467,892**	(32,172)
Total funds brought forward		1,700,045	190,894	1,890,939	1,923,111
Total funds carried forward		**2,196,693**	**162,138**	**2,358,831**	**1,890,939**

Balance sheet as at 31 August 2023

	Notes to the Accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Circuit Model Trusts (Unrestricted)	Total 2023	Total 2022
		£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets					
Circuit Manses & Equipment	11	1,709,562		1,709,562	1,709,562
Church	11	450,000		450,000	-
Investments	12		162,138	162,138	190,894
Total fixed assets		**2,159,562**	**162,138**	**2,321,700**	**1,900,456**
Current Assets					
Debtors	13	1,613	-	1,613	1,281
Central Finance Board Deposits		36,267	-	36,267	16,659
Cash at Bank and in hand		40,951	-	40,951	7,020
Total current assets		**78,831**	-	**78,831**	**24,960**
Current liabilities					
Creditors (due in under 1 year)	14	15,462	-	15,462	16,489
Grants payable		26,238	-	26,238	12,472
Total current liabilities		**41,700**	-	**41,700**	**28,961**
Net current assets/liabilities		**37,131**	-	**37,131**	**(4,001)**
Long term liabilities					
Creditors (due in more than 1 year)	15	-		-	5,516
Total assets less total liabilities		**2,196,693**	**162,138**	**2,358,831**	**1,890,939**
Net Assets		**2,196,693**	**162,138**	**2,358,831**	**1,890,939**
Funds of the Circuit					
General Fund (Unrestricted)		2,175,144		2,175,144	1,700,045
General Fund St Pauls (Unrestricted)		21,549		21,549	-
Circuit Model Trust Fund (Unrestricted)			162,138	162,138	190,894
Designated Funds (Unrestricted)		-	-	-	-
Total Unrestricted Funds		2,196,693	162,138	**2,358,831**	**1,890,939**
Restricted Funds		-	-	-	-
Total Funds		**2,196,693**	**162,138**	**2,358,831**	**1,890,939**

Notes to the accounts

1. Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 in accordance with the 2015 version of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard 102 - the Charities SORP – in replacement for the SORP's 2005 version specified in its related 2008 Regulations and in accordance with the 'true and fair override' provision contained therein.

2. Funds

The funds held constitute:

- General Funds are unrestricted and are held for any purpose of the Circuit.
- The Circuit Model Trust Fund has wide purposes defined in Standing Orders and is categorised as unrestricted.

Restricted funds are funds which are held for a narrower purpose. The Circuit does not hold any restricted or endowment funds. Any funds may be represented by more than just cash.

3. Accounting policies

Basis

These accounts have been prepared on the basis of historical cost, except that investments are shown at their market value at the end of the year, on the accruals basis to show a true and fair view of the Circuit's financial position and activities.

Incoming resources

Income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the Circuit becomes entitled to the resources, and the trustees are reasonably certain they will receive the resources; and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred, or a constructive obligation arises, that results in the payment being unavoidable. Liabilities are recognised as soon as an outflow of economic benefit is considered more likely than not under the legal or constructive obligation committing the Circuit to pay out resources.

Grants

Grants made by the Circuit from its own funds are recognised in full at the time of agreement or when the Circuit accepts that there is a legal or operational obligation to make the payment. When the grant is recurrent over more than one year the balance payable in future years is treated as a provision for future commitments in the Balance Sheet against the appropriate fund, the provision being released in future years as instalments are paid in accordance with the originally agreed terms.

VAT

Since the Circuit is not VAT registered, all input VAT is charged with the expenses to which it refers.

Tangible fixed assets for use by the circuit

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and individually cost at least £1,000. They are valued at cost, or a reasonable value on receipt. We do not regard the value as being less than the cost, have carried out an impairment review and decided no depreciation is necessary.

Investment property

In addition to the manses, the circuit owns one house which it holds as an investment property. Since the value of all manses, including this investment property, is frozen at £1,349,962, the value attributed to the newly defined 'investment property' is *pro rata* to the insured values of the total real estate.

Investments

Investments are valued in the balance sheet at market value at the year end. Investment income is included in the accounts when receivable and any gains or losses on revaluation at the year end are shown in the SOFA.

Debtors and prepayments

Debtors are amounts owed to the Circuit. Prepayments include payments made by the Circuit for services yet to be received. This includes the payment in August of the September Stipends which are debited at the end of August.

Creditors

Creditors include both sundry expenses and also any amounts received by Circuit in advance of when income is actually due.

4. Investment income	**Unrestricted**	**Circuit Model Trust Fund**	**Total 2023**	**Total 2022**
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Lloyds Interest	1,172	-	1,172	90
Circuit Model Trust Fund income	-	5,800	5,800	1,009
Total	**1,172**	**5,800**	**6,972**	**1,099**

5. Other trading activities	**Unrestricted**	**Circuit Model Trust Fund**	**Total 2023**	**Total 2022**
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Lettings income	**43,424**	-	**43,424**	**16,057**

6. Grants received	**Unrestricted**	**Circuit Model Trust Fund**	**Total 2023**	**Total 2022**
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Bedfordshire Essex and Hertfordshire District	**10,768**		**10,768**	
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme Grant	-	-	-	866
Total	**10,768**	-	**10,768**	**866**

7. Gains on closure of St Pauls Church Stevenage

St Paul's Stevenage closed on 31 August 2022 and on 1 September 2022 and its assets including the church (see note 11) were transferred to the Circuit.

8. Payment to Trustees	2023	2022
	£	£
Payments made to trustees for additional services	NIL	NIL
Number of trustees who were paid expenses	4	4
Total amount paid	5,385	5,595

No trustees undertook additional services on behalf of the Circuit.

9. Fees for examination or audit of the accounts	2023	2022
	£	£
Independent examiner's or auditors' fees for reporting on the accounts	624	570
Other fees (eg: advice, accountancy services) paid to the independent examiner or auditor	NIL	NIL

10. Paid employees Staff Costs paid during the year were:	2023	2022
	£	£
Gross wages, salaries and benefits in kind	67,698	99,813
Employer's National Insurance costs	6,157	9,158
Pension costs	15,179	23,205
Total staff costs	89,034	132,176
Average number of staff employed during the year were:	4	5

11. Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets comprise manses at deemed cost of £1,709,562 (2022: £1,709,562) and St Paul's Church, Stevenage valued at £450,000.
St Paul's Church, Stevenage closed on 31 August 2022 and on 1 September 2022 it's assets were transferred to the Circuit.
We do not regard the value as being less than cost and hence no depreciation is necessary.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

12. Investments

The funds that support the Circuit Model Trust Fund are held by TMCP in Trustees Interest Funds on which interest is credited to the accounts each month. These are regarded as medium and long term investments.

TMCP is the Custodian Trustee of all Methodist Model Trust property and is held for and on behalf of local Managing Trustees who are responsible for the day to day management of trust property. TMCP ensures that, through providing guidance and acting under their direction, the Managing Trustees comply with charity law and Methodist law and polity as determined by the Methodist Conference.

	2023	2022
	£	£
Investments listed on a recognised Stock Exchange	2,941	3,072
Investments held in common investment funds	159,197	187,822
	162,138	**190,894**

Change in investment values	2023	2022
	£	£
Carrying (market) value at beginning of year	190,894	228,184
Add: additions to investments at cost	5,800	1,009
Less: disposals at carrying value	(6,467)	(8,093)
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation	(130)	(206)
Transfers in/(out)	(27,959)	(30,000)
Carrying (market) value at end of year	162,138	190,894

13. Analysis of current assets

Debtors and prepayments	2023	2022
	£	£
Prepayments	1,613	1,281

14. Analysis of current liabilities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Accruals	9,946	2,001
Other creditors	5,516	14,488
	15,462	16,489
Grants payable	26,238	12,472
Total Current Liabilities	**41,700**	**28,961**

15. Analysis of long term creditors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Other creditors	-	5,516

16. Capital Commitments and Contingent Liabilities

At the 31 August 2023, the Circuit has no capital commitments.

No Contingent liabilities were identified at 31 August 2023.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

17. Related Party Transactions

2023

Name of related party	Relationship	Description of transaction	Income from related party during year	Payments to related party during the year	Amounts owed by /(to) related party as on 31-Aug-2023
			£	£	£
Bedford, Essex and Hertfordshire District	District	Assessment		44,996	
All Saints Church, Pin Green Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,680		
Arlesey Methodist Church, Beds	Circuit Church	Assessment	-		
Baldock Methodist Church, Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	7,932		(11,754)
Benington Methodist Church,	Circuit Church	Assessment	2,004		
Central Methodist Church, Letchworth	Circuit Church	Assessment	53,232		
Christchurch, Hitchin Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	60,420		(15,211)
High Street Methodist Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	21,924		
Norton Methodist Church, Letchworth	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	6,768		
Pirton Methodist Church, Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,320		
St Hugh and St John Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	5,376		
St Faith's Church, Hitchin Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	5,398		(745)
St Paul's Methodist Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	-		
Stotfold Methodist Church, Beds	Circuit Church	Assessment	5,004		
Trinity Church, Knebworth Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,494		1,472
Total			**181,552**		**(26,238)**

17. Related Party Transactions

2022

Name of related party	Relationship	Description of transaction	Income from related party during year	Payments to related party during the year	Amounts owed by /(to) related party as on 31-Aug-2022
			£	£	£
Bedford, Essex and Hertfordshire District	District	Assessment		42,448	
All Saints Church, Pin Green Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,680		
Arlesey Methodist Church, Beds	Circuit Church	Assessment	-		
Baldock Methodist Church, Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	8,021		(254)
Benington Methodist Church,	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,152		
Central Methodist Church, Letchworth	Circuit Church	Assessment	53,232		(500)
Christchurch, Hitchin Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	60,420		(12,445)
High Street Methodist Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	22,172		
Norton Methodist Church, Letchworth	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	6,768		
Pirton Methodist Church, Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,320		
St Hugh and St John Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	5,376		
St Faith's Church, Hitchin Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	3,060		(745)
St Paul's Methodist Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	8,088		
Stotfold Methodist Church, Beds	Circuit Church	Assessment	10,944		
Trinity Church, Knebworth Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,494		1,472
Total			**195,727**		**(12,472)**

North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit **Charity No. 1133930**

Declarations

Treasurer

I confirm that these accrual based accounts for the year ended 31 August 2023 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

Name of Treasurer Lydia Becket

Address 132 Topstreet Way, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, AL5 5TS

Date 22 05 24

Presentation to the Circuit Meeting for approval.

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2023 will be presented to the Circuit Meeting at its meeting in September 2024.

Signature of the Chair of the meeting

Name of the Chair of the meeting Rev Zdzisiu Hendzel
Superintendent Minister

Date 22 05 24

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit.

This Report is on the Circuit Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2023.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The Circuit's trustees are responsible for ensuring that the annual report and accounts for the year to 31 August 2023 present a true and fair view of the Circuit's income and expenditure for the year and of its assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date. The trustees consider that an audit is not necessary for this year under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

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

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention

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

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

have not been met, or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

(3) I 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.

Name of independent examiner	Sandeep Shah
Signature of independent examiner	S'nySh
Relevant Professional qualification of independent examiner	FCCA
Name of firm (where appropriate)	Leadermans
Address	St Christopher's House Ridge Road Letchworth Garden City SG6 1PT
Date	30/05/24

NORTH HERTS METHODIST CIRCUIT

England & Wales - Charity number 1133930

Accounts

The Methodist Church

34/15 North Hertfordshire Circuit

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

and

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended

31 AUGUST 2022

Charity registration number: 1133930

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Administrative Information

Circuit Ministers

Rev Malcolm Peacock	(Superintendent to 31 August 2022)
Rev Graham Claydon-Knights	(Joint-Superintendent from 1 September 2022)
Rev Val Reid	(Joint-Superintendent from 1 September 2022)
Rev Julian Blakemore	(Sector Minister – Banking)
Rev Melanie Crowley	(Anglican – Authorised Minister)
Chandrika Perera	
Rev Peter Orton	
Rev John Whittle	Supernumerary Minister
Rev N Young	Supernumerary Minister
Rev R Forrest	Supernumerary Minister
Deacon Malcolm Knowles	Supernumerary Deacon

Circuit Stewards

Allison Ffinch	Joint Senior Steward
Janet Tackley	Joint Senior Steward
Gill Hughes	
Vic Evans	
Sara Crowley	
Sue Chastney	

Circuit Meeting Secretaries

Jenny Wright	Administration

Circuit Administrator

Jenny Wright
Central Methodist Church
Pixmore Way
Letchworth Garden City
Herts
SG6 3TR

Custodian Trustees
(for Property and Investments)
Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes
Central Buildings
Oldham Street
Manchester
M1 1JQ

Circuit Web Site Address

www.nhmethodist.org.uk

Bankers
Lloyds Bank PLC
PO Box 1000
BX1 1LT

Investment Adviser
Central Finance Board of the
Methodist Church
9 Bonhill Street
London
EC2A

Independent Examiner
Sandeep Shah FCCA
St Christopher's House
Ridge Road
Letchworth Garden City, Herts
SG6 1PT

Governance and 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 some of which are Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs) with other denominations. Circuits combine to form about 30 districts in Great Britain. Although there is some autonomy, all Methodist organisations in Great Britain are governed by statutes determined by the Methodist Conference and which are published in the Constitution, Practice and Discipline (CPD) 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 clerical members.

In setting our objectives and planning our activities the Circuit Meeting, held at least twice in each 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 (CLT) - the Circuit Ministerial Staff and Circuit Stewards - met every two months to review the life of the Circuit and to take forward the decisions of the Circuit Meeting.

The Trustees and members of the Circuit Meeting are one and the same. They are also Managing Trustees for the property (manses) in the Circuit and for the Circuit Investments. The Trustees have no responsibility for individual churches in the Circuit.

Activities

OUR MISSION IS: to show and share God's love in Christ, that the community of faith may grow.

OUR POLICY: is to encourage and support the churches in the circuit to:

- Grow in our faith and numbers as communities and God's people.
- Show God's love in our worship and being; as church and as individuals.
- Share the good news of 'God with us' and the story of our faith.

Organisational Structure

- The governing document for the circuit is the Deed of Union (1932) and Methodist Church Act (1976)
- Detailed governance arrangements are outlined within the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church by order of the annual conference (CPD).
- Day to day management of the circuit is undertaken by the Circuit Leadership team along with the Local Preachers meeting, and the Circuit Meeting.
- The Districts pass the control down to Circuit level for local implementation by the Superintendent Minister, Ministerial staff and Circuit Stewards and authority is delegated to the Circuit Meeting for certain matters
- The Circuit meeting passes control down to Church Councils for local implementation by the Minister, the Church Stewards and other officers and authority is delegated to Church Councils acting as Managing Trustees.
- 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.
- The Methodist Connexional year runs from 1 September to the following 31 August.

Charity Registration

The North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit was registered as a charity (registration number 133930) in February 2010.

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 (*eg* choral and drama groups, The National Trust)
- some churches have long term tenants (e.g. a playgroup at Trinity)
- uniformed organisations (scouts, cubs, beavers, guides, brownies and rainbows) are affiliated to many of our churches
- lunch clubs are provided for the housebound
- other outreach activities
- opening some of our churches most days of the week to the homeless
- raising money for charities and activities locally and overseas (*eg* the annual Good Friday sponsored walk raises over £2500 for charities)

Safeguarding

The Circuit follows the Connexional policy on safeguarding as detailed in *Creating Safer Space.* Each church has a safeguarding representative and there are two safeguarding officers in the circuit to ensure the adoption of safe practice amongst children and vulnerable adults.

Trustees

The following people served as members of the Circuit Meeting during the year 2021-22.

Trustees name	Appointed	Office	Appointing Body
Rev Malcolm Peacock		Superintendent Minister	Ex officio
Rev Graham Claydon Knights		Minister	Ex officio
Rev Val Reid		Minister	Ex officio
Deacon Marcianne Uwimana		Deacon	Ex officio
Rev Julian Blakemore		Minister	Ex officio
Rev Melanie Crowley		Minister	Ex officio
Rev Peter Orton		Minister	Ex officio
Rev Chandrika Perera		Minister	Ex officio
Rev Nicholas Young		Supernumerary Minister	Ex officio
Rev John Whittle		Supernumerary Minister	Ex officio
Rev Bob Forrest		Supernumerary Minister	Ex officio
Deacon Malcolm Knowles		Supernumerary Deacon	Ex officio
Jenny Wright	Jun-19	Circuit Administrator/Secretary	Ex officio
Lydia Becket	Aug-21	Circuit Treasurer	Ex officio
Circuit Mtg			
Allison Ffinch	Sep-19	Circuit Steward	Circuit Stewards
Andrew Surry	Sep-09	Church Representative	St Faith's Joint PCC
Barbara Cook	Sep-14	Worship Leader	Circuit Meeting
Bob Hamilton	Oct-20	Church Representative	SHSJ
Brian Burgess	Sep-08	Church Representative	Benington Church Council
Cath Edmonds	Sep-19	Church Representative	Christchurch Church Mtg
Colin Yates	Sep-09	Church Representative	Central Church Council
David Latter	Sep-08	Local Preacher (Tutor)	Local Preachers Mtg
Diane Graham	Sep-13	Church Representative/Connex. Funds	Christchurch Church Mtg
Georgina Offie	Sep-18	Church Representative	All Saints Joint PCC
Gill Francis	Sep-18	Church Representative	Baldock Church Mtg
Gill Hughes	Sep-17	Circuit Steward	Circuit Stewards
Helen Hofton	Sep-15	Church Representative	Pirton Church Council
Helen Priest	Oct-20	Church Representative	SHSJ
Ian Brakenbury	Sep-09	Church Representative	Pirton Church Council
J Alan Burrell	Mar-16	Church Representative	St Paul's Church Council
Jackie Hall	Sep-08	Church Representative	Trinity, Church Mtg.
Jane Stephens	Sep-18	Church Representative	St Paul's Church Council
Janet Tackley	Mar-11	Circuit Steward/Church Representative	Pirton Church Council
Jennifer Rogers	Sep-10	Safeguarding Advisor	Circuit Meeting

John Sharman	Mar-08	Church Representative	Central Church Council
Jonathan Battarbee	Sep-19	Church Representative	Central Church Council
Julie Mills	Sep-20	Church Representative	Christchurch Church Mtg
June R Simpson	Mar-08	Church Representative	Stotfold Church Council
Kate Dickinson	Sep-19	LP Meeting secretary	LP Meeting
Ken Sharpe	Nov-16	Church Representative	High St
Mandy Pye	Mar-16	Church Representative	Christchurch Church Mtg
Margaret Turner	Mar-11	Church Representative	Stotfold Church Council
Nick Long	Sep-13	Circuit Steward	Circuit Stewards
Nirmal Chopde	Sep-19	Church Representative	High St
Norman Kiddle	Sep-15	Church Representative	All Saints Joint PCC
Peter Davies	Mar-11	Church Representative	Benington Church Council
Peter Dron	Sep-08	Church Representative	All Saints Joint PCC
Robert Driver	Sep-20	Church Representative	Baldock Church Mtg
Roy Robinson	Sep-21	Church Representative	Baldock Church Mtg
Shawal Spencer	Sep-20	Church Representative	High St
Stephanie Breker	Sep-13	Church Representative	Christchurch Church Mtg
Sue Chastney	Sep-09	Safeguarding Advisor	Circuit Meeting
Val Triplow	Sep-15	Church Representative	Stotfold Church Council
Vic Evans	Sep-19	Circuit Steward	Circuit Stewards
Vivien Storey	Mar-08	Church Representative	Central Church Council

Staff changes

In August 2022 Rev Malcolm Peacock left the Circuit, Rev Graham Claydon-Knights and Rev Val Reid were appointed Joint Super-Intendents in September 2022.

Deacon Marcianne Uwimana left the Circuit in February 2022.

Review of Objectives set for Year 2021-22

We are setting a small number of objectives for 2021-22 as we anticipate being able to access fewer resources – we lost a member of staff during the current year due to personal issues. Due to the ongoing stationing issues within the Methodist Church we anticipate that we will be a member of staff short during the year 2022/23.
During 2022/23 the two Methodist ministers remaining in the circuit are acting as co-superintendents. They have focused on four key areas of circuit life:

1. *Creating small groups of circuit stewards/ministers/paid circuit staff to take shared responsibility for tasks, so that no-one is on their own with big decisions.*
2. *Building up and supporting the team of circuit ministers (Methodist and Anglican) and Local Preachers.*
3. *Ensuring that safeguarding good practice is shared and Circuit records are up to date.*
4. *Ensuring that necessary property work on churches and manses is undertaken and properly recorded.*

In the current year we anticipate that two of our churches will cease to worship and most of our churches will continue to face difficulties around finances as we adjust to the impact of Covid.
Two churches have ceased to worship, and a third church is in the process of selling its building while remaining an active congregation. Circuit support for these congregations is ongoing.

In the year 2022/23 we look forward to the United Area Group of the United Reformed Church appointing a minister who will exercise some oversight in our Trinity Church, Knebworth – Methodist URC LEP.
This URC minister has not taken up his post, and Trinity Knebworth remains without a minister.

Given the difficulties we anticipate we are setting two objectives.

1. To discern priorities in the light of depleted resources.
   This has been an ongoing topic at our CLT meetings
2. To review and evaluate our sense of being as a Circuit post pandemic."
   This has been the principle underlying the four key areas of focus outlines in the first paragraph above.

Objectives set for the year 2022/23 and beyond

For the year ended 31 August 2023 and beyond, we will continue to address the objectives set for the year ended 31 August 2022, in particular:

We will continue to provide support for the congregations of the two churches in the Circuit where worship has ceased. We will manage the sale of one of these churches and will also support the sale of another church where the congregation remains active.

We look forward to welcoming a new Superintendent Minister and a new MOCC (Ministers from Other Churches and Conferences) Minister in September 2023.

In addition, we are planning a Circuit awayday in February 2024 with the objective of creating a Circuit Vision Statement.

Further ahead we plan to welcome a new minister into the Circuit following the planned sitting down of Rev Val Reid in August 2024.

Churches in the Circuit

All Saints Church Pin Green Stevenage Herts
Arlesey Methodist Church Beds
Baldock Methodist Church Herts
Benington Methodist Church(LEP* with Church of England [2 churches], United Reformed Church)
Central Methodist Church Letchworth Garden City Herts
Christchurch Hitchin Herts (LEP* with United Reformed Church)
High Street Methodist Church Stevenage Herts
Norton Methodist Church, Letchworth Garden City Herts
Pirton Methodist Church Herts
St Faith's Church Hitchin Herts (LEP* with Church of England)
St Hugh & St John Church, Chells Stevenage Herts (LEP* with Church of England)
St Paul's Methodist Church Broadwater Stevenage Herts
Stotfold Methodist Church Beds
Trinity Church Knebworth Herts (LEP* with United Reformed Church)

*LEP = Local Ecumenical Partnership

Financial Report

Risk Management

Through its CLT risks faced by the Circuit have been considered. Where appropriate, risks have been transferred by paying insurers to take the risks. Security and safety of our churches is largely for those churches to determine and to mitigate following advice from Circuit Officers.

All churches and manses are the subject of quinquennial inspections and the reports on each are reviewed by the circuit as well as the local trustees. Action is taken to reduce the risks of injury to all who have a legitimate purpose to be on those premises.

We have considered the resilience of churches and the risk that they will not meet their quarterly financial assessments. We judge that there are sufficient resources to cover any probable shortfall in the following year.

The Circuit operates within a statutory framework of regulation and seeks to ensure that it follows Methodist standing orders. It relies on the Methodist Council to provide guidance on changes that could affect the Circuit.

Trustees' Expenses

Members of the Circuit Meeting received neither payment nor reimbursement of their expenses in connection with their function as trustees. The only expenses paid were to the staff of the Circuit in connection with fulfilling their roles.

Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year that 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 accruals method
- made judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- followed applicable accounting standards
- prepared the financial statements on the 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 and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

Following advice from Connexion the Trustees have produced a Health and Safety policy for the Circuit that will be regularly reviewed.

Financial Review

The Circuit's annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2022 have been prepared in accordance with:

- the Charities Act 2011, and
- the Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice 2015 as applicable to the Financial Reporting Standard 102

The Circuit prepares accruals accounts. They are not a consolidation of the accounts of churches in the Circuit.

The Circuit budget is prepared by first anticipating the expenditure for the forthcoming year and then determining how that sum will be raised. Around 91% of the income for the year came from the individual churches within the circuit, with a total of £195,727 being received (2021: £208,854). The Circuit is grateful for the individual churches continuing to meet their assessment during the year.

In 2021-22 the Circuit finished the year with an overall deficit of £32,172 (2021: surplus of £311,601). The surplus in 2021 arose due to the profit on the disposal of the property at Turpin's Way. The proceeds from this sale were used to finance the purchase of a new manse at Topham Gardens, Arlesey.

The Circuit makes a number of grants each year. These are for projects which are part funded by the Bedfordshire Essex and Hertfordshire District. The District part of the funding is paid directly to the church concerned and does not pass through the Circuit accounts. The Circuit usually matches the amount received from the District. In 2021-22 a total of £17,783 (2020-21 £8,905) grants were awarded, with a further £24,085 committed over the next 2 years.

The Circuit Model Trust Fund finished the year with a deficit of £37,290 (2021: surplus £56,252). These funds are now classified as a long term investment. In most years, the Fund returns a deficit because the amounts taken by the Circuit and District are not fully compensated by the income generated by the fund. The Circuit may benefit indirectly from this as the District uses these funds to award grants. The surplus in 2021 arose due to the profit on the disposal of the property at Turpin's Way.

The expenditure during the year on manses was written off and not capitalised (as it generally represented expenditure of a maintenance nature rather than significant capital enhancement). During the year one manse was let commercially for the full year, a second manse was let in August 2022, the Trustees are keen to be responsible landlords.

At 31 August 2022, the total value of manses held is £1,709,562 (2021: £1,709,562).

Reserves not tied up in fixed assets show a deficit at the year end of £9,517. This arises primarily due to the amounts due to repaid to Trinity Church included in Other Creditors due within one year and in Other Creditors due in more than one year.

At no time during the year was the Circuit insolvent either in terms of its assets or in terms of its ability to pay its debts as they became due. All funds are unrestricted.

Reserves Policy

Background

The Circuit seeks to use its financial resources wisely and to predict future needs for capital expenditure on churches, manses and projects. Many of our churches are local ecumenical projects (LEPs) where two or more denominations work together, often sharing the same premises and usually worshipping together.

Grant Support

By way of annual or one-off grant, North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit supports several churches within the Circuit by contributing to the cost of specific projects, especially for mission, sometimes for as long as five years. The Circuit does not generally support the normal running costs of any church.

Before committing to a grant, the Circuit believes that it is prudent to ensure that it has sufficient resources to pay for all instalments of the grant. This is because the Circuit's annual income and expenditure budget does not normally seek to make a surplus. There is, therefore, no intended annual increase in the reserves.

Priority given to projects which:

- share the good news of God's love in Christ.
- help us to reach out to our communities in fresh and imaginative ways.
- have relevance for children and young people.
- develop and equip our buildings for worship and mission in the 21st century which is in line with our Circuit policy and strategy.

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 of the proceeds are received by the Circuit. This levy is then used by the Connexion to fund other innovative property and mission focussed schemes all over the country.

Funding of the Circuit's costs

This is achieved by making an assessment on each church within the Circuit. If any church were to close, that church's assessment would not be paid to the Circuit. The Circuit's costs – principally the stipends of the ministers – would continue and there may be a need to draw on reserves to meet the shortfall in income.

Existing Commitments

As at 31 August 2022 the Circuit has committed £24,085 in grants out of its funds.

Annual costs

The Circuit believes that it should ideally ensure that it has reserves sufficient to cover the stipends of its Presbyters and Deacon for the full ensuing year. At 31 August 2022, this sum is estimated at £89k.

The Circuit deems it prudent to hold sufficient to cover all other costs for six months, this is estimated as £70k

The total of these possible amounts is £159k and current reserves (including fixed assets) exceed that amount.

Upgrading of manses

The Circuit recognises its responsibility to provide adequate accommodation for its ministers. Over the last few years the Circuit has spent sums as necessary rather than as may be desirable.

As at 31 August 2022 the Circuit anticipates that it will, over the following year, spend up to £43k in total on capital projects across its four manses.

Taxation

It is the view of the trustees that none of the activities of the Circuit during the year should attract taxation. Where VAT has been incurred, none has been, or will be, recovered and costs are shown gross of relevant VAT.

Approvals

The Trustees' Report and the Financial Statements have been ratified by the Circuit Leadership Team Meeting.
The financial statements have been approved on behalf of the Circuit by:

Rev Graham Claydon-Knights 25/5/23
Joint Superintendent Minister

Allison Ffinch 25.5.23
Allison Ffinch
Joint Senior Circuit Steward

Rev Val Reid
Joint Superintendent Minister

Janet Tackley 25/5/23
Janet Tackley
Joint Senior Circuit Steward

Date: 14/6/23

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2022

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund	Circuit Model Trust	Total 2022	Total 2021
		£	£	£	£
Income					
1 Donations and legacies		-	-	-	-
2 Income from monetary investments	4	90	1,009	**1,099**	825
3 Income from investment properties	5	16,057	-	**16,057**	7,358
4 Assessments on Churches	17	195,727	-	**195,727**	208,854
5 Profit on Sale of Fixed Assets	6	-	-	-	370,225
6 Grants received	7	866	-	**866**	1,380
7 Other charitable income		2,331	-	**2,331**	1,002
8 **Total income**		**215,071**	**1,009**	**216,080**	589,644
Expenditure					
9 Grants and donations		17,783	-	**17,783**	8,905
10 Salaries and associated costs	10	132,176	-	**132,176**	149,493
11 Property maintenance		21,514	-	**21,514**	45,137
12 Model trust levy		-	7,416	**7,416**	9,378
13 District Assessment & Levy		42,448	-	**42,448**	42,768
14 Depreciation		-	-	-	-
15 Office expenses		26,032	677	**26,709**	20,137
16 Other outgoings		-	-	-	2,733
17 **Total charitable expenditure**		**239,953**	**8,093**	**248,046**	278,551
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments		-	(206)	**(206)**	508
19 Gains/(losses) on investment properties					
20 **Net income/(expenditure)**		**(24,882)**	**(7,290)**	**(32,172)**	311,601
21 Transfers between funds		**30,000**	**(30,000)**	-	-
22 Other gains/(losses)		-	-	-	-
23 **Net movement in funds**		**5,118**	**(37,290)**	**(32,172)**	311,601
24 Total funds brought forward		1,694,927	228,184	1,923,111	1,611,510
25 Total funds carried forward		**1,700,045**	**190,894**	**1,890,939**	**1,923,111**

Balance sheet as at 31 August 2022

	Notes to the Accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted) £	Circuit Model Trusts (Unrestricted) £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Fixed Assets					
Circuit Manses & Equipment	11	1,709,562		1,709,562	1,709,562
Investments	12		190,894	190,894	228,184
Total fixed assets		**1,709,562**	**190,894**	**1,900,456**	**1,937,746**
Current Assets					
Debtors	13	1,281	-	1,281	6,803
Central Finance Board Deposits		16,659	-	16,659	9,942
Cash at Bank and in hand		7,020	-	7,020	15,329
Total current assets		**24,960**	-	**24,960**	**32,074**
Current liabilities					
Creditors (due in under 1 year)	14	16,489	-	16,489	20,233
Grants payable within 2021 22		12,472	-	12,472	7,723
Total current liabilities		**28,961**	-	**28,961**	**27,956**
Net current assets/liabilities		**(4,001)**	-	**(4,001)**	**4,118**
Long term liabilities					
Creditors (due in more than 1 year)		5,516		5,516	18,753
Total assets less total liabilities		**1,700,045**	**190,894**	**1,890,939**	**1,923,111**
Net Assets		**1,700,045**	**190,894**	**1,890,939**	**1,923,111**
Funds of the Circuit					
General Fund (Unrestricted)		1,700,045		1,700,045	1,694,927
Circuit Model Trust Fund (Unrestricted)			190,894	190,894	228,184
Designated Funds (Unrestricted)		-	-	-	-
Total Unrestricted Funds		1,700,045	190,894	**1,890,939**	**1,923,111**
Restricted Funds		-	-	-	-
Endowment Funds		-	-	-	-
Total Funds		**1,700,045**	**190,894**	**1,890,939**	**1,923,111**

Notes to the accounts

1. Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 in accordance with the 2015 version of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard 102 - the Charities SORP – in replacement for the SORP's 2005 version specified in its related 2008 Regulations and in accordance with the 'true and fair override' provision contained therein.

2. Funds

The funds held constitute:

- General Funds are unrestricted and are held for any purpose of the Circuit.
- The Circuit Model Trust Fund has wide purposes defined in Standing Orders and is categorised as unrestricted.

Restricted funds are funds which are held for a narrower purpose. The Circuit does not hold any restricted or endowment funds. Any funds may be represented by more than just cash.

3. Accounting policies

Basis

These accounts have been prepared on the basis of historical cost, except that investments are shown at their market value at the end of the year, on the accruals basis to show a true and fair view of the Circuit's financial position and activities.

Incoming resources

Income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the Circuit becomes entitled to the resources, and the trustees are reasonably certain they will receive the resources; and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred, or a constructive obligation arises, that results in the payment being unavoidable. Liabilities are recognised as soon as an outflow of economic benefit is considered more likely than not under the legal or constructive obligation committing the Circuit to pay out resources.

Grants

Grants made by the Circuit from its own funds are recognised in full at the time of agreement or when the Circuit accepts that there is a legal or operational obligation to make the payment. When the grant is recurrent over more than one year the balance payable in future years is treated as a provision for future commitments in the Balance Sheet against the appropriate fund, the provision being released in future years as instalments are paid in accordance with the originally agreed terms.

VAT

Since the Circuit is not VAT registered, all input VAT is charged with the expenses to which it refers.

Tangible fixed assets for use by the circuit

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and individually cost at least £1,000. They are valued at cost, or a reasonable value on receipt. We do not regard the value as being less than the cost, have carried out an impairment review and decided no depreciation is necessary.

Investment property

In addition to the manses, the circuit owns one house which it holds as an investment property. Since the value of all manses, including this investment property, is frozen at £1,349,962, the value attributed to the newly defined 'investment property' is *pro rata* to the insured values of the total real estate.

Investments

Investments are valued in the balance sheet at market value at the year end. Investment income is included in the accounts when receivable and any gains or losses on revaluation at the year end are shown in the SOFA.

Debtors and prepayments

Debtors are amounts owed to the Circuit. Prepayments include payments made by the Circuit for services yet to be received. This includes the payment in August of the September Stipends which are debited at the end of August.

Creditors

Creditors include both sundry expenses and also any amounts received by Circuit in advance of when income is actually due.

4. Investment income	**Unrestricted**	**Circuit Model Trust Fund**	**Total 2022**	**Total 2021**
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Lloyds Interest	90	-	90	52
Circuit Model Trust Fund income	-	1,009	1,009	773
Total	**90**	**1,009**	**1,099**	**825**

5. Other trading activities	**Unrestricted**	**Circuit Model Trust Fund**	**Total 2022**	**Total 2021**
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Lettings income (Maytrees)	**16,057**	-	**16,057**	**7,358**

6. Profit on Sale of Fixed Assets	**Unrestricted**	**Circuit Model Trust Fund**	**Total 2022**	**Total 2021**
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Profit on sale of property	-	-	-	**370,225**

In the year ended 31 August 2021, the sale of the property at Turpin's Way was completed.

7. Grants received	**Unrestricted**	**Circuit Model Trust Fund**	**Total 2022**	**Total 2021**
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme Grant	866	-	**866**	**1,380**

Notes to the accounts (continued)

8. Payment to Trustees

	2022	2021
	£	£
Payments made to trustees for additional services	NIL	NIL
Number of trustees who were paid expenses	4	5
Total amount paid	5,595	2,599

No trustees undertook additional services on behalf of the Circuit.

9. Fees for examination or audit of the accounts

	2022	2021
	£	£
Independent examiner's or auditors' fees for reporting on the accounts	570	570
Other fees (eg: advice, accountancy services) paid to the independent examiner or auditor	NIL	NIL

10. Paid employees

Staff Costs paid during the year were:	2022	2021
	£	£
Gross wages, salaries and benefits in kind	99,813	112,088
Employer's National Insurance costs	9,158	9,915
Pension costs	23,205	27,490
Total staff costs	132,176	149,493
Average number of staff employed during the year were:	5	7

11. Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets comprise manses at deemed cost of £1,709,562 (2021: £1,709,562)
We do not regard the value as being less than cost and hence no depreciation is necessary.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

12. Investments

The funds that support the Circuit Model Trust Fund are held by TMCP in Trustees Interest Funds on which interest is credited to the accounts each month. These are regarded as medium and long term investments.

TMCP is the Custodian Trustee of all Methodist Model Trust property and is held for and on behalf of local Managing Trustees who are responsible for the day to day management of trust property. TMCP ensures that, through providing guidance and acting under their direction, the Managing Trustees comply with charity law and Methodist law and polity as determined by the Methodist Conference.

	2022	2021
	£	£
Investments listed on a recognised Stock Exchange	3,072	3,278
Investments held in common investment funds	187,822	224,906
	190,894	**228,184**

Change in investment values	2022	2021
	£	£
Carrying (market) value at beginning of year	228,184	171,932
Add: additions to investments at cost	1,009	65,479
Less: disposals at carrying value	(8,093)	(9,735)
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation	(206)	508
Transfers in/(out)	(30,000)	-
Carrying (market) value at end of year	190,894	228,184

13. Analysis of current assets

Debtors and prepayments	2022	2021
	£	£
Prepayments	1,281	996
Other debtors	-	5,807
Total debtors and prepayments	**1,281**	**6,803**

Analysis of cash at bank	2022	2021
	£	£
Bank balance held in Lloyds	**7,020**	**15,329**

14. Analysis of current liabilities

	2022	2021
	£	£
Accruals	2,001	12,510
Other creditors	14,488	7,723
	16,489	20,233
Grants payable	12,472	7,723
Total Current Liabilities	**28,961**	**27,956**

Notes to the accounts (continued)

15. Analysis of long term creditors

	2022	2021
	£	£
Other creditors	5,516	18,753

16. Capital Commitments and Contingent Liabilities

At the 31 August 2022, the Circuit has no capital commitments.

No Contingent liabilities were identified at 31 August 2022.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

17. Related Party Transactions
2022

Name of related party	Relationship	Description of transaction	Income from related party during year	Payments to related party during the year	Amounts owed by /(to) related party as on 31-Aug-2022
			£	£	£
Bedford, Essex and Hertfordshire District	District	Assessment		42,448	
All Saints Church, Pin Green Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,680		
Arlesey Methodist Church, Beds	Circuit Church	Assessment	-		
Baldock Methodist Church, Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	8,021		(254)
Benington Methodist Church,	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,152		
Central Methodist Church, Letchworth	Circuit Church	Assessment	53,232		(500)
Christchurch, Hitchin Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	60,420		(12,445)
High Street Methodist Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	22,172		
Norton Methodist Church, Letchworth	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	6,768		
Pirton Methodist Church, Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,320		
St Hugh and St John Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	5,376		
St Faith's Church, Hitchin Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	3,060		(745)
St Paul's Methodist Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	8,088		
Stotfold Methodist Church, Beds	Circuit Church	Assessment	10,944		
Trinity Church, Knebworth Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,494		1,472
Total			**195,727**		**(12,472)**

2021

Name of related party	Relationship	Description of transaction	Income from related party during year	Payments to related party during the year	Amounts owed by /(to) related party as on 31-Aug-2021
			£	£	£
Bedford, Essex and Hertfordshire District	District	Assessment		42,768	
All Saints Church, Pin Green Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	5,000		
Arlesey Methodist Church, Beds	Circuit Church	Assessment			
Baldock Methodist Church, Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	9,000		
Benington Methodist Church,	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,716		
Central Methodist Church, Letchworth	Circuit Church	Assessment	60,480		
Christchurch, Hitchin Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	68,640		(8,450)
High Street Methodist Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	24,900		
Norton Methodist Church, Letchworth	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	7,680		
Pirton Methodist Church, Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,920		
St Hugh and St John Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	5,904		
St Faith's Church, Hitchin Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment			(745)
St Paul's Methodist Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	8,088		
Stotfold Methodist Church, Beds	Circuit Church	Assessment	12,420		
Trinity Church, Knebworth Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	(2,894)		1,472
Total			**208,854**		**(7,723)**

North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit **Charity No. 1133930**

Declarations

Treasurer

I confirm that these accrual based accounts for the year ended 31 August 2022 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

Name of Treasurer Lydia Becket

Address 132 Topstreet Way, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, AL5 5TS

Date 25 05 23

Presentation to the Circuit Meeting for approval.

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2022 will be presented to the Circuit Meeting at its meeting in September 2023.

Signature of the Chair of the meeting 25/5/23

Name of the Chair of the meeting Rev Graham Claydon-Knights
Joint Superintendent Minister

Signature of the Chair of the meeting

Name of the Chair of the meeting Rev Val Reid
Joint Superintendent Minister

Date 14/6/23

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit.

This Report is on the Circuit Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2022.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The Circuit's trustees are responsible for ensuring that the annual report and accounts for the year to 31 August 2022 present a true and fair view of the Circuit's income and expenditure for the year and of its assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date. The trustees consider that an audit is not necessary for this year under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

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

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention

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

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

have not been met, or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

(3) I 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.

Name of independent examiner	Sandeep Shah
Signature of independent examiner	Sandeep Shah.

Relevant Professional qualification of independent examiner

FCCA

Name of firm (where appropriate)

Leadermans

Address	St Christopher's House Ridge Road Letchworth Garden City SG6 1PT
Date	19/6/23

NORTH HERTS METHODIST CIRCUIT

England & Wales - Charity number 1133930

Accounts

The Methodist Church

34/15 North Hertfordshire Circuit

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

and

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended

31 AUGUST 2021

Charity registration number: 1133930

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Administrative Information

Circuit Ministers

Rev Malcolm Peacock	(Superintendent)
Rev Graham Claydon-Knights	
Rev Val Reid	
Rev Julian Blakemore	(Sector Minister – Banking)
Rev Melanie Crowley	(Anglican – Authorised Minister)
Chandrika Perera	
Rev Peter Orton	
Deacon Marcianne Uwimana	
Rev John Whittle	Supernumerary Minister
Rev N Young	Supernumerary Minister
Rev R Forrest	Supernumerary Minister
Deacon Malcolm Knowles	Supernumerary Deacon

Circuit Stewards

Gill Hughes	Senior Steward
Ann Archer	Manse Steward
Peter Rogers	
Allison Ffinch	
Janet Tackley	
Vic Evans	
Nick Long	

Circuit Meeting Secretaries

Jenny Wright	Administration

Circuit Administrator

Jenny Wright
Central Methodist Church
Pixmore Way
Letchworth Garden City
Herts
SG6 3TR

Custodian Trustees

(for Property and Investments)
Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes
Central Buildings
Oldham Street
Manchester
M1 1JQ

Circuit Web Site Address

www.nhmethodist.org.uk

Bankers
Lloyds Bank PLC
PO Box 1000
BX1 1LT

Investment Adviser
Central Finance Board of the
Methodist Church
9 Bonhill Street
London
EC2A

Independent Examiner
Sandeep Shah FCCA
St Christopher's House
Ridge Road
Letchworth Garden City, Herts
SG6 1PT

Trustees' Report

Governance and 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 some of which are Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs) with other denominations. Circuits combine to form about 30 districts in Great Britain. Although there is some autonomy, all Methodist organisations in Great Britain are governed by statutes determined by the Methodist Conference and which are published in the Constitution, Practice and Discipline (CPD) 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 clerical members.

In setting our objectives and planning our activities the Circuit Meeting, held at least twice in each 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 (CLT) - the Circuit Ministerial Staff and Circuit Stewards - met every two months to review the life of the Circuit and to take forward the decisions of the Circuit Meeting.

The Trustees and members of the Circuit Meeting are one and the same. They are also Managing Trustees for the property (manses) in the Circuit and for the Circuit Investments. The Trustees have no responsibility for individual churches in the Circuit.

Activities

OUR MISSION IS: to show and share God's love in Christ, that the community of faith may grow.

OUR POLICY: is to encourage and support the churches in the circuit to:

- Grow in our faith and numbers as communities and God's people.
- Show God's love in our worship and being; as church and as individuals.
- Share the good news of 'God with us' and the story of our faith.

Organisational Structure

- The governing document for the circuit is the Deed of Union (1932) and Methodist Church Act (1976)
- Detailed governance arrangements are outlined within the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church by order of the annual conference (CPD).
- Day to day management of the circuit is undertaken by the Circuit Leadership team along with the Local Preachers meeting, and the Circuit Meeting.
- The Districts pass the control down to Circuit level for local implementation by the Superintendent Minister, Ministerial staff and Circuit Stewards and authority is delegated to the Circuit Meeting for certain matters
- The Circuit meeting passes control down to Church Councils for local implementation by the Minister, the Church Stewards and other officers and authority is delegated to Church Councils acting as Managing Trustees.
- 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.
- The Methodist Connexional year runs from 1 September to the following 31 August.

Charity Registration

The North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit was registered as a charity (registration number 133930) in February 2010.

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 (*eg* choral and drama groups, The National Trust)
- some churches have long term tenants (e.g. a playgroup at Trinity)
- uniformed organisations (scouts, cubs, beavers, guides, brownies and rainbows) are affiliated to many of our churches
- lunch clubs are provided for the housebound
- other outreach activities
- opening some of our churches most days of the week to the homeless
- raising money for charities and activities locally and overseas (*eg* the annual Good Friday sponsored walk raises over £2500 for charities)

Safeguarding

The Circuit follows the Connexional policy on safeguarding as detailed in *Creating Safer Space*. Each church has a safeguarding representative and there are two safeguarding officers in the circuit to ensure the adoption of safe practice amongst children and vulnerable adults.

Trustees

The following people served as members of the Circuit Meeting during the year 2020-21.

Trustees name	Appointed	Office	Appointing Body
Rev Malcolm Peacock		Superintendent Minister	Ex officio
Rev Graham Claydon Knights		Minister	Ex officio
Rev Val Reid		Minister	Ex officio
Deacon Marcianne Uwimana		Deacon	Ex officio
Rev Julian Blakemore		Minister	Ex officio
Rev Melanie Crowley		Minister	Ex officio
Rev Peter Orton		Minister	Ex officio
Rev Chandrika Perera		Minister	Ex officio
Rev Nicholas Young		Supernumerary Minister	Ex officio
Rev John Whittle		Supernumerary Minister	Ex officio
Rev Bob Forrest		Supernumerary Minister	Ex officio
Deacon Malcolm Knowles		Supernumerary Deacon	Ex officio
Jenny Wright	Jun-19	Circuit Administrator/Secretary	Ex officio
Circuit Mtg			
Ann Archer	Sep-14	Circuit Manse Steward	Circuit Meeting
Brian Burgess	Sep-08	Church Representative	Benington Church Council
Kate Dickinson	Sep-19	LP Meeting secretary	LP Meeting
Allison Ffinch		Circuit Steward	Circuit Stewards
Andrew Surry	Sep-09	Church Representative	St Faith's Joint PCC
Barbara Cook	Sep-14	Worship Leader	Circuit Meeting
Bob Hamilton	Oct-20	Church Representative	SHSJ
Cath Edmonds	Sep-19	Church Representative	Christchurch Church Mtg
Stephanie Breker	Sep-13	Church Representative	Christchurch Church Mtg
Colin Yates	Sep-09	Church Representative	Central Church Council
David Latter	Sep-08	Local Preacher (Tutor)	Local Preachers Mtg
Diane Graham	Sep-13	Church Representative/Connex. Funds	Christchurch Church Mtg
Georgina Offie	Sep-18	Church Representative	All Saints Joint PCC
Gill Francis	Sep 18	Church Representative	Baldock Church Mtg
Gill Hughes	Sep-19	Circuit Steward	Circuit Stewards
Helen Hofton	Sep-15	Church Representative	Pirton Church Council
Helen Priest	Oct-20	Church Representative	SHSJ
Ian Brakenbury	Sep-09	Church Representative	Pirton Church Council
J Alan Burrell	Mar-16	Church Representative	St Paul's Church Council
Jackie Hall	Sep-08	Church Representative	Trinity, Church Mtg.
Jane Stephens	Sep-18	Church Representative	St Paul's Church Council
Janet Tackley	Mar-11	Circuit Steward/Church Representative	Pirton Church Council
Jennifer Rogers	Sep-10	Safeguarding Advisor	Circuit Meeting
Julie Mills	Sep-20	Church Representative	Christchurch Church Mtg
John Sharman	Mar-08	Church Representative	Central Church Council

Trustees name	Appointed	Office	Appointing Body
Jonathan Battarbee	Sep-19	Church Representative	Central Church Council
June R Simpson	Mar-08	Church Representative	Stotfold Church Council
Ken Sharpe	Nov-16	Church Representative	High St
Mandy Pye	Mar-16	Church Representative	Christchurch Church Mtg
Margaret Turner	Mar-11	Church Representative	Stotfold Church Council
Nick Long	Sep-13	Circuit Steward	Circuit Stewards
Nirmal Chopde	Sep-19	Church Representative	High St
Norman Kiddle	Sep-15	Church Representative	All Saints Joint PCC
Peter Davies	Mar-11	Church Representative	Benington Church Council
Peter Dron	Sep-08	Church Representative	All Saints Joint PCC
Peter Rogers	Sep-11	Circuit Steward	Circuit Meeting
Robert Driver	Sep-20	Church Representative	Baldock Church Mtg
Roy Robinson	Sep-21	Church Representative	Baldock Church Mtg

Staff changes

We welcomed Deacon Marcianne Uwimana as a Probationer Deacon into the Circuit in September 2020.

Review of Objectives set for Year 2020-21

1. Like many churches and other organisations, we have had our activities severely curtailed by the impact of Covid 19. All of our churches have been affected in some way. Some have chosen to meet virtually using Zoom and streams services, some have made significant efforts to sustain a regular pattern of on-premises worship when national restrictions have allowed. The impact has also been on our finances a mixture of reduced Sunday giving and a loss through community rental of our buildings.
2. Normal ways of CLT meeting to tease out Circuit objectives was severely hampered by limitations of Covid-19 and other restrictions, including Sabbatical leave and personal health issues within the team. Our emphasis in discussions has been to remain open to observing and recognised what we might retain and build on when we are able to draw new objectives for the mission of the Circuit.
3. We have encouraged all of our Churches to make appropriate worship arrangements give the need and size of their congregations.
4. We have encouraged our Local Preachers and Worship Leaders to be careful in the level of commitments they can offer. This has resulted in our being able to offer a restricted capacity for on-site worship in the Circuit. This is a possible learning point as we continue to respond to Covid-19 and its impact in 2021.
5. We will continually monitor the impact of Covid-19 on Circuit finances so we can make suitable gestures of support.
6. We recognise that the ongoing difficulty in appointing a Circuit Treasurer is having a detrimental effect n out strategic development as a Circuit and we will look to make a paid appointment during 2021.
7. We have developed additional levels of pastoral support with a focus on those who are at risk and who are challenged by technology.
8. We will use the experience of the impact of Covid 19 to assess and evaluate the needs that have been revealed in the life of the Circuit and what are the most appropriate ways of developing out Church life in response to this.

We have attempted to meet the objectives we set in the last year. As the Circuit responds to changes in Covid regulations we will continue to challenge and encourage the Churches in the Circuit to respond in the way that is appropriate to their members and to be careful that we do not create expectations that cannot be met.

We continue to encourage Local Preachers to be careful in their commitments to the circuits and to ensure they do not put themselves unnecessarily at risk.

Pressure on finances remains acute and we are looking at different ways in which we can support and help those churches in need.

We were successful in recruiting a Circuit Treasurer as a paid role and are pleased to have Lydia Becket in post.

Objectives set for the year 2021/22

We are setting a small number of objectives this year as we anticipate being able to access fewer resources – we lost a member of staff during the current year due to personal issues. Due to the ongoing stationing issues within the Methodist Church we anticipate that we will be a member of staff short during the year 2022/23.

In the current year we anticipate that two of our churches will cease to worship and most of our churches will continue to face difficulties around finances as we adjust to the impact of Covid.

In the year 2022/23 we look forward to the United Area Group od the United Reformed Church appointing a minister who will exercise some oversight in our Trinity Church, Knebworth – Methodist URC LEP.

Given the difficulties we anticipate we are setting two objectives.

1. To discern priorities in the light of depleted resources.
2. To review and evaluate our sense of being as a Circuit post pandemic.

Churches in the Circuit

All Saints Church Pin Green Stevenage Herts
Arlesey Methodist Church Beds
Baldock Methodist Church Herts
Benington Methodist Church(LEP* with Church of England [2 churches], United Reformed Church)
Central Methodist Church Letchworth Garden City Herts
Christchurch Hitchin Herts (LEP* with United Reformed Church)
High Street Methodist Church Stevenage Herts
Norton Methodist Church, Letchworth Garden City Herts
Pirton Methodist Church Herts
St Faith's Church Hitchin Herts (LEP* with Church of England)
St Hugh & St John Church, Chells Stevenage Herts (LEP* with Church of England)
St Paul's Methodist Church Broadwater Stevenage Herts
Stotfold Methodist Church Beds
Trinity Church Knebworth Herts (LEP* with United Reformed Church)

*LEP = Local Ecumenical Partnership

Financial Report

Risk Management

Through its CLT risks faced by the Circuit have been considered. Where appropriate, risks have been transferred by paying insurers to take the risks. Security and safety of our churches is largely for those churches to determine and to mitigate following advice from Circuit Officers.

All churches and manses are the subject of quinquennial inspections and the reports on each are reviewed by the circuit as well as the local trustees. Action is taken to reduce the risks of injury to all who have a legitimate purpose to be on those premises.

We have considered the resilience of churches and the risk that they will not meet their quarterly financial assessments. We judge that there are sufficient resources to cover any probable shortfall in the following year.

The Circuit operates within a statutory framework of regulation and seeks to ensure that it follows Methodist standing orders. It relies on the Methodist Council to provide guidance on changes that could affect the Circuit.

Trustees' Expenses

Members of the Circuit Meeting received neither payment nor reimbursement of their expenses in connection with their function as trustees. The only expenses paid were to the staff of the Circuit in connection with fulfilling their roles.

Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year that 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 accruals method
- made judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- followed applicable accounting standards
- prepared the financial statements on the 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 and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

Following advice from Connexion the Trustees have produced a Health and Safety policy for the Circuit that will be regularly reviewed.

Financial Review

The Circuit's annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2021 have been prepared in accordance with:

- the Charities Act 2011, and
- the Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice 2015 as applicable to the Financial Reporting Standard 102

The Circuit prepares accruals accounts. They are not a consolidation of the accounts of churches in the Circuit.

The Circuit budget is prepared by first anticipating the expenditure for the forthcoming year and then determining how that sum will be raised. Around 95% of the income for the year came from the individual churches within the circuit, with a total of £208,854 being received (2020: £231,795). The Circuit is grateful for the individual churches continuing to meet their assessment during the year.

In 2020-21 the Circuit finished the year with an overall surplus of £311,601 (2020: a deficit of £8,409). This arises due to the profit on the disposal of the property at Turpin's Way in the year. The proceeds from this sale have been used to finance the purchase of a new manse at Topham Gardens, Arlesey. This purchase was funded temporarily by a bridging loan of £450,000 from Methodist Chapel Aid until the Turpin's Way Manse was sold in September 2020.

The Circuit makes a number of grants each year. These are for projects which are part funded by the Bedfordshire Essex and Hertfordshire District. The District part of the funding is paid directly to the church concerned and does not pass through the Circuit accounts. The Circuit usually matches the amount received from the District. In 2020 21 a total of £8,905 (2019 20 £5,135) grants were awarded, with a further £42,749 committed over the next 4 years.

The Circuit Model Trust Fund finished the year with a surplus of £56,252 (2020: £5,275). These funds are now classified as a long term investment. The surplus arises due to the profit on the disposal of the property at Turpin's Way after the repayment of the bridging loan taken out in 2020 to finance the purchase of the property at Topham Gardens. Usually the Fund returns a deficit each year because the amounts taken by the Circuit and District are not fully compensated by the income generated by the fund. The Circuit may benefit indirectly from this as the District uses these funds to award grants.

The expenditure during the year on manses was written off and not capitalised (as it generally represented expenditure of a maintenance nature rather than significant capital enhancement). One of the manses is presently let on a commercial lease and trustees are keen to be responsible landlords.

At 31 August 2021, the total value of manses held is £1,709,562 (2020: £1,849,912). In the current year the manse at Turpin's Way was sold.

Reserves not tied up in fixed assets show a deficit at the year end of £14,635. This arises primarily due to the amounts due to repaid to Trinity Church included in Other Creditors due within one year and in Other Creditors due in more than one year.

At no time during the year was the circuit insolvent either in terms of its assets or in terms of its ability to pay its debts as they became due. All funds are unrestricted.

Reserves Policy

Background

The Circuit seeks to use its financial resources wisely and to predict future needs for capital expenditure on churches, manses and projects. Many of our churches are local ecumenical projects (LEPs) where two or more denominations work together, often sharing the same premises and usually worshipping together.

Grant Support

By way of annual or one-off grant, North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit supports several churches within the Circuit by contributing to the cost of specific projects, especially for mission, sometimes for as long as five years. The Circuit does not generally support the normal running costs of any church.

Before committing to a grant, the Circuit believes that it is prudent to ensure that it has sufficient resources to pay for all instalments of the grant. This is because the Circuit's annual income and expenditure budget does not normally seek to make a surplus. There is, therefore, no intended annual increase in the reserves.

Priority given to projects which:

- share the good news of God's love in Christ.
- help us to reach out to our communities in fresh and imaginative ways.
- have relevance for children and young people.
- develop and equip our buildings for worship and mission in the 21st century which is in line with our Circuit policy and strategy.

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 of the proceeds are received by the Circuit. This levy is then used by the Connexion to fund other innovative property and mission focussed schemes all over the country.

Funding of the Circuit's costs

This is achieved by making an assessment on each church within the Circuit. If any church were to close, that church's assessment would not be paid to the Circuit. The Circuit's costs – principally the stipends of the ministers – would continue and there may be a need to draw on reserves to meet the shortfall in income.

Existing Commitments

As at 31 August 2021The Circuit has committed £42,749 in grants out of its funds.

Annual costs

The Circuit believes that it should ideally ensure that it has reserves sufficient to cover the stipends of its Presbyters and Deacon for the full ensuing year. At 31 August 2021, this sum is estimated at £143k.

A part time administrator is employed at an annual cost of around £7,200. Other costs of the circuit are estimated at around £111k per year. The Circuit deems it prudent to hold sufficient to cover these costs for six months, ie £56k.

The total of these possible amounts is £199k and current reserves (including fixed assets) exceed that amount.

Upgrading of manses

The Circuit recognises its responsibility to provide adequate accommodation for its ministers. Over the last few years the Circuit has spent sums as necessary rather than as may be desirable.

As at 31 August 2021 the Circuit anticipates that it will, over the following year, spend up to £25,000 in total on capital projects across its four manses.

Taxation

It is the view of the trustees that none of the activities of the Circuit during the year should attract taxation. Where VAT has been incurred, none has been, or will be, recovered and costs are shown gross of relevant VAT.

Approvals

The Trustees' Report and the Financial Statements have been ratified by the Circuit Leadership Team Meeting.
The financial statements have been approved on behalf of the Circuit by:

Rev Malcolm Peacock

Superintendent Minister

Malcolm Peacock

Date:

21/4/22.

Gill Hughes

Senior Circuit Steward

G Hughes

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2021

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund	Circuit Model Trust	Total 2020-21	Total 2019-20
		£	£	£	£
Income					
1 Donations and legacies		-	-	-	149
2 Income from monetary investments	4	52	773	**825**	2,124
3 Income from investment properties	5	7,358	-	**7,358**	14,915
4 Assessments on Churches	17	208,854	-	**208,854**	231,795
5 Profit on Sale of Fixed Assets	6	305,519	64,706	**370,225**	-
6 Grants received	7	1,380	-	**1,380**	7,131
7 Other charitable income		1,002	-	**1,002**	918
8 **Total income**		**524,165**	**65,479**	**589,644**	257,032
Expenditure					
9 Grants and donations		8,905	-	**8,905**	5,435
10 Salaries and associated costs	10	149,493	-	**149,493**	154,493
11 Property maintenance		45,137	-	**45,137**	23,088
12 Model trust levy		-	9,378	**9,378**	6,418
13 District Assessment & Levy		42,768	-	**42,768**	44,452
14 Depreciation		-	-	-	-
15 Office expenses		19,780	357	**20,137**	31,015
16 Other outgoings		2,733	-	**2,733**	490
17 **Total charitable expenditure**		**268,816**	**9,735**	**278,551**	265,391
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments		-	508	**508**	(50)
19 Gains/(losses) on investment properties					
20 **Net income/(expenditure)**		**255,349**	**56,252**	**311,601**	(8,409)
21 Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
22 Other gains/(losses)		-	-	-	-
23 **Net movement in funds**		**255,349**	**56,252**	**311,601**	(8,409)
24 Total funds brought forward		1,439,578	171,932	1,611,510	1,619,919
25 Total funds carried forward		**1,694,927**	**228,184**	**1,923,111**	**1,611,510**

Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2021

	Notes to the Accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted) £	Circuit Model Trusts (Unrestricted) £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Fixed Assets					
Circuit Manses & Equipment	11	1,709,562		1,709,562	1,849,912
Investment properties					
Investments	12		228,184	228,184	171,932
Total fixed assets		**1,709,562**	**228,184**	**1,937,746**	**2,021,844**
Current Assets					
Debtors	13	6,803	-	6,803	1,124
Central Finance Board Deposits		9,942	-	9,942	39,333
Cash at Bank and in hand		15,329	-	15,329	10,125
Total current assets		**32,074**	-	**32,074**	**50,582**
Current liabilities					
Creditors (due in under 1 year)	14	20,233	-	20,233	1,190
Grants payable within 2020-21		7,723	-	7,723	9,726
Bridging Loan		-	-	-	450,000
Total current liabilities		**27,956**	-	**27,956**	**460,916**
Net current assets/liabilities		**4,118**	-	**4,118**	**(410,334)**
Long term liabilities					
Creditors (due in more than 1 year)		18,753		18,753	-
Total assets less total liabilities		**1,694,927**	**228,184**	**1,923,111**	**1,611,510**
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
Net Assets		**1,694,927**	**228,184**	**1,923,111**	**1,611,510**
Funds of the Circuit					
General Fund (Unrestricted)		1,694,927		1,694,927	1,439,578
Circuit Model Trust Fund (Unrestricted)			228,184	228,184	171,932
Designated Funds (Unrestricted)		-	-	-	-
Total Unrestricted Funds		1,694,927	228,184	**1,923,111**	**1,611,510**
Restricted Funds		-	-	-	-
Endowment Funds		-	-	-	-
Total Funds		**1,694,927**	**228,184**	**1,923,111**	**1,611,510**

Notes to the accounts

1. Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 in accordance with the 2015 version of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard 102 - the Charities SORP – in replacement for the SORP's 2005 version specified in its related 2008 Regulations and in accordance with the 'true and fair override' provision contained therein.

2. Funds

The funds held constitute:

- General Funds are unrestricted and are held for any purpose of the Circuit.
- The Circuit Model Trust Fund has wide purposes defined in Standing Orders and is categorised as unrestricted.

Restricted funds are funds which are held for a narrower purpose. The Circuit does not hold any restricted or endowment funds. Any funds may be represented by more than just cash.

3. Accounting policies

Basis

These accounts have been prepared on the basis of historical cost, except that investments are shown at their market value at the end of the year, on the accruals basis to show a true and fair view of the Circuit's financial position and activities.

Incoming resources

Income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the Circuit becomes entitled to the resources, and the trustees are reasonably certain they will receive the resources; and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred, or a constructive obligation arises, that results in the payment being unavoidable. Liabilities are recognised as soon as an outflow of economic benefit is considered more likely than not under the legal or constructive obligation committing the Circuit to pay out resources.

Grants

Grants made by the Circuit from its own funds are recognised in full at the time of agreement or when the Circuit accepts that there is a legal or operational obligation to make the payment. When the grant is recurrent over more than one year the balance payable in future years is treated as a provision for future commitments in the Balance Sheet against the appropriate fund, the provision being released in future years as instalments are paid in accordance with the originally agreed terms.

VAT

Since the Circuit is not VAT registered, all input VAT is charged with the expenses to which it refers.

Tangible fixed assets for use by the circuit

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and individually cost at least £1,000. They are valued at cost, or a reasonable value on receipt. We do not regard the value as being less than the cost, have carried out an impairment review and decided no depreciation is necessary

Investment property

In addition to the manses, the circuit owns one house which it holds as an investment property. Since the value of all manses, including this investment property, is frozen at £1,349,962, the value attributed to the newly defined 'investment property' is *pro rata* to the insured values of the total real estate.

Investments

Investments are valued in the balance sheet at market value at the year end. Investment income is included in the accounts when receivable and any gains or losses on revaluation at the year end are shown in the SOFA.

Debtors and prepayments

Debtors are amounts owed to the Circuit. Prepayments include payments made by the Circuit for services yet to be received. This includes the payment in August of the September Stipends which are debited at the end of August.

Creditors

Creditors include both sundry expenses and also any amounts received by Circuit in advance of when income is actually due.

4. Investment income	Unrestricted	Circuit Model Trust Fund	2021 Total	2020 Total
	£	£	£	£
Lloyds Interest	52	-	52	563
Circuit Model Trust Fund income	-	773	773	1,561
Total	**52**	**773**	**825**	**2,124**

5. Other trading activities	Unrestricted	Circuit Model Trust Fund	2021 Total	2020 Total
	£	£	£	£
Lettings income (Turpins Way)	7,358	-	7,358	14,915

6. Profit on Sale of Fixed Assets	Unrestricted	Circuit Model Trust Fund	2021 Total	2020 Total
	£	£	£	£
Profit on sale of property	305,519	64,706	370,225	-

During the year the sale of the property at Turpin's Way was completed.

7. Grants received	Unrestricted	Circuit Model Trust Fund	2021 Total	2020 Total
	£	£	£	£
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme Grant	1,380	-	1,380	-

Notes to the accounts (continued)

8. Payment to Trustees	2021	2020
	£	£
Payments made to trustees for additional services	NIL	NIL
Number of trustees who were paid expenses	5	9
Total amount paid	2,599	5,533

No trustees undertook additional services on behalf of the Circuit.

9. Fees for examination or audit of the accounts	2021	2020
	£	£
Independent examiner's or auditors' fees for reporting on the accounts	570	660
Other fees (eg: advice, accountancy services) paid to the independent examiner or auditor	NIL	NIL

10. Paid employees Staff Costs paid during the year were:	2021	2020
	£	£
Gross wages, salaries and benefits in kind	112,088	118,185
Employer's National Insurance costs	9,915	9,507
Pension costs	27,490	26,801
Total staff costs	149,493	154,493
Average number of staff employed during the year were:	7	7

11. Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets comprise manses at deemed cost of £1,709,562 (2020: £1,849,962)
We do not regard the value as being less than cost and hence no depreciation is necessary.
During the year the property at Turpin's Way was sold. In the previous year a new property at Topham Gardens, Arlesey had been purhased, this was faciliated by a bridging loan of £450,000 whilst the property at Turpin's Way was sold. This loan was fully repaid in the current year.

12. Investments

The funds that support the Circuit Model Trust Fund are held by TMCP in Trustees Interest Funds on which interest is credited to the accounts each month. These are regarded as medium and long term investments.

TMCP is the Custodian Trustee of all Methodist Model Trust property and is held for and on behalf of local Managing Trustees who are responsible for the day to day management of trust property. TMCP ensures that, through providing guidance and acting under their direction, the Managing Trustees comply with charity law and Methodist law and polity as determined by the Methodist Conference.

	2021	2020
	£	£
Investments listed on a recognised Stock Exchange	3,278	2,769
Investments held in common investment funds	224,906	169,163
	228,184	**171,932**

Change in investment values	2021	2020
	£	£
Carrying (market) value at beginning of year	171,932	177,207
Add: additions to investments at cost	65,479	1,560
Less: disposals at carrying value	(9,735)	(6,785)
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation	508	(50)
Carrying (market) value at end of year	228,184	171,932

13. Analysis of current assets

Debtors and prepayments	2021	2020
	£	£
Prepayments	996	1,124
Other debtors	5,807	-
Total debtors and prepayments	**6,803**	**1,124**

Analysis of cash at bank	2021	2020
	£	£
Bank balance held in Lloyds	**15,329**	**10,125**

14. Analysis of current liabilities

	2021	2020
	£	£
Accruals	12,510	1,190
Other creditors	7,723	-
	20,233	1,190
Grants payable	7,723	9,726
Bridging Loan	-	450,000
Total Current Liabilities	**27,956**	**460,916**

Notes to the accounts (continued)

15. Analysis of long term creditors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Other creditors	18,753	-

16. Capital Commitments and Contingent Liabilities

At the 31 August 2021, the Circuit has no capital commitments.

No Contingent liabilities were identified at 31 August 2021.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

17. Related Party Transactions

2021

Name of related party	Relationship	Description of transaction	Income from related party during year	Payments to related party during the year	Amounts owed by /(to) related party as on 31-Aug-2021
			£	£	£
Bedford, Essex and Hertfordshire District	District	Assessment		42,768	
All Saints Church, Pin Green Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	5,000		
Arlesey Methodist Church, Beds	Circuit Church	Assessment			
Baldock Methodist Church, Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	9,000		
Benington Methodist Church,	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,716		
Central Methodist Church, Letchworth	Circuit Church	Assessment	60,480		
Christchurch, Hitchin Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	68,640		(8,450)
High Street Methodist Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	24,900		
Norton Methodist Church, Letchworth	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	7,680		
Pirton Methodist Church, Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,920		
St Faith's Church, Hitchin Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment			(745)
St Hugh and St John Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	5,904		
St Paul's Methodist Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	8,088		
Stotfold Methodist Church, Beds	Circuit Church	Assessment	12,420		
Trinity Church, Knebworth Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	(2,894)		1,472
Total			**208,854**		**(7,723)**

17. Related Party Transactions (continued)

2020

Name of related party	Relationship	Description of transaction	Income from related party during year	Payments to related party during the year	Amounts owed by /(to) related party as on 31-Aug-2020
			£	£	£
Bedford, Essex and Hertfordshire District	District	Assessment		44,452	
All Saints Church, Pin Green Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	6,750		
Arlesey Methodist Church, Beds	Circuit Church	Assessment	2,048		
Baldock Methodist Church, Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	6,982		
Benington Methodist Church,	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	4,585		(4,000)
Central Methodist Church, Letchworth	Circuit Church	Assessment	58,769		
Christchurch, Hitchin Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	66,655		(6,453)
High Street Methodist Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	24,153		
Norton Methodist Church, Letchworth	Circuit Church	Assessment	7,466		
Pirton Methodist Church, Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	4,796		
St Faith's Church, Hitchin Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment /(grant)	2,231		(745)
St Hugh and St John Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	6,168		
St Paul's Methodist Church, Stevenage	Circuit Church	Assessment	8,088		
Stotfold Methodist Church, Beds	Circuit Church	Assessment	12,077		
Trinity Church, Knebworth Herts	Circuit Church	Assessment	21,029		1,472
Total			**231,797**	**44,452**	**(9,726)**

North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit

Charity No. 1133930

Declarations

Treasurer

I confirm that these accrual based accounts for the year ended 31 August 2021 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  Date 21 04 22

Name of Treasurer Lydia Becket

Address 132 Topstreet Way, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, AL5 5TS

Presentation to the Circuit Meeting for approval.

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 Aug 2021 will be presented to the Circuit Meeting at its meeting in September 2022.

Signature of the Chair of the meeting 

Name of the Chair of the meeting Malcolm Peacock

Date 21 04 22

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of North Hertfordshire Methodist Circuit.

This Report is on the Circuit Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2021.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The Circuit's trustees are responsible for ensuring that the annual report and accounts for the year to 31 August 2021 present a true and fair view of the Circuit's income and expenditure for the year and of its assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date. The trustees consider that an audit is not necessary for this year under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

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

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention

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

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

have not been met, or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

(3) I 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.

Name of independent examiner	Sandeep Shah
Signature of independent examiner	S Shah
Relevant Professional qualification of independent examiner	FCCA
Name of firm (where appropriate)	Leadermans
Address	St Christopher's House Ridge Road Letchworth Garden City SG6 1PT
Date	25/4/22