

Annual report 1 September 2023 – 31 August 2024

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

This report relates to Bath Methodist Church to 31.8.2024, registered with the Charity Commission under Charity Number 1134062.

All correspondence for the church should be addressed to:

Mrs Sharon Keevill – Church Administrator
Bath Methodist Church
Walcot Methodist Chapel
Nelson Place East
Bath BA1 5DA
Telephone: 01225 461509
Email: admin@bathmethodists.org.uk

Further and latest information is available on our website: bathmethodists.org.uk

The membership of Bath Methodist Church stood at **151** members as of August 31st 2024:

The Managing Trustees for the year 2023 - 24 were:

Ministers: Revd Simon Topping (Superintendent Minister), Revd Jan Tate, Deacon Annie Trembling

Church Council Secretary: Jane Stanfield

Treasurer: Trevor Purches

Administrator: Sharon Keevill

Stewards: Gareth James (Senior Steward), Allan Bain, Julia Barratt, Gwen Essam, Elizabeth Kenyon, Tricia Mills, David Pendle.

Safeguarding Officer: Steven Barratt

Congregational reps: Anne Allen, Steven Barratt, Greville Mills, Claire Phillips, Hazel Roch, Ben Sykes.

Interfaith rep: Revd David Musgrave

Chapel House rep: Peter Keevill

Circuit Steward: Ian Sims

Decisions concerning the activities of Bath Methodist Church and the appointment of its Trustees are made at Church Council meetings of which there are a minimum of three each year.

Bath Methodist Church was launched on 1st September 2022 when the existing Methodist Societies of Beechen Cliff, Horizon, Nexus and Weston were merged to form a single society. The church buildings - Walcot Chapel (the former Nexus site), Beechen Cliff and Weston - were retained for church and community use and Southdown Methodist Church Centre (managed by Trustees appointed by the North East Somerset & Bath Methodist Circuit) is also used for worship.

Aims And Organisation

The aims of Bath Methodist Church are as defined in the Methodist Church Act 1976 namely:

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 subsidiary or ancillary to the Methodist Church.
- d) any purpose for the time being of any charity being a charity subsidiary or ancillary of the Methodist church.

This is achieved by:

- a) Holding regular acts of public worship open to members and public alike.
- b) providing pastoral care for members of our community visiting sick and bereaved.
- c) teaching Christianity through sermons, courses and small groups – both in person and online.
- d) Promoting Christianity through events and services.
- e) Provision of activities and clubs to support need in the community such as lunch clubs /foodcycle for elderly and homeless.
- f) Letting premises for community organisations - for example local choirs , pre-schools, health and wellbeing classes.
- g) Supporting other charities with finance and prayer in accordance with Christian values to promote Christian mission and by addressing poverty and social need in both UK and the World.

Review of activities, progress and achievements (September 2023 – August 2024)

The mission of the Bath Methodist Society is to promote and practise 'A Methodist Way of Life'.

We will seek to live out this mission by sustaining and nurturing both our Christian journey inwards and our Christian journey outwards.

The 'Inner Journey':

- daily prayer - keeping connected to each other through prayer groups and prayer times
- worshipping together – Sundays and during the week
- pastoral care of members and adherents
- small groups – for fellowship, prayer and bible study/learning
- discipleship formation – stepping stones to discipleship - from enquirers' events to fully committed participation in the Methodist Way of Life
- building up our fellowship through social activities

The 'Journey Outwards':

- outreach to the local community (hospitality and generosity)
- commitment to social justice
- care for creation
- practising an inclusive welcome to all
- outreach to University students/Chapel House Community
- commitment to the Southdown Church and Community Project
- sharing the faith – actively seeking ways to tell the Christian story

‘Inner Journey’

Sunday Worship:

Sunday morning worship is held at Walcot Chapel and Southdown Methodist Church Centre on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Sundays of the month. On the 4th and 5th Sundays, there is a joint service alternating between the two sites.

On the 1st Sunday of the month, there is also a short service of Morning Prayer at Walcot, followed by breakfast.

We offer paper worship resource for those unable to attend in-person services.

Worship for all ages

- ‘Muddy Church’ monthly at Bath City Farm. Outdoor interactive worship for families with children of all ages – in partnership with St Barnabas Church
- ‘Creative Worship’ – quarterly at Walcot and Southdown as part of morning worship. This is a new initiative to provide worship accessible for all ages.

Midweek Devotions:

- Weekly prayer meeting via Zoom. Each week we hear and reflect on a passage from scripture. Our prayers focus on one local topic, our church, a step from A Methodist Way of Life, a national or international topic and prayers from the Methodist Prayer Handbook.
- Weekly Celtic Prayers at Southdown - following liturgy from the Northumbria Community

Bible Study & Fellowship

Study groups are held during Advent, Lent and Bible Month (June). There are several fellowship groups meeting in-person or online.

Pastoral Care

Our pastoral visitors have remained in contact with those on their lists and have continued to support members of the congregation.

Church-run groups

- ‘Tea & Cake’ meets weekly at Walcot in the Concourse (and church garden weather-permitting). This is both an opportunity for people to meet socially and for the main church doors to be open to anyone passing by.
- ‘Coffee Plus’ is a monthly evening event at Walcot with talks on a range of topics by local speakers.
- ‘Tigerlilies’ Parent and Toddler group meets weekly in term time at Weston. It is run by church members for families in the local community.

Journey Outwards

EcoChurch

This scheme encourages churches to commit to care for the environment in worship and teaching, management of church buildings and land, community and global engagement and the lifestyle of church members.

- 'No-fly Holidays' – an open day with representatives from local organisations and information on alternatives to flying.
- 'No-Mow May' – we took part in this national initiative to encourage wildflowers in the lawn at Walcot and continue to develop the garden to encourage biodiversity
- A Rocha 'EcoChurch' Award Scheme – we have previously qualified for the Bronze Level Award at both our Walcot and Southdown buildings and are working towards the Silver Award.
- 'CreationTide' services at both worship centres in September 2023.

Social justice

The Methodist Church is committed to challenge injustice in our local communities and throughout the world. As Bath Methodist Church we do this by supporting local, national and global initiatives, campaigning and informing.

- Visit from 'Christians Against Poverty' at our morning worship in October 2023
- Regular updates on social justice issues (eg Israel/Palestine) in our monthly magazine
- Supporting Christian Aid Week with a special service and lunch and other fundraising initiatives
- Charity Collections – eg for All We Can, Action for Children.
- Supporting the Southdown Whiteway Church & Community Partnership through volunteering and Harvest and Christmas Appeals.
- Volunteering and financial support for the Southdown Food Pantry
- Supporting our twinned church in Rwanda

Interfaith

- Methodist representative on the Bath Interfaith Group
- Interfaith conversation with the Imam of Bath Mosque
- Taking part in events organised by the Bath Interfaith Group

Community use:

Our church buildings have rooms available for hire and are used by several community groups:

Walcot:

- FoodCycle – using surplus food from supermarkets to provide free meals and a place to meet.
- Bath Child Contact Centre – a safe place for children from separated families to meet their absent parent.
- 'Pixies' Steiner Playgroup
- 57th Bathampton Guides
- Choirs – Horizons Choir, Bath Minerva Choir and CWM Male Choir
- Exercise classes – Pilates
- Events
 - A venue for Bath Festivals 'Party in the City' event
 - Fundraising concerts

Beechen Cliff:

- Korean Methodist Community weekly Sunday worship and Bible study
- Bear Flat Association – monthly Community Tea and Community Market
- Bath Share & Repair Café - monthly
- Green Shoots Pre-School – 4 days per week in school term time.
- Choirs - City of Bath Male Choir and Birch Tree Choir
- Exercise classes – Yoga and Pilates
- Children's birthday parties

Weston:

- PeterPan Pre-School continues to meet on the premises for 4 days per week during school term time. This is an OFSTED and Local Authority approved provision.
- Uniformed organisations (Rainbows, Brownies, Beaver Scouts)
- Several physical and mental health activities including Yoga and Pilates
- Newbridge Arts Trail: This is an annual event, for a weekend, involving local artists who exhibits from their homes and public places.
- Space for Consultation with the public about local issues such as proposals for parking permits or road closures.
- Children's birthday parties
- The New Testament Church of God – weekly Sunday worship

Southdown Church and Community Partnership

This is a project of the North East Somerset and Bath Methodist Circuit and is based at Southdown Methodist Church Centre. Many of our church members are involved as volunteers for the activities organised and supported by the Partnership:

- Lunch Club
- Community Charity Shop
- Toddler group
- Warm Spaces
- Roundhill Food Pantry (in partnership with Oasis Bath).

Chapel House

Chapel House is a student residence next to Walcot Methodist Chapel, run by Bath Methodist Church. The Chapel House Community is made up of 2 parts: the resident students who live in Chapel House, and an extended, non-residential community made up of others who have committed to follow the same way of life and to pray for those who live in the house.

The Chapel House Community meets together for monthly meals in the hall at Walcot.

Administration and Compliance

Church Administrator:

The church administrator is responsible for producing the weekly notice sheets and monthly magazines, updating the website, dealing with telephone and email enquiries, updating the membership list, ensuring compliance with GDPR, producing publicity material for church events and activities and dealing with room hire enquiries.

The administrator keeps church members informed via weekly emails or by distributing printed resources to those without internet access.

Stewards

The team of Stewards are responsible for the smooth running of the church, ensuring services and other events are organised properly plus keeping an oversight over the various committees/church groups and indeed the overall life of the church.

Safeguarding

As part of the Methodist Church we are committed to safeguarding as an integral part of our life and ministry. Safeguarding is about the action the Church takes to promote a safer culture. This means we will:

- promote the welfare of children, young people and adults
- work to prevent abuse from occurring
- seek to protect and respond well to those that have been abused.

All those who hold roles and responsibilities within the church are required to undertake safeguarding training and DBS checks in line with the policies and procedures of the national Methodist Church.

The Church Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually and made accessible to all users of our buildings.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

As part of The Methodist Church commitment to Justice, Dignity and Solidarity, people in certain roles are now required to undertake EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) training.

EDI training is mandatory for Church Stewards, Circuit Stewards and Local Preachers but others, such as members of the Church Council, are encouraged to undertake the training.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The Data Protection Checklist is submitted annually to ensure that all personal data held by the church complies with GDPR.

Property

Bath Methodist Church are Managing Trustees for :

- Walcot Chapel – BMC worship space and community rooms
- Beechen Cliff – worship space used by Korean Methodist Community and community rooms
- Weston – worship space used by New Testament Church of God and community rooms
- Chapel House – Christian Student residential community

All are maintained to be fit for purpose according to the recommendations of the 5-year independent inspections.

Southdown Methodist Church Centre is managed by the North East Somerset and Bath Methodist Circuit, which appoints its trustees. It is used by Bath Methodist Church for worship and meetings and to support community activities.

Future Plans

Feasibility Study for the future use of Church buildings

With the creation of Bath Methodist Church in September 2022 and the coming together of 4 church societies, it was recognised that the existing set of church buildings were not appropriate for its needs. A Property & Mission group was set up to examine the future of the buildings, which carried out various consultations with church members to try to discern the best future form for each of the three main church buildings:

- Walcot Chapel
- Beechen Cliff Church
- Weston Church

As a result of these consultations, it was concluded in the autumn of 2023 that professional help was required to better understand the potential future uses of these buildings and in particular to consider whether these buildings could, at least in part, be developed to provide social/affordable housing. There was also a desire to consider whether the Walcot Chapel building could be adapted to provide accommodation for an intentional Methodist community, which could support the work of Bath Methodist Church in the future. To this the end, the Property & Mission Group developed a consultants' brief for a feasibility study to examine the future of all three buildings.

In early 2024, suitably experienced consultants were invited to provide technical and financial proposals for undertaking the feasibility study. Following a review of the proposals a team led by Futureground in conjunction with architects BiBO were appointed to undertake this work in April 2024. External funding for the study was obtained from three main sources:

- Methodist Church – centrally (Connexional Funding)
- Methodist Church – regionally (District Funding)
- Methodist Church – locally (Circuit Funding)

In addition, Bath Methodist Church provided approximately 25% of the funding from its own finances.

The study was divided into 3 phases – the first phase which involved information gathering and some community consultation was completed in July 2024 and the second phase involved with the development of design options for modifying is now underway at the time of reporting (August 2024). It is anticipated that this Phase 2 work will be completed in September 2024 and that there will then be a break in the study to give Bath Methodist Church an opportunity to review the findings of Phase 2 and select their preferred options for each building to be taken through into Phase 3 of the study, which will provide:

- How the building modifications might be funded,
- Business models to illustrate how the modified buildings could be operated financially
- Details of partners who might be used to help deliver the new buildings,
- A programme for delivering the work

It is anticipated that this work will be complete by the end of 2024

Once the study is complete, Bath Methodist Church will need to consider how it wishes to proceed based on all the information which it has gained through the feasibility study and the recommendations from the consultants.

Finance

THE CHURCH'S BANKERS

The Church has accounts with the following banks:

Central Finance Board

9 Bonhill Street
London
EC2A 4PE

CAF Bank

25 Kings Hill Avenue,
Kings Hill
West Malling,
Kent ME19 4JQ

Treasurer's Report 2023 - 24 financial year

Headlines

1. With a turnover of £231,000, the operating account shows a small surplus of £800 and our cash assets have increased by a modest £1500 to £204,000. Those headline figures suggest a quiet stable year with a healthy financial position with substantial cash assets. However we have £130,000 on running the church and £100,000 on maintaining and operating the buildings.
2. Since the accounts were submitted for audited we have been notified that our TMCP bequest funds increased by nearly £11,000. As well as more positive interest rate the Pension reserve fund has repaid with interest the loads that our former churches made to in in 2021 when pension fund was struggling due to low interest rates.
3. The small surplus is due to £20,000 of grants still in the income column while £30000 are still to be paid on the building consultation study. Also payment of the Chapel house window repairs £13,000 fell into the new year with another £10,000 still to be paid.
4. There is a large deficit between our church operating costs £12,000 compared with £5,000 in previous year. and this will increase this year with 7% increase in our assessment pledge and salary. The agreement to pay a contribution of £4000 pa to the With You project and costs of University Chaplain has been implemented through monthly instalments
5. There will be several major projects progressed during the year. First 2 are likely to attract grant contributions.
 - a. Walcot Accessibility ramp installation guestimate £15,000.
 - b. Walcot stair lift £5,000
 - c. Next stage of our building repurposing
 - d. Sound and projection equipment was surveyed with recommendation for upgrades proposed. As yet these have still to be taken forward.
6. The accounts have been easier to manage and balance this year with a solid starting position as Bath MC and most of the historic bank accounts closed.

Trevor Purches: treasurer

THE METHODIST CHURCH STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS

BATH METHODIST	Church
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FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 August 2024

NE Somerset and Bath	Circuit	Circuit no.	7/13
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Registered Charity - Charity Registration number

1134062

**If not a registered charity Her Majesty's Revenue and
Customs Gift Aid number**

(The HMRC number is equivalent to a registered charity number in terms of evidence of charitable status and may be used to give to donors or grant funders wishing to see evidence of the organisation's charitable status. Methodist charities in England and Wales that are not registered charities are excepted from registration under Statutory Instrument 2014 No.242)

Minister:

Revd Simon Topping Rev Jan Tate Deacon Annie Trembling
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Church Stewards:

Gareth James	Julia Barratt
Gwen Essam	David Pendle
Patricia Mills	Alan Bain
Elizabeth Kenyon	Mike Priscott

Treasurer:

Trevor Purches Assts Steve Barratt, Roger Chapman, Paul Udey

SECTION A		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
		£	£	£	£
a1	RECEIPTS	Note			
a2	Offerings and Tax recovered	102932.46		102,932	107,460
a3	Bank and CFB interest and Investment income	4,984		4,984	2,537
a4	Lettings	96,960		96,960	88,684
a5	Other receipts	including fund movement 27,151		27,151	28,086
a6	TOTAL RECEIPTS	232,028		232,028 (a7)	226,767

SECTION B					
b1	PAYMENTS				
b2	Circuit Assessment or Share	113,400		113,400	108,000
b3	Donations	6,085		6,085	8,332
b4	Repairs and Maintenance	42,539		42,539	18,457
b5	Utilities (Insurances, water charges, heating & lighting)	57,563		57,563	52,270
b6					
b7	Other payments	10843.16		10,843	11,152
b8	TOTAL PAYMENTS	230,431		230,431 (b9)	198,211

SECTION C					
c1	NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR	(a6-b8)	1,598	1,598	28,556
c2	Total funds brought forward from last year		91,175	111,453	202,628 (c6)
c3	Sub total	(c1+c2)	92,773	111,453	204,226
c4	Transfers and adjustments				(c7)
c5	TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR	(c3+c4)	92,773	111,453	204,226 (c8)
					202,628 (c6)

SECTION D			
FOR INFORMATION ONLY: MONEY RECEIVED AND PASSED ON TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS			
d	(these amounts are not to be included in total receipts/payments figures above)	£	£
d1	Balance brought forward from last year	(93)	227
d2	Offerings/Gifts - received for external organisations	1,767	2,376
d3	Offerings/Gifts - passed to external organisations	1,674	2,696
d4	BALANCE STILL TO BE PAID		(93)
	(d1+d2-d3)		

SUMMARY OF CHURCH ACCOUNTS AND INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS REPORTING TO THE CHURCH COUNCIL**SECTION E**

Please follow the Guidance Notes to complete this page

Summary of the Church accounts for the year ended 31 August 2022 and Internal Organisations reporting to the Church Council/Church Meeting. Note that the funds of an Internal Organisation would normally be Restricted funds unless it could be clearly shown that they could be used for any Methodist purpose. This section must be completed to arrive at the gross income and expenditure totals of the Church. If gross income exceeds the Accruals threshold, then the Accruals method of accounting AND A DIFFERENT FORM must be used to report the accounts (see Methodist website). Please refer to the guidance notes regarding transfers between the District and connected District Organisations.

INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS	Receipts	Payments	Net Receipts/ Payments	Adjustments	Opening balances	Closing balances
e1						
e2						
e3						
e4						
e5						
e6						
e7						
e8 Sub total of Internal Organisations funds					(e11)	
e9 Church accounts (totals brought forward from page 2 - totals column)	232,028 (a7)	230,431 (b9)	1,598	(c7)	202,628 (c6)	204,226
e10 TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH	232,028	230,431	1,598		202,628 (x)	204,226
Continue on a separate sheet if necessary and bring the totals forward	TOTAL RECEIPTS	TOTAL PAYMENTS				

SECTION F**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES****CHURCH - CASH FUNDS HELD at 31 August 2024**

f1	Cash in hand
f2	Bank Current Account HSBC, Lloyds
f3	Bank Current Account CAF
f4	Central Finance Board
f5	Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes
f6	Other funds
f7	SUB TOTAL - Church accounts
f8	Total funds held by Internal Organisations (the closing balance total from above) (e12)
f9	TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH

**OPENING
BALANCES**

12,309	
45,139	
91,517	
53,663	
202,628	(c6)
	(e11)
202,628	(x)

**CLOSING
BALANCES**

9,470
51,394
88,722
54,640
204,226
204,226

SECTION G**OTHER ASSETS and LIABILITIES**

g1	Investments (include Endowments)
g2	Land & Buildings (see notes re Insurance value)
g3	Other Assets
g4	Loan(s) - show amount outstanding at year end
g5	Other Liabilities

At
1 September 2023

At
31 August 2024

13,047,685
256,839

f4 Include only Funds held at the Central Finance Board

f5 Include only Funds held at Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes

g1 Include any other investments (not the cash element of TMCP trusts accounts this is included in line f5)

(e12)

(c8)

(y)

(c8)

(e12)

(y)

Name of Church BATH METHODIST

No 7/13

Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these Receipt and Payment based accounts for the year to 31 August 2023 have been prepared from the records of the Church and that they include all funds under the control of the Church trustees.

Signature of treasurer  Date..... 03-Sep-24

Name and address of treasurer TREVOR PURCHES 6 Christchurch Road, Bradford-on-Avon

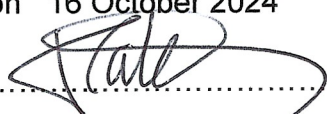
finance@bathmethodists.org.uk

Post Code

BA15 1TB

Presentation to the Church trustees

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2024 will be presented to the meeting of the Church trustees held on 16 October 2024

Signature of the Chair of the meeting 

Name of the Chair of the meeting

Revd Jan Tate

Date

16-Oct-24

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

BATH METHODIST CHURCH

Charity Number 1162034

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the BATH METHODIST Church for the year ended 31 August 2024 set out on pages 1 to 3 As the Church's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Church's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and, in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Name of Church BATH METHODIST CHURCH No 7/13

Independent Examiner's Statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below*) which give me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

I have not* obtained independent verification of all investments with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes or held in other trusts, bank balances and funds at the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church which are individually in excess of £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) at the balance sheet date.

Signature of independent examiner



Name of independent examiner Alexander M du Pré

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner . Chartered Engineer

Name of firm (where appropriate) N/A

Address 15 Mitchell Walk, Bridgegate, Bristol

POST CODE

BS305XY

Date 29-Sep-24