

THE METHODIST CHURCH
REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
(ACCRUALS BASIS)
for the year ended 31 August 2022

Upper Thames Methodist

Circuit

Registered Charity - Registration number

1134231

Bristol

District No / Circuit No

007 / 23

Ministers

Rev Shirlyn Toppin

Rev Clive Deverell

Rev Sarah Simpson

Circuit Stewards

Mrs Jane Phoenix-Stone (GDPR)

Mr Mike Ostime

Mrs Sheila Knowles (Safeguarding Officer)

Mr Adrian German (Local Preachers' Secretary)

Mr Robin Phoenix-Stone (Convenor of Circuit Resources Network)

Circuit Treasurer

Mr Mike Ostime

**Upper Thames Methodist Circuit
TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

Introduction

Welcome to the Upper Thames Methodist Circuit's Annual Report for the year ending 31st August 2022.

Aims and organisation

The Upper Thames Circuit works to support its local churches in developing the vision which God has given for ministry & discipleship and mission & outreach which is: "To grow in the love of God, to preach the gospel of Christ, and, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to reach out to others." The Circuit has a willingness to face challenge and change, whilst retaining our evangelical identity, firmly standing on a Bible base. A new initiative in 2016 supports our churches working in conjunction with the Joint Public Issues team to pursue an agenda concerned with social justice and change. There are regular Circuit Bible Studies and Study Days.

Review of the year

This has been the first year for our new Superintendent Minister, Rev Shirlyn Toppin. During the year, the Circuit Office relocated to Royal Wootton Bassett Methodist Church

The Covid-19 epidemic continued to underpin a reduction in income from offerings and lettings. Although churches were re-open for most of the year, numbers attending remain reduced. Lettings re-uptake remains a challenge. Sadly, one of our ecumenical Circuit churches has agreed to close and dissolve its partnership.

The Circuit continues to look for ways to structure itself more effectively and to practically and financially support social justice and inclusivity. A £10,000 donation was made to the Methodist Church Pensions Reserves Fund.

Lay employees were substantially reduced from last year with only the Circuit Administrator in post from the end of September 2021. We have no second minister replacement for 2022/23 and, due to lack of applicants, have been unable to recruit a Part-Time Lay Pastoral Assistant.

Property expenditure for Manses shows an increase due to the need to catch up with quinquennials in the post-Covid period and the moving expenses for an outgoing minister.

At the end of the year, the Circuit agreed to apply for permission to sell two manses, then purchase a new strategically placed manse and also upgrade an existing manse.

Income Trends

Circuit income is primarily drawn from the annual assessments paid by the circuit churches. These payments were originally reduced by an average of 14% for 2021-2022 to just the expected Circuit expenditure whilst taking into account the continuing impact of Covid on the churches' finances. However, the payments from two of the churches were further reduced due to their particular financial circumstances. The rental income relates to the rental of two manses.

Expenditure Trends

Stipend expenditure has increased each financial year in line with conference approved increases. The same increase has been applied to the salaries of the lay employees.

31.36% of expenditure is the Circuit contribution to the District and Connexion, of which a significant part is used to fund the work of the wider Methodist Church. This included a donation from the Circuit of £10,000 to the Methodist Church Pensions Reserves Fund.

Fund Balances

As at 31 August 2022, total reserves amounted to £1,655,927. All funds held were unrestricted.

As at 31 August 2022 the net current assets of the Circuit were £387,000.

Upper Thames Methodist Circuit
Trustee's Annual Report on Finance and Governance

Basis of preparation and legal framework

The Charity's annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2019 have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 and the Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice 2015 (FRS 102).

Full Name of Charity: Upper Thames Methodist Circuit

Registration Charity Number: 1134231

Date of registration: 9th February 2010

Main communication address: Royal Wootton Bassett Methodist Church, Rope Yard,
Royal Wootton Bassett, Swindon, SN4 7BS

The members of the Upper Thames Methodist Circuit meeting are the Charity Trustees, membership being made up of circuit office holders, ministers and representatives appointed by the local churches.

Full membership is shown as Appendix A to this report.

Circuit Ministers and officers

Active Circuit Ministers	Rev Shirlyn Toppin (Superintendent) Rev Clive Deverell Rev Sarah Simpson
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Circuit Lay Employees	Mr. Simon Wills (to Sept 24 2021)
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Circuit Stewards	Mrs Jane Phoenix-Stone Mr Mike Ostime (Treasurer) Mrs Sheila Knowles
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Circuit Property Secretary	Mr Robin Phoenix-Stone
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Circuit Administrator	Mrs Margaret Flood
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Upper Thames Methodist Circuit

Aims and organisation

Charity objective is to act as a resource provider within an area surrounding Swindon known as the Upper Thames Methodist Circuit which is part of the Methodist Church of Great Britain.

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 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 to The Methodist Church

The organisation and resourcing of regular public acts of worship open to members of the church and non members alike.

The teaching of Christianity through sermons, courses and small groups.

The resourcing of pastoral work including visiting the sick and bereaved.

Taking religious assemblies in local schools.

Promotion of Christianity through the staging of events and services.

Provision of chaplaincy services to the local university and other institutions.

Public Benefit

We confirm the trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Structure, Governance and Management

The governing document for the circuit is the Deed of Union (1952) 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, the Circuit Finance and Property Committee and the Circuit Policy Committee.

Trustee Training

A range of guidance produced by Methodist Connexion to support the effective running of the circuit, specifically the leaflet 'The Role of a Trustee in The Methodist Church' is given to all new Circuit meeting members as induction to their role as trustees.

Related Parties

The Circuit is part of the Bristol District and is also accountable to the Methodist Conference.

The following Methodist Churches and organisations are linked to the circuit:

Braydon Methodist Church
Highworth Methodist Church
Purton Methodist Church
Shrivenham and Longcot Methodist Church
Royal Wootton Bassett Methodist Church
Cricklade United Church
Christ The Servant, Abbey Meads Local Ecumenical Partnership
West Swindon and Lydiard Tregoze Church Partnership

Risk Management

The major risks have been identified and recorded by the Circuit Finance and Property Committee with professional advice taken as required.

There is a regular annual review process undertaken and recorded.

Income and Expenditure is being monitored in total and is compared with the approved annual budget on a half yearly basis to detect trends as part of the risk management process to avoid unforeseen calls on reserves.

Safeguarding

Every person has a value and dignity which comes directly from the creation of male and female in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this potential as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

Methodist Connexional practice outlines commitment to the following principles:

- the care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and adults
- the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable
- the establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse.
- We will carefully select and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with Safer Recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration with the relevant vetting and barring schemes.
- We will respond without delay to every complaint made which suggests that an adult, child or young person may have been harmed, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.
- We will seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.
- We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.
- We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- In all these principles we will follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice

The Upper Thames Circuit commits itself to ensuring the implementation of Connexional Safeguarding Policy; government legislation, guidance and safe practice in the circuit and in the churches.

The Upper Thames Circuit commits itself to the provision of support, advice and training for lay and ordained people that will ensure people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable.

Reserves Policy

The Reserves Policy for the Circuit is to hold a minimum sum equivalent to six months' average expenditure. This should be sufficient to meet any unforeseen item of major expenditure on manse and / or to be able to continue, in the short term, funding planned activities in the event of any inability to raise the full assessment payments from churches. At the year end the Circuit held £1,655,927 in unrestricted funds. No restricted funds were held.

Plans for 2022-2023

Circuit financial plans for the coming year have been prepared on the basis that there remains a) 1 full time ordained staff with anticipated cost of living stipend increases, b) a part time lay employee, c) a part time Circuit administrator, d) a reduction in the assessment paid to the district such that on average an 8% assessment decrease has been requested from the circuit churches.

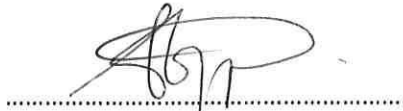
Whilst the churches' assessments have been calculated to cover the Circuit's anticipated expenditure, income levels and reserves of the churches will be kept under regular review so that any need for assistance from the Circuit can be identified and discussed at an early stage.

The planned appointment of a new lay employee post (covering Highworth/Shrivenham) from Sept 2022 did not go ahead. Alternative posts will be discussed and will be very much dependant on the level of available finances from the churches and the Circuit.

It is planned to sell the manses in Highworth and Abbey Meads and buy a new manse better suited to the required standard of accommodation for ministers. A review is ongoing as to the best property use of the remaining Circuit funds with one alternative being to upgrade the manse in Royal Wootton Bassett.

Approved by

Rev S Toppin

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S Toppin', written over a horizontal dotted line.

M Ostime (Treasurer)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M Ostime', written over a horizontal dotted line.

28 Dec 2022

CIRCUIT MEETING MEMBERSHIP 2021-22

MINISTERS

Rev Shirlyn Toppin (Superintendent)
Rev Clive Deverell
Rev Sarah Simpson

SUPERNUMERARY MINISTERS

Rev Margaret Livingstone
Rev George Nuttall
Rev Jan Partridge
Rev Don Symonds

LAYWORKERS

Simon Wills (to Sept 2021)

CIRCUIT STEWARDS

Jane Phoenix-Stone (GDPR)
Mike Ostime (Treasurer)
Sheila Knowles (Safeguarding Officer)
Adrian German (Local Preacher Secretary)
Robin Phoenix-Stone (Circuit Property Secretary)

CIRCUIT CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES

Abbey Meads

Richard Candlin
Luke Deaves

Braydon

Simon Dubber
Felicity Scott
Susan Barrett

Cricklade

Margaret Griffiths
John Youe
Margaret Roberts

Highworth

Peter McAuley
Hazel Garnell
Tricia Clitheroe
Lynne Culling

Purton

Brian Davies
Sylvia Freemantle

Shrivenham

Linda Hood
Ian Brodie
Stella Tidmarsh

Royal Wootton Bassett

Roger Moss
Ruth Cooper
John Dixon
Lisa Williams
Gillian Griffiths

West Swindon

Mark Dowling

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Upper Thames Methodist Circuit

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2022 which are set out on pages 11 to 17.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity'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 charity'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.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

S Plumb ACA

Susan Plumb ACA
Haines Watts
Old Station House
Station Approach
Newport Street
Swindon
SN1 3DU

Date 9 January 2023

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

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted) £	Circuit Model Trust (Unrestricted) £	Designated Funds (unrestricted) £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2021-22 £
Income							
1 Donations and legacies		880					880
2 Income from monetary investments		469	864				1,333
3 Income from investment properties							0
4 Assessments on Churches		129,350					129,350
5 Capital Receipts							0
6 Grants received							0
7 Other charitable income		13,382					13,382
8 Total income		144,081	864	-	-	-	144,945
Expenditure							
9 Grants and donations		12,100					12,100
10 Salaries and associated costs		84,077					84,077
11 Property maintenance		8,029					8,029
12 Connexional assessment & model trust levy							0
13 District Assessment & Levy		35,220	7,047				42,267
14 Depreciation							0
15 Office expenses		1,568					1,568
16 Other outgoings		18,063	544				18,607
17 Total charitable expenditure		159,057	7,591	0	0	0	166,648
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments		-	1,156				-1,156
19 Gains/(losses) on properties		196,213					196,213
20 Net income/(expenditure)		181,237	-7,883	0	0	0	173,354
21 Transfers between funds							0
22 Other gains/(losses)							
23 Net movement in funds		181,237	-7,883	0	0	0	173,354
24 Total funds brought forward		1,283,534	199,039				1,482,573
25 Total funds carried forward		1,464,771	191,156	-	-	-	1,655,927

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

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Circuit Model Trust (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2020-21
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Income							
1 Donations and legacies		30,412					30,412
2 Income from monetary investments		50	180				230
3 Income from investment properties							0
4 Assessments on Churches		135,864					135,864
5 Capital Receipts			218,570				218,570
6 Grants received					3,000		3,000
7 Other charitable income		11,571					11,571
8 Total income		177,897	218,750	-	3,000	-	399,647
Expenditure							
9 Grants and donations		3,130					3,130
10 Salaries and associated costs		122,876			3,000		125,876
11 Property maintenance		15,529					15,529
12 Connexional assessment & model trust levy							0
13 District Assessment & Levy		34,464	68,832				103,296
14 Depreciation							0
15 Office expenses		1,295					1,295
16 Other outgoings		33,758	146				33,904
17 Total charitable expenditure		211,052	68,978	0	3,000	0	283,030
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments							0
19 Gains/(losses) on properties		84,004	-				84,004
20 Net income/(expenditure)		50,849	149,772	0	0	0	200,621
21 Transfers between funds		15,000	15,000				0
22 Other gains/(losses)							
23 Net movement in funds		65,849	134,772	0	0	0	200,621
24 Total funds brought forward		1,217,685	64,267				1,281,952
25 Total funds carried forward		1,283,534	199,039	-	-	-	1,482,573

Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2022

Notes to the Accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Circuit Model Trusts (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (Unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Totals 2021/22	Totals 2020/21
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets							
Circuit Manse & Equipment	1,268,361					1,268,361	1,072,148
Investment properties						0	0
Investments						0	0
Total fixed assets	1,268,361	0	0	0	0	1,268,361	1,072,148
Current Assets							
Debtors	7,074					7,074	9,592
Loans by the Circuit	0					0	2,500
Investments with TMCP		6,934				6,934	8,089
TMCP		184,222				184,222	190,947
Central Finance Board Deposits	146,662					146,662	63,842
Cash at Bank and in hand	44,124					44,124	136,855
Total current assets	197,860	191,156	0	0	0	389,016	411,825
Current liabilities							
Creditors (due in under 1 year)	1,450					1,450	1,400
Grants payable within 2018-19						0	0
Total current liabilities	1,450	0	0	0	0	1,450	1,400
Net current assets/liabilities	196,410	191,156	0	0	0	387,566	410,425
Total assets less current liabilities	1,464,771	191,156	0	0	0	1,655,927	1,482,573
Long term liabilities (due after more than one year)							
Grants payable after 2018-19						0	0
Loans to the Circuit						0	0
Net assets	1,464,771	191,156	0	0	0	1,655,927	1,482,573
Funds of the Circuit							
General Fund (Unrestricted)	1,464,771					1,464,771	1,283,537
Circuit Model Trust Fund (Unrestricted)		191,156				191,156	199,036
Designated Funds (Unrestricted)			0			0	0
Total Unrestricted Funds						1,655,927	1,482,573
Restricted Funds				0		0	0
Endowment Funds					0	0	0
Total Funds	1,464,771	191,156	0	0	0	1,655,927	1,482,573

Signed

Circuit Treasurer



28 Dec 2022

Notes to the Accounts

1 Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 in accordance with the 2014 version of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS102 – the Charities SORP (FRS102) and taking note of the Update Bulletin 1 issued in 2016. No Cash Flow Statement is included as permitted by (SORP) FRS 102.

2 Funds

The funds held constitute: General Funds held for any purpose of the Circuit which are Unrestricted. The Circuit Model Trust Fund has wide purposes defined in Standing Orders and is categorised as unrestricted. Restricted funds which are held for a narrower purpose. There are no Endowment funds. Details of each material fund are disclosed in the final note to these accounts. 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

This 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.

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

Tangible fixed assets are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £500.

The freehold property is shown in the accounts at insurance values. No depreciation is provided on the building because the trustees consider the current residual fair value of the manse buildings (on the assumption that it had reached the end of its useful economic life by the year-end) to be not less than its current value. Any depreciation would not be material. The property has been reviewed for impairment.

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

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

Creditors

Creditors are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors are recognised at their settlement amount.

Upper Thames Methodist Circuit
31 August 2022

Notes to the Accounts *(continued)*

4 Payment to Trustees

There were no payments made to trustees for additional services provided to the Circuit by agreement with the Circuit Meeting, this excludes stipends.

Trustee expenses

	2021/22	2020/21
Number of Trustees	2	2
Total amount	£4,607	£2,596

Expense payments primarily relate to reimbursement for travel and computing costs

5 Fees for examination or audit of the accounts

	2021/22 £	2020/21 £
Independent examiner's or auditors' fees for reporting on the accounts	1,300	1,200
Other fees (e.g.: advice, accountancy services) paid to the independent examiner or auditor	NIL	NIL

6 Paid employees

Staff Costs paid during the year were:

	2021/22	2020/21
Gross wages, salaries and benefits in kind	£ 64,691	108,575
Employer's National Insurance costs	£ 5,464	8,994
Pension costs	£ 13,922	16,281
Total staff costs	£ 84,077	133,850

Average number of full-time equivalent employees in the year were:

	3	5
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7 Capital Commitments and Contingent Liabilities

At the 31st August 2022 there are no capital commitments.

No Contingent liabilities were identified at 31st August 2022.

Upper Thames Methodist Circuit
31 August 2022

Notes to the Accounts *(continued)*

8 Tangible Fixed Assets

Cost or valuation

	Land £	Manses £	Other buildings £	Fixtures, fittings and equipment £	Payments on account and assets under construction £	Total £
Balance brought forward	0	1,072,148	0	0		1,072,148
Additions		0				0
Revaluations (+/-)		196,213				196,213
Disposals (-)						
Transfers * (+/-)						
Balance carried forward	0	1,268,361	0	0		1,268,361

Accumulated depreciation

Balance brought forward				00		0
Depreciation charge for year (-)				0		0
Revaluations (+/-)						
Disposals (-)						
Transfers* (+/-)						
Balance carried forward		0	0	0		0

Net book value

Brought forward	0	1,072,148	0	0		1,072,148
Carried forward	0	1,268,361	0	0		1,268,361

9 Investment assets

The circuit has no Investment properties

The circuit has no common investment fund holdings

10 Analysis of restricted and designated funds

2021-22

Restricted Fund Name	Opening Balance	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Transfers	Closing Balance	Purpose of the fund
	0	0	0		0	
Totals	0	0	0		0	

""Comparative analysis of restricted and designated funds 2020-2021

Restricted Fund Name	Opening Balance	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Transfers	Closing Balance	Purpose of the fund
Layworker Fund	0	3,000	(3,000)		0	Contributions towards layworker costs
Totals	0	3,000	(3,000)		0	