



THE METHODIST CHURCH
REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
(ACCRUALS BASIS)
for the year ended 31 August 2023

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)

Ms Jenny Corkett (EDI Officer)

Mrs Sheila Knowles (Safeguarding Officer)

Mr Adrian German (Local Preachers' Secretary)

Mr Robin Phoenix-Stone (Property Secretary)

Circuit Finance Officer

Mrs Margaret Flood

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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Introduction

Welcome to the Upper Thames Methodist Circuit's Annual Report for the year ending 31st August 2023.

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.

Review of the year

This has been the second year for our Superintendent Minister, Rev Shirlyn Toppin.

The Covid-19 epidemic continued to underpin a reduction in income from offerings and lettings. Although churches were re-opened, numbers attending remain reduced. Lettings re-uptake remains a challenge.

The Circuit continues to look for ways to structure itself more effectively and to practically and financially support social justice and inclusivity.

There have been only the Circuit Administrator in post from the end of September 2022. We have no second minister replacement for 2022/23.

Property expenditure for Manses shows an increase due to the need update and refurbish the Superintendent's manse and to bring the newly purchased manse up to standard.

During the year, the Circuit applied for permission to sell two manses and 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. The rental income relates to the rental of one manse.

Expenditure Trends

44% of expenditure is the Circuit contribution to the District and Connexion (including a levy on the sale of property), of which a significant part is used to fund the work of the wider Methodist Church.

Fund Balances

As at 31 August 2023, total reserves amounted to £1,514,633. All funds held were unrestricted.

As at 31 August 2023 the net current assets of the Circuit were £389,016.

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 2023 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

Circuit Lay Employees

Circuit Stewards	Mrs Jane Phoenix-Stone
	Mrs Sheila Knowles

Circuit Property Secretary	Mr Robin Phoenix-Stone
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Circuit Administrator	Mrs Margaret Flood
Circuit Finance Officer	Mrs Margaret Flood

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 (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, 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
West Swindon and Lydiard Tregoze Church Partnership

Upper Thames Methodist Circuit

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 manses 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 £???? in unrestricted funds. No restricted funds were held.

Upper Thames Methodist Circuit

Appendix A

CIRCUIT MEETING MEMBERSHIP 2022-23

MINISTERS

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

SUPERNUMERARY MINISTERS

Rev Margaret Livingstone
Rev Jan Partridge
Rev Don Symonds

LAYWORKERS

CIRCUIT STEWARDS

Jane Phoenix-Stone (GDPR)
Sheila Knowles (Safeguarding Officer)
Adrian German (Local Preacher Secretary)
Robin Phoenix-Stone (Circuit Property Secretary)
Jenny Corkett (EID Training Officer)

CIRCUIT CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES

Braydon

Simon Dubber
Susan Barrett

Cricklade

Nicola Arthurs
John Youe
Margaret Roberts

Highworth

Peter McAuley
Hazel Garnell
Tricia Clitheroe
Lynne Culling

Purton

Brian Davies
Sylvia Freemantle

Shrivenham

Wendy Smith
Ian Brodie
Stella Tidmarsh

Royal Wootton Bassett

Barry Scott
Ruth Cooper
John Dixon
Lisa Williams
Gillian Griffiths

West Swindon

Mark Dowling

Plans for 2023-2024

Circuit financial plans for the coming year have been prepared on the basis that there are a) 2 full time ordained staff with anticipated cost of living stipend increases, b) a part time Circuit administrator and finance officer, c) a similar assessment paid to the district as in 2021-2022. d) churches to still be subsidised by the Circuit for their assessments.

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 manses in Highworth and Abbey Meads have now been sold and a new manse better suited to the required standard of accommodation for ministers in Highworth has been purchased. Upgrading work on the new Highworth manse has been necessary and the upgrade of the manse in Royal Wootton Bassett is continuing.

Approved by

Rev S Toppin

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

M Flood (Circuit Finance Officer)

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

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 2023 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.



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

Date 22 June 2024

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

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted) £	Circuit Model Trust (Unrestricted) £	Designated Funds (unrestricted) £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2022-23 £
Income							
1 Donations and legacies							0
2 Income from monetary investments		5,460	8,809				14,269
3 Income from investment properties							0
4 Assessments on Churches		103,348					103,348
5 Capital Receipts							0
6 Grants received							0
7 Other charitable income		9,068					9,068
8 Total income		117,876	8,809	-	-	-	126,685
Expenditure							
9 Grants and donations							0
10 Salaries and associated costs		57,762					57,762
11 Property maintenance		38,531					38,531
12 Connexional assessment & model trust levy							0
13 District Assessment & Levy		32,640	87,882				120,522
14 Depreciation							0
15 Office expenses							0
16 Other outgoings		52,538	525				53,063
17 Total charitable expenditure		181,471	88,407	0	0	0	269,878
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments		-	254				-254
19 Gains/(losses) on properties	-	251,408	253,561				2,153
20 Net income/(expenditure)		-315,003	173,709	0	0	0	-141,294
21 Transfers between funds		50,000	50,000				0
22 Other gains/(losses)							
23 Net movement in funds		-265,003	123,709	0	0	0	-141,294
24 Total funds brought forward		1,464,771	191,156				1,655,927
25 Total funds carried forward		1,199,768	314,865	-	-	-	1,514,633

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

Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2023

Notes to the Accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted) £	Circuit Model Trusts (Unrestricted) £	Designated Funds (Unrestricted) £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Totals 2022/23 £	Totals 2021/22 £
Fixed Assets							
Circuit Manses & Equipment	984,566					984,566	1,268,361
Investment properties						0	0
Investments						0	0
Total fixed assets	984,566	0	0	0	0	984,566	1,268,361
Current Assets							
Debtors	7,619					7,619	7,074
Loans by the Circuit	0					0	0
Investments with TMCP		6,679				6,679	6,934
TMCP		307,931				307,931	184,222
Central Finance Board Deposits	161,385					161,385	146,862
Cash at Bank and in hand	51,607					51,607	44,124
Total current assets	220,611	314,610	0	0	0	535,221	389,016
Current liabilities							
Creditors (due in under 1 year)	5,154					5,154	1,450
Grants payable within 2018-19						0	0
Total current liabilities	5,154	0	0	0	0	5,154	1,450
Net current assets/liabilities	215,457	314,610	0	0	0	530,067	387,566
Total assets less current liabilities	1,200,023	314,610	0	0	0	1,514,633	1,655,927
Long term liabilities (due after more than one year)							
Grants payable after 2018-19						0	0
Loans to the Circuit						0	0
Net assets	1,200,023	314,610	0	0	0	1,514,633	1,655,927
Funds of the Circuit							
General Fund (Unrestricted)	1,200,023					1,200,023	1,464,771
Circuit Model Trust Fund (Unrestricted)		314,610				314,610	191,156
Designated Funds (Unrestricted)			0			0	0
Total Unrestricted Funds						1,514,633	1,655,927
Restricted Funds				0		0	0
Endowment Funds					0	0	0
Total Funds	1,200,023	314,610	0	0	0	1,514,633	1,655,927

Signed

Circuit Treasurer

M.R. Flood

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 2023

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

	2022/23	2021/22
Number of Trustees	2	2
Total amount	£3,613	£4,607

Expense payments primarily relate to reimbursement for travel and computing costs

5 Fees for examination or audit of the accounts

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Independent examiner's or auditors' fees for reporting on the accounts	1,400	1,300
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:

	2022/23	2022
Gross wages, salaries and benefits in kind	£ 45,451	64,691
Employer's National Insurance costs	£ 3,762	5,464
Pension costs	£ 8,549	13,922
Total staff costs	£ 57,762	84,077

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

2022/23	2022
2	3

7 Capital Commitments and Contingent Liabilities

At the 31st August 2023 there are no capital commitments.
 No Contingent liabilities were identified at 31st August 2023.

Upper Thames Methodist Circuit
31 August 2023

Notes to the Accounts *(continued)*

8 Tangible Fixed Assets

Cost or valuation

	Land £	Manse £	Other buildings £	Fixtures, fittings and equipment £	Payments on account and assets under construction £	Total £
Balance brought forward	0	1,268,361	0	0		1,268,361
Additions		535,810				535,810
Revaluations (+/-)						
Disposals (-)		(819,605)				(819,605)
Transfers * (+/-)						
Balance carried forward	0	984,566	0	0		984,566

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	1,268,361	0	0		1,268,361
Carried forward	0	984,566	0	0		984,566

9 Investment assets

The circuit has no Investment properties

The circuit has no common investment fund holdings

10 Analysis of restricted and designated funds

2022-23

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 2021-2022

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	