THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

England & Wales · Charity number 1134265

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	Other
Registered	2010-02-11
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Brunswick Methodist Church Brunswick Place Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 7BJ
Phone	01912321692
Email	circuitoffice@brunswickmethodist.org.uk
Website	www.newcastlecentralmethodist.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 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.

Activities: The Methodist Church was created after John Wesley's conversion on 24/5/1738. The calling of the Methodist Church is:Worship, to increase awareness of God's presence and celebrate God's loveLearning and caring, to help people to grow and learn as ChristiansService, to be a good neighbour to people in need and challenge injusticeEvangelism, we make more followers of Jesus Christ.

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Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** Education/training, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Religious Activities, Arts/culture/heritage/science
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, People Of A Particular Ethnic Or Racial Origin, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** UNDEFINED. IN PRACTICE, LOCAL
- Durham
- Gateshead
- Newcastle Upon Tyne City
- North Tyneside
- Northumberland
- South Tyneside

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-08-31	£790,303	£763,238	£2,336,680	11
2024-08-31	£795,979	£727,786	£2,308,156	11
2023-08-31	£818,704	£636,116	£1,977,702	11
2022-08-31	£706,328	£811,362	£1,827,319	14
2021-08-31	£1,808,740	£641,639	£1,931,037	14

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Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Rev Alison Mary Wilkinson BA MEd MA	Chair	2016-09-01
ALAN BARKER		2000-05-15
Adam John Wilkinson		2020-02-27
Alan Nicholson ACIB		2020-09-01
Audrey Ilderton		
Benjamin Spence		2025-10-19
CAROLE LESLEY EKE JP, BEd		2014-09-23
CAROLYN HALL		2021-08-31
Chi Keung Ricky lai FCCA		2023-05-31
Christine Carroll		2025-09-09
DAVID ALEXANDER STABLER ACIB CeMap		1980-05-01
David Lowry		2020-01-23
Deacon William David Topping MA		2025-09-01
Dr Hazel Joan Nelson MRCGP		2024-09-01
Fat Tai Li		2026-01-04
Fung Yee Jacqueline Shuen MD		2021-03-03
Howard Joseph Chapman BEd ACG		2013-09-01
Ivy Leung		2014-05-01
JANET ANDERSON		1999-03-12
JOAN CHRISTINE KELSALL TEACH Cert		
James Andrew Buchan MEng		2024-03-13
Jane Atherton		2020-01-28
Jill Henderson		2025-09-01
Joshua Paul Simpson		2025-09-01
Ka Fu Poon		2026-01-01
Keith Andrew Jones BSc PGCE		2025-09-01
Keith Ian Gilfillan JP		2014-09-23

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Name	Role	Appointed
Keith Stewart		2017-09-01
Margaret Elizabeth Graham		2015-09-01
Margaret Harrison TQ cert		2023-09-01
Mark John Burdon BA		2025-09-01
Michael Stephen Ball MA		2020-01-19
Natasha Aimee Downs BA		2024-03-13
PETER HENRY MARTIN		
Pauline Newman		2025-05-11
REV Kathryn Margaret Reader B Ed BA		2012-09-01
ROGER PICKARD BSc		2016-09-01
Rachel Taglione		2020-09-01
Rev Helen White BEd BA		2025-09-01
Rev Julie Mooney		2016-09-19
Rev Malcolm Alexander Newman		2025-09-01
Rev Marie Attwood		2025-09-01
Rev Paul David Cleever-Thorpe BA		2017-09-01
Revd Professor David Adam Wilkinson BSc PhD MA		2017-09-01
SUE WALKER		2009-10-12
Susan E C Johnson		2026-01-01
TIMOTHY FLETCHER ROGERS MSc		
Tin Ching Kwok BA		2024-09-01
WILLIAM FRANK FILMER		

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THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1134265

Accounts

Charity registration number 1134265 (England and Wales)

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Charity number	1134265
Principal address	Brunswick Methodist Church Brunswick Place Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear NE1 7BJ
Independent examiner	Robson Laidler Accountants Limited Fernwood House Fernwood Road Jesmond Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 2TJ
Bankers	Lloyds Bank plc 102 Grey Street Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7BJ Central Finance Board of the Methodists Church 9 Bonhill Street London EC2A 4PE
Solicitors	Sintons LLP The Cube Barrack Road Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 6DB
Surveyors and Valuers	Lambert Smith Hampton 41-51 Grey Street Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 6DB
Custodian Trustees	The Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes Central Buildings Oldham Street Manchester M1 5JQ

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

Rev A D Mabbs - deceased 01.06.25
V Choi - resigned 01.09.25
J C Kelsall
R Lai - resigned 01.03.25
P H Martin
T F Rogers
W F Filmer
A Ilderton
J Keltie - resigned 01.06.25
A Nicholson
R Taglione
A Wilkinson
J Shuen
J Atherton
D Lowry
M S Ball
D Pigeon - resigned 01.09.25
N Pigeon - resigned 01.09.25
K Stewart
Rev P D Cleever-Thorpe
Rev Professor D A Wilkinson
Rev J Mooney
Rev A Wilkinson
R Pickard
Deacon G I Morgan - resigned 01.07.25
M E Graham
C L Eke
K I Gilfillan
I Leung
H J Chapman
L Morley - resigned 01.09.25
J G Patrick - resigned 01.09.25
Rev K M Reader
S Walker
A Barker
J Anderson
D A Stabler
C Hall
S Hutchinson - resigned 01.04.25
M Harrison
J A Buchan
N A Downs - resigned 01.06.25
M Burdon - appointed 01.09.25
Deacon J Henderson - appointed 01.09.24
Rev H White - appointed 01.09.24
K Jones - appointed 01.09.24
H Nelson - appointed 01.09.24
TC Kwok - appointed 01.09.24
J Simpson - appointed 01.09.24
P Cheung - appointed 01.03.25
P Newman - appointed 11.05.25
S Johnson - appointed 01.01.26

Deacon W Topping - appointed 01.09.25
F Li - appinted 04.01.26
K Poon - appointed 01/.01.206
C Carroll - appointed 09.09.25
Rev M Newman - appointed 01.09.25
Rev M Attwood - appointed 01.09.25
B Spence appointed 19.10.25

Circuit Stewards

The Circuit Stewards, who are the treasurers of the Circuit fund, who served during the year and until the date of this report were as follows:

Margaret Graham (Finance)
Carolyn Hall
Keith Gilfillan J.P.
Audrey Ilderton (Senior Circuit Steward)

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

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THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2025. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

PREAMBLE

The Methodist Church is said to have been created after John Wesley's conversion on 24th May 1738; it is a Free Church. The Newcastle Central and East Circuit came into being on 1st September 2009 at the merger of the former Newcastle Heaton & Wallsend and Newcastle Brunswick Central Circuits. The latter was itself formed from a merger in the early 1970's of the Brunswick and Central Circuit & the Sandyford Circuit.

The Methodist Church is called to be a growing, inclusive, evangelistic and justice-seeking Church

The Circuit's Vision Statement, agreed in May 2023, is as follows:
"Our vision is to be a Circuit of welcoming churches who look to reach and serve our communities, foster values of inclusion and acceptance, nurture and equip our preachers, leaders of worship and lay leaders, and who work in partnership with others to make God's love tangible and accessible to all".

We commit to worship, pray together and celebrate our good news stories; to review our local ministry and mission annually; to identify key strengths and challenges; and to form plans not just for future sustainability but also to include strategies for growth.

OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE

The Circuit is constituted to advance the effective deployment of the resources of ministry, which include people, property and finance, as they relate to the Methodist Churches in the Circuit, the District and Connexion, to Churches of other denominations and to participation in the communities served by the Circuit and in ecumenical work in the area. The Constitution and Enumeration of Circuits is set out year by year in the Stations appointed by the Methodist Conference.

The public benefit can be clearly demonstrated by the Trustees as they have fulfilled the calling of the Methodist Church in maintaining the witness of the church throughout the area which the Circuit serves in parts of Newcastle and North Tyneside. The grants made have enabled the work to continue and people to develop themselves and grow in faith.

The Circuit continues to fulfil its basic role of providing ministers to be in pastoral charge of the Societies (Local Churches) which make up the Circuit and support the churches in various ways including providing financial help for their work. We provide ministers with manses (one manse is owned by The United Reformed Church, Northern Synod) and see that, through the Methodist Church and United Reformed Church Central Services, they are paid their stipends and allowances. Manses that are not immediately required are let on assured short hold leases.

During the year under review, our small team of four Circuit Stewards managed its various tasks and responsibilities, guided as needed by the CPD (The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church): see https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/governance/cpd/. The Superintendent Minister and the Stewards normally meet bi-monthly. The Circuit Leadership Team, which also meets bi-monthly, comprises all ministers in the Circuit and the Circuit Stewards.

The Circuit Stewards are the Lay Leaders of The Circuit. They are Managing Trustees, as are all members of The Circuit Meeting, and as Stewards they are responsible for managing the day-to-day operation of all Circuit affairs in consultation with the Superintendent Minister. The Circuit Meeting (Managing Trustees) meet three times per year.

The life, work, and ministry of the Circuit is underpinned by prayer, public worship and personal commitment to follow Christ. We base our Circuit's mission and our churches plans upon the four aspects of The Calling of The Methodist Church: 'Growing, 'Inclusive, 'Evangelistic' & 'Justice seeking'.

Our churches have continued to explore and develop new ways of worship, learning and caring, introduced during 2020-2021 due to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, often in an on-line context as well as face-to-face gatherings. Whilst this is difficult for those who are less able to access on-line worship and other activities, churches who have been able to expand their on-line presence have continued to see significant numbers of new people engaging with their church's life. This is very encouraging to witness.

Sadly, one of our Local Ecumenical Partnerships - United Reformed Church (URC) and Methodist – St Cuthbert's Church, Heaton, requested to close or 'cease to meet' in early 2025. This request was granted and the final service of the Church was held at the end of August. Members of the church have moved to other local churches in Heaton or elsewhere in the Circuit. The building is owned by the URC and, at this time, we do not know if Christian worship and witness will continue on the site or whether the building will be sold.

The Circuit is served by Ministers of other traditions. The Circuit contributes an annual assessment to The United Reformed Church Northern Synod, to cover the stipends and other expenses of URC ministers stationed in the Circuit. There has been one URC minister stationed within the Circuit. Revd Alex Mabbs became seriously ill in September 2024 and, sadly, died in June 2025. A replacement URC minister will be sought in the next year.

The Circuit is blessed with the continuing ministry of our Supernumeraries; thanks go to Revd Malcolm Newman, Revd Derek Aldridge, Revd Susan Richardson, Revd Ann Shepherdson and Revd Marie Attwood. Local Preachers and Worship Leaders continue to serve the Circuit in their calling. There were six preachers in training, at various stages, during the year: one in pre-ordination training for presbyterial ministry; one who moved from on note to on trial; one who has paused her training; and three on note.

CIRCUIT POLICIES

All policies conform as appropriate with guidance and principles as stipulated by the Methodist Church (https://www.methodist.org.uk/) and the CPD.

RISK POLICY

Our Risk Policy covers the following areas:

Financial Risk

The Circuit Meeting is faced with the following financial risks:

- dependency on limited income sources (assessments, investment income and donations);
- managing the capital resources;
- fluctuations in investment income and rental income;
- inability to attract additional donations from the general public and members;
- an unforeseen rise in demand for expenditure (for example on Manses and Chapels);
- an unforeseen increase in the actuarial shortfall on the pension funds for which the Circuit Meeting could be deemed responsible;
- an unforeseen increase in the requirement for an additional manse or other property;
- a sustained fall in the value of investments and property held by the Circuit and appearing in the balance sheet.

Operation, Reputation and Strategy

We have identified the most significant risks as follows:

- inability to create new Methodist disciples resulting in further decline, ultimately resulting in the Methodist Church ceasing to exist;
- failure to provide adequate resources that enable the Circuit Meeting to discharge its responsibilities;
- the experience of the Methodist Church's Calling fails to be integrated into the mission and ministry pathways of the Circuit;
- sudden change in policy or strategic direction enforced by The Circuit Meeting;
- dependency on limited income sources (Assessments, investment income and donations);
- the impact of economic fluctuations on our assets, liabilities and our ability to raise funds to enable us to continue our work;
- loss of key personnel;
- the continuing effects of 'Brexit' and the coronavirus pandemic;
- we have a large number of lay employees but no Circuit HR Officer.

Many of these risks are likely to remain equally relevant throughout 2025 and beyond.

Risk management

The Methodist Church in Great Britain has a risk management policy, which has been set by the Methodist Council for use both by the Trustees and by Circuits.

The risk management policy is designed to identify and analyse key strategic and operational risks facing the Methodist Church and, where at unacceptable levels, to take steps to mitigate the risks.

We define key strategic and operational risks as those that, without effective or appropriate mitigation, are highly likely to occur and would have a positive or negative impact on the Church's ability to fulfil its purpose of advancing the Christian faith in accordance with its doctrinal standards. These risks are reported to the Managing Trustees through a risk management process, which allows them both to challenge any assumptions the Circuit Leadership team has made about risks and also to understand the context in which decisions are taken. This helps to ensure that the most serious risks are being managed effectively.

The trustees recognise that it is neither possible nor appropriate to seek to eliminate risk entirely. We recognise that risk-taking is inherent within the task of communicating the Gospel; John Wesley himself took risks in establishing the Methodist communities.

Our task, therefore, is to embrace risks that aim to advance the Church's purposes while ensuring that we avoid or minimise those risks that might have a negative impact. Effective risk management processes will help to increase the likelihood of the Church fulfilling its mission. The risk management report is reviewed and revised annually.

INVESTMENT POLICY

Since 2019-2020, the Circuit had built up significant reserves, generated from the sale of West Moor, Allen Memorial, Longbenton and Heaton Methodist Churches and the Burn Terrace flats, as well as the sale of surplus manses. The Circuit's free reserves in August 2025 were £216,562

In 2022, the Circuit Meeting (Trustees) had discussed and considered the notion of investing a significant part of the free reserves, it was agreed to invest £750,000 in the Central Finance Board (CFB) Managed Mixed Fund which had shown a positive return over a long period. See
https://www.cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk/managed-funds/

The decision of the Trustees was based on the following considerations:

1. The Circuit Meeting has a responsibility, as far as is possible, to protect, manage and conserve the capital for future mission and ministry.
2. The Charities Commission has provided guidance to Charities, seeking to invest cash funds. See https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-and-investment-matters-a-guide-for-trustees-cc14
3. The proposed fund for our investment – The Managed Mixed Fund – is a medium risk investment (that is risk 5 on the scale 0-10).
4. There is much evidence to be confident that the CFB Managed Mixed Fund is both an ethical and a sound medium risk investment. See also the CFB ethics page: https://www.cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk/ethics/ which indicates their ethical policy regarding investments.
5. The staff at the CFB are all salaried employees and are not paid on commission or performance.
6. If the Circuit Meeting wishes to draw from capital that is held in the CFB Managed Mixed Fund then it is possible to do this with a few weeks notice.
7. Interest received from the investments will be used to fund mission and ministry within the Circuit.
8. This will be an investment for the long term and will be reviewed regularly.

PAYMENTS TO STAFF

Ministers

Stipends for Methodist Ministers are determined annually by the Methodist Conference. The Circuit, as the employing body, contributes to their pension fund. They are also given an annual computer allowance.

Lay employees

In 2010 the Methodist Conference agreed that the rates of the Real Living Wage, as published by the Living Wage Foundation, should form the minimum basic salary for people employed by a district, circuit or a local church. This policy also includes young people below the age of 18. In addition, a 9-point salary scale is applied to a person specification, which is based on qualifications, experience and responsibilities. The Circuit is scrupulous in following this policy. Guidelines are available on the Methodist Church website. See https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/employees-and-volunteers/lay-employment-resource/

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The circuit's safeguarding policy is reviewed annually and is now presented at September's Circuit Meeting. All managing trustees are regularly reminded of their responsibilities. The circuit takes its safeguarding responsibilities very seriously, ensuring every church/project is aware of and adheres to its responsibilities, such as displaying its policy, updating its safeguarding information, reviewing its safeguarding policy on an annual basis, and retaining its records in accordance with proper guidelines. We appoint a Circuit Safeguarding Officer who works closely with the Circuit Superintendent, Circuit Administrator, and Circuit Stewards to ensure that our safeguarding responsibilities are reviewed on a regular basis.

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Regular meetings are held with all Church Safeguarding Officers and the Circuit Stewards, to remind them of the forms/declarations which all volunteers need to sign, depending on their individual roles, together with the training which they need to undertake. DBS checks are required for any volunteer whose work brings them into contact with users of our services and projects, and the general public.

COMPLAINTS HANDLING

It is hoped that any conflict situations will be dealt with sensitively by leaders of our local church groups. However, where this is not possible then the Methodist Complaints process will need to be invoked. This will require contact being made with the Local Complaints Officer who is our Circuit Superintendent Minister, Revd Alison Wilkinson. The process would then be put into effect with the appropriate support being given by our District Reconciliation group.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

To comply with Methodist Church guidance, Trustees are asked at the Circuit Meeting to declare any conflict of interest as soon as they are aware of any possibility that his or her personal or wider interests could influence decision-making within the Circuit. This is a standard agenda item at the beginning of each meeting to allow trustees to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

GRANTMAKING POLICY

The Circuit meeting is minded to make occasional grants from one of the funds. These grants are discretionary and full details are given in the accounts. The funds are:

- The general fund, for example, grants to the District Benevolence fund.
- The Model Trust [formerly the Circuit Advance Fund] which is now exhausted.
- The District City Centre Fund, which is used in the same way as a Model Trust - it is controlled by the Managing Trustees of the District.
- The Susannah Gibson Memorial Fund – grants were awarded for "the sustenance of Wesleyan Methodist Ministers" - no grants have been awarded for a number of years.
- The Doris Nuttall bequest - funds in this Trust were exhausted in 2022-2023, and it was closed.
- The Elizabeth Ann Burton bequest - the funds have now been expended and the fund closed.
- Bequest funds – these are various small funds that may be used at the discretion of the Circuit meeting, for mission.
- The Deacons' Fund – this fund was created by a vote at the Spring Circuit Meeting 2019, by agreeing to bring together the three remaining small Model Trusts and the balance of the general fund of the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church. In order to achieve this, a Charity Commission Order has been obtained and in the case of trust 1486 the Methodist Council voted to approve the transfer of the W R Dixon gift to the Deacons' Fund. Trust 1486 is a permanent endowment; Trust 5377, capital and income can be used; and Trust 5377B, income can be used and the capital with restrictions. In practice, it is the intention that a Deacon can use the income only.
- Coxlodge Mission Fund – the Circuit Meeting set up this fund in March 2025 from the rental income of the Owl Tree Children's Café (following the closure of Coxlodge Methodist Church). The fund is designated for mission work within the circuit.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The following reports have been submitted by the individual churches or projects within the Circuit.

Brunswick Methodist Church

Brunswick Methodist Church plays host to two congregations, the traditional Brunswick Methodist Church and the Newcastle Chinese Methodist Church. There is now a third group which gathers for the purpose of mutual support, spiritual growth and ongoing discipleship. This group is called 'Recovery Church', an inclusive community for those seeking recovery from all addictions and led by people who are, themselves, in recovery. The Newcastle expression of 'Recovery Church' is offering a blueprint for similar communities which are beginning across the UK. This group is growing in numbers which has been very encouraging to see and our new Diaconal Minister, who is to be stationed to our Circuit in September 2025, will offer time in support of this work.

Over the past year a major fundraising initiative has been overseen by our Church Treasurer, Property Secretary and Finance Committee. This was in support of the installation of new boilers, replacing the six fitted in 1980 with three eco-friendly boilers which can be converted to hydrogen. The cost came in on budget at £66,845 and was funded by donations from Brunswick and Chinese members of £11,352 and five generous grants: William Leech Charity £10,000; Catherine Cookson Foundation £3,500; Benefact Trust £19,400; Northumbria Historic Churches Trust £5,000; and the Circuit Meeting £18,593. There was also support offered by the Methodist District and TMCP. This project came on the back of alterations and associated fundraising to alter the former Listening Post rooms to create the Recovery Hub costing circa £30,000.

As Brunswick is very much a multi-cultural and international church, we have given time over this year to looking at new areas of cross-cultural ministry headed up by our part-time Lay Worker. These areas will include bilingual bible studies, the continuation of our united acts of worship with Newcastle Chinese Methodist Church and a sharing of vision on the part of those in leadership across our two congregations. This vision will, we trust, underpin how Brunswick grows and thrives over the next five to ten years.

Newcastle Chinese Methodist Church.
NCMC was established in 2003 and became a member of the Methodist Church in Great Britain in 2012. NCMC provides Cantonese and Mandarin worship services, as well as community care services. In the past year, 30 British Nationals from Overseas (BNO's) have been baptised in our church or have become church members.

Opportunities.
The number of attendees at Sunday service has increased from an average of 130 in 2023-24 to 150 in 2024-25. Although the influx of BNO immigrants has levelled off since 2022, NCMC continues to provide both pastoral care and support services to the newcomers. These include:

- establishing relationships with these families;
- assisting in solving their emigration problems to settle down in Newcastle;
- helping their youth and young children assimilate into the UK education and cultural system;
- providing caring support to their families and elderly parents to adapt to life in UK.

Challenges.
NCMC has limited pastoral manpower resources. Before November 2023, there was only one full-time pastoral worker under the supervision of the Circuit Superintendent Rev. Paul Cleever-Thorpe. To alleviate the workload of the only pastoral worker, NCMC conducted a fundraising exercise in the congregation in 2023 to enable the appointment of an additional pastoral worker. This post was on a one-year contract basis and was not renewed in November 2023.

Our intention is to seek a new pastoral worker who will take up the following responsibilities:

- the pastoral care and development of children and youth work programs within the church;
- helping young people to explore the Christian faith in a creative and dynamic way;
- recruiting, motivating and training volunteer youth workers;
- nurturing young disciples to become youth leaders and future church leaders.

We understand that the Church is facing a lot of challenges. However, we have faith in our mighty God. With His guidance, we will fulfil his mission to serve and offer evangelist work to the Chinese community in Newcastle.

The Church of the Good Shepherd, Battle Hill
(Anglican, Methodist and United Reformed Church (URC) Local Ecumenical Partnership)
We are delighted that more new people have engaged with us this past year. We have had seven Baptisms and a Confirmation and Reception into Membership Service for another three people. This is a result of our continued intentional mission and evangelism; forming relationships with people in the community and other community groups.

Our closer connections with uniformed organisations has resulted in their greater involvement in Church Worship Services as well as helping us become more eco-friendly.

Our strategy for Mission encompasses all:

- Our Little Shepherds, Baby and Toddler Group remains a flourishing effort and we have a waiting list for more places. Our ministry is not just to the children but also to the parents and carers who enjoy meeting and sharing with us and each other. Kidz Rock and Open the Book are means by which we successfully engage with primary school children, both in meetings in the church and in the local schools. We have been pleased to welcome school groups for visits into our church and for their Christmas Services.
- Outreach to teenagers is through the Hot Chocolate Youth Group, now under the governance of North Tyneside Local Council. Our minister is one of the volunteer leaders. This enterprise helps reduce anti-social behaviour and enables Christian fellowship and teaching at secondary school level. Other topics explored have touched upon wider community issues including safety, Mental Health Awareness, First Aid and Fire Safety sessions.
- Honest to God is our twice monthly drop-in meeting for adults wishing to share their Christian experience and learn more about faith. We also run Advent and Lent courses in person and online. These are valuable and less formal opportunities to encourage and welcome others into our church to meet and talk. We regularly visit our local care home, meeting residents and carers.

- We continue our commitment to local outreach through the Rising Sun Neighbours which is a small group of churches engaging with people at the Country Park. We sang carols and told the Nativity Story at Christmas, held a craft stall at the Summer Festival and distributed leaflets about our church with invitations to visit us. We are proud to be one of the original founders of this group.
- Sew and Socialise is what the title suggests. The thriving group meets weekly, celebrating birthdays and other events. This past year knitted blankets were donated to Charlton Court and to another care home. The RVI Dementia Team asked if "Twiddle Muffs" and blankets could be knitted and donated to them which S&S happily did. A good year!

Our Christmas events generate interest outside our walls bringing in more people to enjoy the celebrations. Our Carol Service saw a congregation of 58 and our Christingle had 185 adults and 35 children in attendance. We also held a Christmas Morning service which was well attended. Carol singing at the local shops involved a collection of 40 singers and an equal number of people joined us at Charlton Court. Our Christmas Fair is very popular with our local community, bringing them into our premises to enjoy fellowship.

We have fulfilled our financial commitments and feel very blessed by God in serving Him, each other and our wider community.

Jesmond Methodist Church

The congregation at JMC continues to grow and flourish. Formal membership has just topped 50, for the first time in many years, and we have many other friends and adherents, both in person and on-line. Two people have been baptised in the past year with plans for a third in later 2025. It's always a thrill to use the District's adult baptismal pool within our worship. We are blessed that everyone in our congregation delights in using their talents to support Church activities, internally and for outreach.

In September 2024, as part of the Shieldfield Project grant from the Circuit and the District Advance Fund, we welcomed two new staff members: Josh, our Student & Young Adult Worker, and Krystal, our Creative Communications lead. They have helped support our outreach to students and expanded our online presence through Instagram and Facebook. The grant has also released our JMC Lay Pastor and Student Worker to continue development of our New Places for New People project in Shieldfield, now called *Sanctuary*: a partnership between JMC and Shieldfield Art Works and those belonging to *Sanctuary*. There are now a fortnightly Shieldfield house group and a monthly evening worship service. Two of the best *Sanctuary* moments of the year were at Christmas and Easter. At Christmas, our relationship with local families and the school meant that 40 people of all ages gathered in the SAW garden to put on a Scratch Nativity and sing carols. At Easter, we partnered with the exhibition at SAW, 'Jagged Edges', which is a collection of art prints, poetry and music taking you through the stations of the cross. This work is created by artists who have first-hand experience of church-related abuse and it helps tell their stories through the story of Jesus' final days.

While there has been work and time put into the New Places for New People initiative, we are also seeing growth at Jesmond, with new people regularly walking through our doors and finding a home. We are not just growing numerically but also are growing spiritually, as we spend each day working out how to be better followers of Jesus. New outreach highlights include our weekly Create Space craft and jigsaw morning, which is beginning to attract people from the local community, and the successful running of an Alpha course (10 weekly sessions and an away day), with over 20 attending the first session. In an effort to continue to highlight climate change, as part of the Jesmond Community Festival, we organised a pop-up clothes swap, with over 250 local people coming to participate. Other events hosted for the Festival included a Paint and Pizza evening and The Big Jesmond Quiz, both of which attracted Church members and local residents.

We are delighted that we now have sufficient young people to be able to form a Youth Group, which meets twice a month. The young people have also participated in District youth activities. Jesmond Methodist Kids and the Youth Group contribute regularly to our Sunday worship. Easter was a particular moment for celebration and involvement as we struggled for enough chairs to fit everyone in!

Challenges include the upkeep of an old Edwardian building, which celebrates its 125th birthday in 2026. We are enormously grateful that God has provided funds to keep the bricks and mortar in good order, so that the building can continue as a safe place for our community.

St Andrew's Church, Benton
(Methodist and URC LEP)

The church welcomed its new minister, Revd Helen White, in September 2024 and she has quickly settled in. We are blessed with a rich and varied worship experience with worship leaders provided by the Methodist and United Reformed Churches. We organised two services designated as 'Own Arrangement' which involved our own members sharing their unique journeys of faith and leading our prayers. All-age worship takes place on the first Sunday of each month; Communion services take place on the third Sunday of each month. There is a monthly midweek worship and fellowship service, and we run Messy Church on a quarterly basis. Refreshments after the Sunday morning service enhances the fellowship shared by regular worshippers and enables us to offer a warm welcome to visitors.

Apart from the ongoing work of our minister, the church has a team of eleven volunteer pastoral carers who each take responsibility to help and keep in touch with several of our people on a regular basis. The pastoral carers, Cradle Roll secretary and a Sunday School representative meet with the minister, vestry steward and the pastoral secretary as a committee at least twice a year to review the pastoral needs and ensure that the close families of all church members, frequent worshippers (adherents) and children in recent contact with the church are included in the care coverage.

Junior Church has been led by two dedicated church volunteers with the regular assistance of one enthusiastic church member and the occasional support of parents. The number of children attending Junior Church fluctuates and there is a wide age range. The children engage in craft activities and games linked to the Old and New Testaments. At Pentecost everyone enjoyed blowing bubbles, making paper aeroplanes and flying a miniature kite to demonstrate the Holy Spirit moving as the breath of God.

Church Membership stands at 93. Some of our elderly members are now unable to attend church services, but we are normally blessed to have a congregation of 60-70 attendees at Sunday morning services.

Currently we keep in touch with four families who have children on the Cradle Roll and three families whose children have had infant thanksgiving and blessing services. They all receive the church magazine, and the Cradle Roll secretary visits each home with a card for the child's birthday and a general invitation to Messy Church or weekly Junior Church.

The 4th Newcastle Girls' Brigade meets in the church each week, run by trained volunteer leaders. Numbers are growing. Activities include sleepovers, outings, special church services, award nights and camps.

Our dedicated editor puts together our church magazine – Tidings – ten times a year. The content features a message from the minister, a diary of church activities, church news and looking forward or back at church-related events in the neighbourhood and worldwide. It also covers current events at home or abroad that may be of interest from a Christian or community perspective.

Many from the church participated in the Christmas knitted angels outreach project. After a request from staff and residents, services have been held in the local care home once a month. These services are well supported by members of the church family who sit among the residents, getting to know them and encouraging them to take part in the singing.

The premises are also well used by external groups, and some have been carrying out their activities in the church for many years and are well known in the local communities.

We support the connexional funds of the Methodist and United Reformed Churches in Britain. The church regularly supports several UK charities that operate locally or globally. This year money was sent to support local causes through Foundation Futures; Walking With and the Cullercoats RNLI. Appeals for the Gaza crisis and other international charity appeals were also supported. Church donations are made from the church CARE Fund, which represents 2% of all offerings and related Gift Aid, or by special collections during the year. In total we donated £3,935 this year.

As well as routine maintenance on the building, the church is seeking to make the building more energy efficient, with an initial focus on renewing older windows with double glazed units, as funds permit.

St Cuthbert's Church, Heaton
(Methodist and URC LEP)
The church welcomed our new Minister, Revd. Paul Cleever-Thorpe, in September 2024. Worship continued to be held on Sunday mornings for our own members and friends. Our Wives & Friends Group have met on alternate Tuesday afternoons at which about 20 ladies have attended.

The building has continued to be used by Newcastle Christian Tabernacle on two weekday evenings and on a Sunday afternoon. St Cuthbert's continued to support the local Heaton Churches Together group, hosting a Lent lunch and supporting events which are shared by the churches across Heaton and High Heaton.

In January 2025 an important church 'vision afternoon' was held. At this gathering, our Minister invited us to consider our church's recent past in terms of missional activities held, to assess our present circumstances and to pray about our future. Whilst there was affirmation concerning those efforts which the church had made, we also understood the realities of what we were now facing, and we recommended that the Lay Leaders should meet together and bring a recommendation to our next Church Meeting.

The recommendation was that the church should close later in the year at a date to be agreed. This recommendation was passed. Subsequently, from February onwards there has been a huge effort to begin to clear the church building and to pull together important church records for placing in the archives. The Lay Leaders deserve enormous credit not only for spearheading this work but also for doing it in a united and gracious way.

The final thanksgiving services for St. Cuthbert's LEP took place over the weekend of 30th/31st August and were attended by many people with past connections to the church and by those from both partner denominations giving their support to church members at an emotional time for them. At these final services, thanksgiving was expressed to God for all his many blessings and for all the ways in which St. Cuthbert's, and the original Heaton Presbyterian church, had reached out into the local community and been a spiritual home to so many.

Church records have been archived with the URC Northern Synod which has taken over Trusteeship of the church building with the intention of it being sold following valuation.

Church of St John the Evangelist, Kingston Park
(Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and URC LEP)
This has been a year of steady progress. Recorded membership has increased slightly, and attendance at services has grown throughout the year, with over 100 people regularly attending services. We are delighted to be welcoming an increasingly diverse range of members. We continue our initiative to encourage new attendees to become members and, just as importantly, to volunteer in supporting our work. Our Bible study groups have expanded both online via Zoom and in person, and this has been positively received with increased attendance. To assist some new arrivals to the UK, two members established a Bible study group for Cantonese speakers.

In September 2024 we welcomed our new Methodist minister, Deacon Jill Henderson, and in June 2025 Rev Shena Moray-Evans filled our longstanding Anglican vacancy. The arrival of both has served to enliven our worship and outreach activities.

We offer a range of outreach events to the community, including a successful Easter egg hunt and Harvest activities, combined with Messy Church sessions, with each event attracting over 50 children. We held our carol singing events at Marks & Spencer and Tesco to raise funds for West End Refugees and Action for Children, though we will be reviewing whether they serve their purpose adequately in time for Christmas 2025. Members have been very active in the collection of shoeboxes from across Northumberland and North Durham.

A new initiative has been re-invigorating our relationship with Kingston Park Primary school using the 'Open the Book' material. This has been very well received by the school. We are fortunate to have received a grant of £500 from the circuit to purchase props and costumes.

Sadly, our bookings and usage by community groups have not been as good in the year as previously, which has impacted our finances.

In January we completed the renewal of our heating boilers. This was largely funded by grants received from the following: Wesley Orphan House Trust (£5,500), Benefact Trust (£1,750), Northumbria Historic Trust (£3,000), Garfield Weston Foundation (£3,500), Congregational & General Charitable Trust (£5,100), and the Newcastle Central & East Methodist Circuit (£10,000). We are deeply grateful to all the grant providers for their support. In addition, the Lord spoke to our members who responded and provided the balance of the cost of renewal.

Throughout the year we have completed a programme of draught proofing and completed a long-term project to convert all our lighting to LEDS. The works were largely covered by a grant of £2,350 from the Diocese of Newcastle as part of its 'Quick Wins for Net Zero' initiative.

Trinity Church, Gosforth
(Methodist and URC LEP)
2024-2025 has been a very challenging year for Trinity Gosforth. Our minister, Revd Alex Mabbs, was taken ill at the beginning of September and later diagnosed with a terminal brain tumour. Sadly, he passed away in June. The church has supported his family and mourned the loss of a dear friend and minister.

The loss of a full-time minister has impacted our achievements; however, we were joined by a half time minister, Deacon Jill Henderson, in September 2024 who has supported us and has been a blessing. Faithful church members have worked hard to ensure the life of the church continues. We have received great support from the Methodist Circuit and visiting preachers.

Despite the challenges, we have welcomed four new members by transfer, conducted ten infant baptisms and three believers' baptisms by full immersion. We are becoming a more diverse church welcoming new people of different ages, nationalities and backgrounds. With this in mind, we are planning an Alpha course in the New Year.

This year we celebrated 25 years since the coming together of three churches - Gosforth URC, Woodbine Rd & West Avenue Methodist Churches. At our July coffee morning there were children's activities outside, and a BBQ. In the church, a slideshow of the amazing transformation of the building and subsequent celebrations was shown on a loop during the morning, drawing many people to sit and watch.

We held a prayer and Vision Day and published a Trinity Times 25th Celebration Edition. At the end of September, our celebrations culminated with a service of worship led by Rev. Jona Sewell, Chair of District, and lunch.

We strive to make services more accessible, with larger print hymns and copies of the sermon. Service at home sheets are sent out to 12 members and the service is live streamed on YouTube, with approximately 70 contacts a week. Young Church is thriving, with Sunday Nights Over Tens meeting in homes on Sunday evenings. The toddler groups give fun, fellowship and support to many families during the week. Life groups meet for fellowship and Bible study, and there have been opportunities to share further study with St Johns's LEP in Kingston Park. About 40 men gather monthly for breakfast, fellowship and a speaker. Women's Fellowship meet monthly, and our weekly Friday morning (a designated warm space) and monthly Saturday coffee mornings are very well attended and are an opportunity for us to build bridges with the community.

Men's Shed continues to make a huge impact on men's lives, particularly for those recently bereaved, the lonely or those with mental health issues. While sharing skills and producing some wonderful products, the men are able to talk to each other, as well as having a great deal of fun. Amongst other things, they have made holding crosses that have been given to people in hospital, care homes and to the terminally ill, which have been greatly appreciated.

Trinity Centre is well used by the community, with many hirers as well as our own church groups. 2,500 people a week use our building, providing us with the opportunity to build relations with our community.

Our finances remain strong, with £9540 being donated to the Walker and District Food Bank, over and above our normal church and charity commitments.

We are now in the process of seeking a new full-time URC minister and continue to look to God for his leadership through the Holy Spirit in the months to come.

Trinity Methodist Church, Wallsend
During the past Methodist year, we have continued to hold our Warm Space Coffee Morning every Saturday. In the summer, the welcome remains warm but hopefully the space is pleasantly cool. We always have 20 plus people, mostly from the local community. Some are regulars whilst others are occasional visitors or new people. The Council donate their left-over food on a Friday – particularly sandwiches and scones. It's great that they continue to do this. Sometimes there's a lot, and other times not much, but it goes down well with those who attend.

We continue to video all our Sunday services and put them on YouTube. This enables those who can't attend to still take part in the worship.

Our Youth Group, Girls Brigade and Tea Dance, all run by members of the church, continue to do well. The Girls' Brigade has gained an extra leader, much loved by the youngest girls, and we have some new girls. We also have a Toddler Group, Scouts, Line Dancing, and *Forward in Faith* Church, that use our premises. So, our premises are well used.

The Wesley Orphan House Trust (WOHT)
The WOHT receives its income from ground rent from the site of the former 'Orphan House' on Northumberland Street in Newcastle upon Tyne. The Trust also receives a small sum from investments.

The Trust allocates an annual budget of approximately £25,000 for grants, prioritising work that supports children, vulnerable individuals, property repairs, and a lot more. In 2024/2025, the Trust has granted 14 individual grants totalling £23,400 to: Recovery Church; Scots Gap Methodist Church; Brunswick Methodist Church; St. John's LEP Kingston Park; Martha and Mary's Community Café; Lindisfarne Methodist Church; Junction 42; West End Women and Girls Centre; Calvert Kielder; Cornerstone, Benwell; Chester-le-Street Methodist Church; Cornerstones; Shieldfield Art Works; and Her Circle.

Over the past year, the Trust has appointed a new Secretary and has increased its number of Trustees. The design of a new application form will be discussed at upcoming meetings. Applicants will be able to access and complete the grant application form online and then submit it to pmchurcht25@gmail.com

We have also updated the payment process by moving to online banking, instead of using cheques, which is a lot more efficient.

Further information about the Trust can be found on the Circuit's website: http://newcastlecentralmethodist.org.uk/woht.php

Hand in Hand
Hand in Hand meets weekly, on a Tuesday, in Trinity Methodist Church, Wallsend. The aim is to reduce and prevent loneliness and social isolation in older people. Each week our members are welcomed with a cup of tea and then enjoy a two-course home cooked traditional lunch. This is followed by a wide range of activities including reminiscing, quizzes, slide shows, games, chair exercises and crafts.

The kitchen team, both volunteers, provide good quality food every week and work on a rota basis which works really well. We continue to have good feedback from the members who enjoy the tasty, nutritious meals.

We have had six new members this year. One member enjoyed it so much that she brought her three friends the following week. Of those who came on their own, strong friendships seem to have formed and they now meet up outside the club. The members really do care for and support one another.

There is certainly a lot of fun and laughter at the club each week but this wouldn't be possible without the team of dedicated volunteers who, along with the Coordinator, enable the club to run smoothly every week.

Methodist Women in Britain (MWIB)

The twice a year retreats at Minsteracres continue to be highlights of the Newcastle District's MWiB calendar as the members always feel warmly welcomed there.

An Away Day in September 2024 at Houghton-le-Spring Methodist Church was entitled 'A Taste of Porto' and incorporated Bible Study, a service with Holy Communion, Crafting, and a Prayer Walk/Liturgical Dance.

In November 2024, at Ponteland Methodist Church, the MWiB held their annual service to induct Mrs Rosemary Gray as District President and recommission all their other officers. Cheques were presented to the outgoing President's Projects. A new project was introduced. Rev. Jona Sewell, Chair of the Newcastle District, was the preacher.

A Bring and Share District dinner was held at Ponteland Methodist Church in July 2025 and included entertainment.

World Church Day was celebrated in June 2025 at St Andrew's and St Mark's at Newbiggin by the Sea where MWIB members enjoyed a talk by Isabel Hindle on 'Reaching the Unreached in India', followed by a Bring and Share lunch.

Through her own fundraising and through the fundraising of the MWiB Newcastle District combined, the President raised the sum of £1092 for her chosen project, Tynedale Hospice at Home.

Shieldfield Art Works (SAW) @ The Holy Biscuit

Exhibitions

There were six exhibitions during the year:

- **September-October 2024 // Playing Out**
  An interactive exhibition made in response to community conversations, exploring our connections with place and space as our own playing fields. Visitors were invited to respond by adding to the gallery walls using the paint provided. It grew up into a riot of colour and celebration of play.
- **November-December 2024 // Craft Action Collective Exhibition**
  A gathering and celebration of work produced by Craft Action Collective, a group exploring activism and issues in the news through the medium of craft and printmaking. From January 2024 we started documenting artworks and encouraging the group to write labels articulating why they made a piece of art. This has the purpose of encouraging creative articulation both visually, through speech and now writing. It also builds towards an exhibition of the group's work, giving time and space to revisit ideas for further reflection in a world where new ideas are so often rapidly consumed.
- **February-March 2025 // Take Over 2025**
  Take Over is SAW's annual programme showcasing emerging artists, as part of our commitment to support up and coming talent. This year's three exhibitions looked at uncomfortable experiences as a young woman in Newcastle, everyday challenges of living on a remote farm and the identities of artist and mother.
- **April 2025 // Jagged Edges**
  Jagged Edges was an exhibition of printmaking, poetry, and music created by and for survivors of church-related abuse. The artists drew links between their own experiences and the story of Jesus as he approached his crucifixion
- **May-June 2025 // Sowing Creative Fallow**
  An interactive exhibition considering work, rest and leisure. Can rest be a form of resistance in a productivity-obsessed and consumerist world? Who in society is and isn't free to rest well?
- **August 2025 // Painting for Fun**
  A vibrant exhibition, bringing together an eclectic group of artists united by their love of painting. With subject matter ranging from landscapes, portraits, local scenes and botanical studies, there was something for everyone.

Workshops and Events

- **Songs of Solidarity and Strength Part 1**
  Community song writing workshops with songwriters Gareth Davies-Jones and Bronwen Davies-Jones, residents and a group from the local primary school to share their experience of life in Shieldfield.

- **National Garden Scheme**
  SAW participated for the first time in the Scheme which gives visitors unique access to over 3,300 exceptional private gardens and raises impressive amounts of money for nursing and health charities through admissions.

Other workshops included Wreath-Making, Highland Cow Painting and Portrait.

SAW received specific funding to take a group of people within our different communities to visit the Auckland Project in Bishop Auckland.

SAW regular groups include the Painting for Fun oil painting class, Craft Action Collective, and Shieldfield Grows (a regular community gardening group).

For further information about SAW and its activities, please see the web site: https://saw-newcastle.org/

Financial position
Income for the year ended 31 August 2025 totalled £790,303 (2024: £795.979 resulting in a surplus for the year of £28,524 (2024: £330,454). Funds totalled £2,336,680 at the year end, of which £19,351 are restricted funds, which are held for special purpose of The Holy Biscuit, and £2,350 are endowment funds. Unrestricted reserves total £2,314,979 which includes those held for special purpose of £32,206 The Holy Biscuit, £6,195 Hand in hand and £82 Methodist Women in Britain. Designated funds at the end of the year amounted to £1,599,005.

Reserves policy - general funds
The definition of reserves is: "income which becomes available to the charity and is to be expended at the trustees' discretion in furtherance of the charity's objects, but which is not yet spent, committed or designated." The free reserves of the charity therefore exclude endowments, restricted funds, designated funds and funds already invested in fixed assets. Free reserves of the charity at the year end amounted to £216,562.

The reserves policy for the general and manse funds of the Circuit agreed by the trustees is to hold the equivalent of the relevant annual expenditure, plus an estimate of any known fluctuations. These reserves are held in the Central Finance Board deposit account. The unrestricted funds are currently below the policy, the Circuit Managing Trustees are concerned about this and mindful to address the situation as soon as possible. There are plans to balance the budget over the following two or three years and then start to re-build reserves. Should there be a funding crisis then the Managing Trustees would make an appeal to the Local Churches.

Structure, governance and management
The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust and constitutes an unincorporated charity. The charity's treasurers of the Circuit Funds are the lay Circuit Stewards. Of the Managing Trustees listed previously, all are lay people excepting the eleven ministerial staff. Circuit meetings are generally held three times a year and include representatives of all the Societies (local churches) and projects in the Circuit. The Superintendent Minister (who supervises the work of the other Ministers in the Circuit) reports to this meeting as do the Circuit Stewards.

The governing body of the Circuit is the annual conference of The Methodist Church. The Methodist Church Act 1976 gives the authority under which The Methodist Church acts. The constitution practice and discipline of The Methodist Church (2019 edition) together with The Deed of Union (Act of 1929 adopted 1932) govern the activities of the Circuit.

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

In general, The Methodist Church is excepted from the need to register as a charity by the combined effects of Section 46(4) (A) of the Charities Act 1993 and Paragraph 4(2) (C) of the Charities (exception from registration) Regulations 1996 as amended by Statutory Instrument 2014 No 242. The Circuit, however, is a separate Registered Charity, number 1134265, in England and Wales.

The Trustees who have served during the year and since the year-end are set out on the legal and administration pages. The treasurers (Circuit Stewards) are appointed annually by the Circuit Meeting and the Managing Trustees are appointed either by: (a) the Societies of which they are members; (b) the Preachers' Meeting; or (c) by being ex-officio (Ministers in good standing or holding a District or Connexional Office or duly appointed Lay Workers). In practice, up to seven Circuit Stewards may be appointed who serve, generally, for a minimum of 3 years and a maximum of 6.

The principal address of the Circuit's auditors, bankers, solicitors and other advisors are given as part of the reference and administrative details.

The Circuit Stewards, acting as Treasurers, are responsible for the detailed examination of the Financial Statements and for recommending their adoption by the Circuit Meeting. One of their number is designated 'Treasurer' and her main role is to manage the finances of the Circuit, assisted by the Circuit Accounts Administrator.

The Circuit is one of 12 of the Newcastle District and has 9 Local Churches [10 premises], of which 5 are Local Ecumenical Partnerships. They are contactable via the principal address of the Circuit. Funds are transferred to the Circuit on a regular basis to meet the commitments to the District and the upkeep of the Circuit.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

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

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:
- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

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

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

..... Alison Wilkinson

Rev A Wilkinson - Trustee

Dated: 25/2/26

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The Newcastle Central and East Circuit of the Methodist Church (the charity) for the year ended 31 August 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act 2011.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000, the independent examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of ACCA, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Charities Act 2011.
2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3 the financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of financial statements set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the financial statements 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 financial statements to be reached.

NCh

Nicholas Cunningham FCCA
Robson Laidler Accountants Limited
Fernwood House
Fernwood Road
Jesmond
Newcastle Upon Tyne
Tyne and Wear
NE2 1TJ

Dated: 2-7-2026

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

Current financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Endowment funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	2	422,814	64,253	-	487,067	652,624
Other trading activities	3	6,097	-	-	6,097	6,475
Investments	4	112,940	-	52	112,992	136,880
Other income	5	184,147	-	-	184,147	-
Total income and endowments		725,998	64,253	52	790,303	795,979
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds		18	-	113	131	21
Charitable activities	6	703,356	59,751	-	763,107	727,765
Total resources expended		703,374	59,751	113	763,238	727,786
Net gains/(losses) on investments		1,441	-	18	1,459	262,261
Net movement in funds		24,065	4,502	(43)	28,524	330,454
Fund balances at 1 September 2024		2,290,914	14,849	2,393	2,308,156	1,977,702
Fund balances at 31 August 2025		2,314,979	19,351	2,350	2,336,680	2,308,156

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

Prior financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Endowment funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	2	649,307	3,317	-	652,624
Other trading activities	3	6,475	-	-	6,475
Investments	4	136,817	-	63	136,880
Total income and endowments		792,599	3,317	63	795,979
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		15	-	6	21
Charitable activities	6	727,256	509	-	727,765
Total resources expended		727,271	509	6	727,786
Net gains/(losses) on investments		262,074	-	187	262,261
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		327,402	2,808	244	330,454
Net movement in funds		327,402	2,808	244	330,454
Fund balances at 1 September 2023		1,963,512	12,041	2,149	1,977,702
Fund balances at 31 August 2024		2,290,914	14,849	2,393	2,308,156

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 AUGUST 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		263,412		272,260
Investment properties	12		240,000		240,000
			503,412		512,260
Current assets					
Debtors	14	5,120		9,539	
Investments	15	784,767		783,503	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,097,629		1,056,185	
		1,887,516		1,849,227	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	16	(54,248)		(53,331)	
Net current assets			1,833,268		1,795,896
Total assets less current liabilities			2,336,680		2,308,156
Capital funds					
Endowment funds - general	21		2,350		2,393
Income funds					
Restricted funds	19		19,351		14,849
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds	20	-,1595,005		1,634,684	
General unrestricted funds		719,974		656,230	
			2,314,979		2,290,914
			2,336,680		2,308,156

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on .....

C Anan Wilkinson

Rev A Wilkinson - Trustee

25/2/26

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

	Notes	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash absorbed by operations	24		(261,479)		(10,281)
Investing activities					
Proceeds from disposal of tangible fixed assets		189,736		-	
Proceeds from disposal of investments		195		(8)	
Investment income received		112,992		136,880	
Net cash generated from investing activities			302,923		136,872
Net cash generated from financing activities			-		-
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents			41,444		126,591
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			1,056,185		929,594
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			1,097,629		1,056,185

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Newcastle Central and East Circuit of the Methodist Church is a unincorporated charity (charity number (1134265).

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

1.5 Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

1 **Accounting policies** **(Continued)**

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Freehold land and buildings	straight line over 100 years
Computers	straight line over 3 years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Investment properties

Investment property, which is property held to earn rentals and/or for capital appreciation, is initially recognised at cost, which includes the purchase cost and any directly attributable expenditure. Subsequently it is measured at fair value at the reporting end date. The surplus or deficit on revaluation is recognised in profit or loss.

1.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

2 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2025	2025	2025	2024	2024	2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Donations and gifts	494	-	494	155	-	155
Assessments	350,204	-	350,204	358,255	-	358,255
Grants receivable	-	64,253	64,253	-	-	-
Administration	55,442	-	55,442	79,402	3,317	82,719
Other	16,674	-	16,674	211,495	-	211,495
	422,814	64,253	487,067	649,307	3,317	652,624

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Unrestricted funds 2024
	£	£
Other trading activities		
Books & telephone income	6,047	6,375
Sundry income	50	100
	6,097	6,475

4 Investments

	Unrestricted funds	Endowment funds general	Total	Total
	2025	2025	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Rental income	49,580	-	49,580	56,844
Income from unlisted investments	16,365	-	16,365	21,749
Interest receivable	46,995	52	47,047	58,287
	112,940	52	112,992	136,880

5 Other income

	Unrestricted funds	Total
	2025	2024
	£	£
Net gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	184,147	-

6 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Charitable activities 2025	Charitable activities 2024
	£	£
Direct costs		
Staff costs	341,424	329,979
Depreciation and impairment	3,259	3,325
Gifts and donations	1,745	1,230
Assessments	118,815	109,065
Travel	11,472	12,405
Repairs and property costs	70,533	88,377
Pulput supply	1,341	2,004
The Holy Biscuit costs	124,678	109,097
Hand in Hand costs	7,234	7,625
	680,501	663,107
Grant funding of activities (see note 7)	41,093	24,781
Share of support and governance costs (see note 8)		
Support	21,536	21,700
Governance	19,977	18,177
	763,107	727,765
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	703,356	727,256
Restricted funds	59,751	509
	763,107	727,765

7 Grants payable

	Charitable activities 2025 £	Charitable activities 2024 £
Grants to institutions:		
MINE	-	5,375
Newcastle Chinese Methodist Church	-	4,939
Brunswick Methodist Church	23,593	7,467
Shieldfield Artworks	-	7,000
St. John's LEP	10,500	-
Cross Cultural Ministry	7,000	-
	41,093	24,781

8 Support costs allocated to activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Telephone	8,643	9,399
Postage & stationery	7,092	6,802
Sundries	5,801	5,499
Governance costs	19,977	18,177
	41,513	39,877
Analysed between:		
Charitable activities	41,513	39,877

Governance costs comprise:	2025 £	2024 £
Independent examiner's fee	4,896	4,663
Professional services	15,081	13,514
	19,977	18,177

9 Trustees

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 August 2025 nor for the year ended 31 August 2024.

Trustees expenses
The aggregate amount of travelling and subsistence expenses reimbursed to the trustees in relation to their lay worker and ministerial roles within the charity during the year was £14,089 (2024: £15,685). The number of persons reimbursed was 12 (2024: 13).

During the year the following trustees were paid salaries and stipends for their ministerial or lay worker roles within the Circuit:

	2025	2024
	£	£
S Hutchinson	7,501	10,151
S Walker	18,199	16,842
P Cleever- Thorpe	40,950	42,907
A Wilkinson	44,494	40,142
W Topping	3,535	-
G Morgan	37,416	39,848
H White	32,622	2,662
J Henderson	40,951	3,354

10 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
Direct charitable expenditure	10	9
Management and admin of the charity	2	2
Total	12	11

Employment costs	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	270,762	255,085
Social security costs	26,520	20,942
Other pension costs	44,142	53,952
	341,424	329,979

The key management personnel of the charity include the circuit stewards, the superintendent and other ministers who are all managing trustees. Total employee benefits of the key management personnel for the year were £41,032 (2024: £37,584).

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

12 Investment property

	2025 £
Fair value	
At 1 September 2024 and 31 August 2025	240,000

The investment properties were revalued by trustees on 31 August 2024. The valuation was made on an open market basis by reference to market evidence of transaction prices for similar properties, which the trustees believe represents fair value.

	2025 £	2024 £
Freehold	240,000	240,000

13 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings £	Computers £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 September 2024	332,467	10,827	343,294
Disposals	(6,575)	-	(6,575)
At 31 August 2025	325,892	10,827	336,719
Depreciation and impairment			
At 1 September 2024	60,207	10,827	71,034
Depreciation charged in the year	3,259	-	3,259
Eliminated in respect of disposals	(986)	-	(986)
At 31 August 2025	62,480	10,827	73,307
Carrying amount			
At 31 August 2025	263,412	-	263,412
At 31 August 2024	272,260	-	272,260

14 Debtors

	2025	2024
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Other debtors	-	3,800
Prepayments and accrued income	5,120	5,739
	5,120	9,539

15 Current asset investments

	2025	2024
	£	£
Unlisted investments	784,767	783,503

16 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Accruals and deferred income	54,248	53,331

17 Retirement benefit schemes

	2025	2024
	£	£
Defined contribution schemes		
Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes	44,142	53,952

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund.

18 Operating lease commitments

Lessee

Amounts recognised in profit or loss as an expense during the period in respect of operating lease arrangements are as follows:

At the reporting end date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Within one year	3,593	3,593
Between two and five years	5,390	8,983
	8,983	12,576

19 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

	At 1 September 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	At 31 August 2025
	£	£	£	£
Shieldfield Arftworks	14,849	64,253	(59,751)	19,351

Previous year:	At 1 September 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	At 31 August 2024
	£	£	£	£
Shieldfield Arftworks	12,041	3,317	(509)	14,849

Shieldfield Art Works At The Holy Biscuit

Shieldfield Methodist Church closed as Local Church or Society, and in about 2006 the premises were rented to various organisations including a local radio station. By 2009 there was a proposal to sell the site but Rev'd Rob Hawkins in consultation with local businessman Ramy Zac, proposed a radical suggestion to develop and arts expression of Church, a form of Fresh Expressions of Church, using the premises. Mr Zac said that he would carry out, at his expense, a major refurbishment and Rob would set up the organisation of what quickly became known as The Holy Biscuit - it being opposite the Biscuit Factory art gallery. Until recently it has operated as a separate fund, but it is now felt that it should be an internal organisation of the Circuit, which 'owns' it.

The project has grown and now receives significant grants from the Methodist Connexional grants committee and is seen as an integral part of the arts scene in Newcastle. There are links to both universities in Newcastle and the one in Sunderland as well as the Ouseburn arts community. The Holy Biscuit is now reaching out to the local community, schools and other churches in Shieldfield. As well as providing gallery space, the premises are well used, for example, painting for fun (working with those who have health problems), schools work and church with a difference mid-week services.

20 Designated funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 September 2023	Transfers	Balance at 1 September 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Gains and losses	Balance at 31 August 2025
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Property Fund	1,522,391	112,293	1,634,684	318,834	(359,949)	1,436	1,595,005
General unrestricted funds	-	-	656,230	407,164	(343,425)	5	719,974
	1,522,391	112,293	2,290,914	725,998	(703,374)	1,441	2,314,979

The Property Fund
This fund represents funds relating to the sale, letting or other disposition of land which is Circuit property. The authority to sanction schemes for the application of capital money in the fund rests with the Circuit meeting, subject to approval by the Synod. The fund is represented by investments and or cash.

21 Endowment funds

Endowment funds represent assets which must be held permanently by the charity. Income arising on the endowment funds can be used in accordance with the objects of the charity and is included as unrestricted income. Any capital gains or losses arising on the assets form part of the fund.

			Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 September 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Gains and losses	Balance at 31 August 2025
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Permanent endowments						
The Susannah Gibson memorial fund	592	11	(2)	-	15	616
WR Dixon gift	1,801	41	(111)	-	3	1,734
	2,393	52	(113)	-	18	2,350

The Susannah Gibson Memorial Fund
This fund represents monies left to the church in 1880 by the late Susannah Gibson, the income from which can be used 'for the sustenance of Wesleyan Ministers'.

The WR Dixon Gift
This fund represents Model Trust funds transferred from the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church and is used at the discretion of the deacon.

22 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2024 - none).

23 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Endowment funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Fund balances at 31 August 2025 are represented by:					
Tangible assets	263,412	-	-	263,412	272,260
Investment properties	240,000	-	-	240,000	240,000
Current assets/(liabilities)	1,811,567	19,351	2,350	1,833,268	1,795,896
	2,314,979	19,351	2,350	2,336,680	2,308,156

24 Cash absorbed by operations

	2025 £	2024 £
Surplus for the year	28,524	330,454
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(112,992)	(136,880)
Gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	(184,147)	-
Fair value gains and losses on investment properties	-	(206,000)
Fair value gains and losses on investments	(1,459)	(56,261)
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	3,259	3,325
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease in debtors	4,419	7,524
Increase in creditors	917	47,557
Cash absorbed by operations	(261,479)	(10,281)

25 Analysis of changes in net funds

The charity had no material debt during the year.

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1134265

Accounts

Charity registration number 1134265

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Charity number	1134265
Principal address	Brunswick Methodist Church Brunswick Place Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear NE1 7BJ
Independent examiner	Robson Laidler Accountants Limited Fernwood House Fernwood Road Jesmond Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 2TJ
Bankers	Lloyds Bank plc 102 Grey Street Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7BJ Central Finance Board of the Methodists Church 9 Bonhill Street London EC2A 4PE
Solicitors	Sintons LLP The Cube Barrack Road Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 6DB
Surveyors and Valuers	Lambert Smith Hampton 41-51 Grey Street Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 6DB
Custodian Trustees	The Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes Central Buildings Oldham Street Manchester M1 5JQ

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

Rev A D Mabbs
V Choi
D J Cowans - resigned 31.08.24
J C Kelsall
R Lai
P H Martin
M Burdon - Appointed 21.05.23
T F Rogers
W F Filmer
A Ilderton
R E Bourne
M Harrison - appointed 01.09.23
E Leung - resigned 15.11.23
J A Buchan - appointed 01.03.24
N A Downs - appointed 01.03.24
P Short - resigned 31.08.24
J Keltie
Deacon A Carter - resigned 31.08.24
Deacon T Hume - resigned 31.08.24
A Nicholson
R Taglione
A Wilkinson
J Shuen
J Atherton
D Lowry
M S Ball
R Ward - resigned 31.08.24
E Fellows - resigned 31.08.24
Rev A F Moorhouse - resigned 31.08.24
D Pigeon
N Pigeon
K Stewart
Rev G R Hume - resigned 31.08.24
Rev P D Cleever-Thorpe
Revd Professor D A Wilkinson
Rev J Mooney
Rev Dr G Wilson - resigned 31.01.24
Revd A Wilkinson
R Pickard
Deacon G I Morgan
M E Graham
C L Eke
K I Gilfillan
I Leung
H J Chapman
L Morley
J G Patrick
Rev K M Reader
S D Richardson
S Walker
A Barker
J Anderson

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

D A Stabler
C Hall
S Hutchinson

Circuit Stewards
The Circuit Stewards, who are the treasurers of the Circuit fund, who served during the year and until the date of this report were as follows:
Margaret Graham (Finance)
Carolyn Hall
Keith Gilfillan J.P.
Audrey Ilderton (Senior Circuit Steward)

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

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THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2024. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

PREAMBLE

The Methodist Church is said to have been created after John Wesley's conversion on 24th May 1738; it is a Free Church. The Newcastle Central and East Circuit came into being on 1st September 2009 at the merger of the former Newcastle Heaton & Wallsend and Newcastle Brunswick Central Circuits. The latter was itself formed from a merger in the early 1970's of the Brunswick and Central Circuit & the Sandyford Circuit.

The calling of The Methodist Church is:

Worship: to Increase awareness of God's Presence and celebrate God's love.
Learning and caring: to help people to grow and learn as Christians.
Service: to be a good neighbour to people in need and challenge injustice.
Evangelism: we make more followers of Jesus Christ.

The Circuit's Vision Statement, agreed in May 2023, is as follows:
"Our vision is to be a Circuit of welcoming churches who look to reach and serve our communities, foster values of inclusion and acceptance, nurture and equip our preachers, leaders of worship and lay leaders, and who work in partnership with others to make God's love tangible and accessible to all".

We commit to worship, pray together and celebrate our good news stories; to review our local ministry and mission annually; to identify key strengths and challenges; and to form plans not just for future sustainability but also to include strategies for growth.

OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE

The Circuit is constituted to advance the effective deployment of the resources of ministry, which include people, property and finance, as they relate to the Methodist Churches in the Circuit, the District and Connexion, to Churches of other denominations and to participation in the communities served by the Circuit and in ecumenical work in the area. The Constitution and Enumeration of Circuits is set out year by year in the Stations appointed by the Methodist Conference.

The public benefit can be clearly demonstrated by the Trustees as they have fulfilled the calling of the Methodist Church in maintaining the witness of the church throughout the area which the Circuit serves in parts of Newcastle and North Tyneside. The grants made have enabled the work to continue and people to develop themselves and grow in faith.

The Circuit continues to fulfil its basic role of providing ministers to be in pastoral charge of the Societies (Local Churches) which make up the Circuit and support the churches in various ways including providing financial help for their work. We provide ministers with manses (two manses are owned by The United Reformed Church, Northern Synod) and see that, through the Methodist Church and United Reformed Church Central Services, they are paid their stipends and allowances. Those manses not immediately required have been let on assured short hold leases.

During the year under review, our small team of four Circuit Stewards managed its various tasks and responsibilities, guided as needed by the CPD (The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church): see https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/governance/cpd/. The Circuit Leadership Team comprises all ministers in the Circuit and the Circuit Stewards. The Superintendent Minister and the Stewards normally meet monthly and the Circuit Leadership Team bi-monthly.

The Circuit Stewards are the Lay Leaders of The Circuit. They are Managing Trustees, as are all members of The Circuit Meeting, and as Stewards they are responsible for managing the day-to-day operation of all Circuit affairs in consultation with the Superintendent Minister. The Circuit Meeting (Managing Trustees) meet three times per year.

The life, work, and ministry of the Circuit is underpinned by prayer, public worship and personal commitment to follow Christ. We continue to base our Circuit's mission and our churches growth plans upon the four aspects of 'Our Calling' of The Methodist Church: 'Worship', 'Service', 'Learning & Caring' & 'Evangelism'.

Our churches have continued to explore and develop new ways of worship, learning and caring, introduced during 2020-2021 due to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, often in an on-line context as well as face-to-face gatherings. Whilst this is difficult for those who are less able to access on-line worship and other activities, churches who have been able to expand their on-line presence have continued to see significant numbers of new people engaging with their church's life. This is very encouraging to witness.

As reported last year, one of our Societies, Coxlodge Methodist Church, 'ceased to meet' in September 2022. From September 2023, we have been able to lease the building to a Community Interest Company, Owl Tree Children's Café (https://theowltreechildrenscafe.co.uk/). The arrangement brings in some welcome rental income which is earmarked for mission related activity elsewhere within the Circuit.

There were a few changes to Circuit office holders, as noted in the Minutes of our Circuit Meetings. The Circuit is also served by Ministers of other traditions. The Circuit contributes an annual assessment to The United Reformed Church Northern Synod, to cover the stipends and other expenses of URC ministers stationed in the Circuit. As Revd Dr Grant Wilson retired in February 2024, there is now only one URC minister stationed in the Circuit.

The Circuit continues to be blessed with the continuing ministry of our Supernumeraries; thanks go to Revd Malcolm Newman, Revd Derek Aldridge, Revd Susan Richardson, Revd Ann Shepherdson and Revd Marie Attwood. Local Preachers and Worship Leaders continue to serve the Circuit in their calling. There were six preachers in training, at various stages, during the year: two on trial, one of whom is in pre-ordination training for presbyteral ministry; one who has failed to complete his training and has now been removed from the plan; one who had paused her training but is now back on note; and two on note, one of whom is close to moving to on trial.

The Circuit Leadership Team has not led a specific annual review of our Churches and projects, as required by the Annual Conference of The Methodist Church. Growth or end of life plans were still not feasible, as our churches continued to recover from the pandemic restrictions. However, we were able to review our vision at the February 2023's Circuit Meeting, resulting in a revised Vision statement as outlined above.

CIRCUIT POLICIES

All policies conform as appropriate with guidance and principles as stipulated by the Methodist Church (https://www.methodist.org.uk/) and the CPD.

RISK POLICY

Our Risk Policy covers the following areas:

Financial Risk

The Circuit Meeting is faced with the following financial risks:

- dependency on limited income sources (assessments, investment income and donations);
- managing the capital resources;
- fluctuations in investment income and rental income;
- inability to attract additional donations from the general public and members;
- an unforeseen rise in demand for expenditure (for example on Manses and Chapels);
- an unforeseen increase in the actuarial shortfall on the pension funds for which the Circuit Meeting could be deemed responsible;
- an unforeseen increase in the requirement for an additional manse or other property;
- a sustained fall in the value of investments and property held by the Circuit and appearing in the balance sheet.

Operation, Reputation and Strategy

We have identified the most significant risks as follows:

- inability to create new Methodist disciples resulting in further decline, ultimately resulting in the Methodist Church ceasing to exist;
- failure to provide adequate resources that enable the Circuit Meeting to discharge its responsibilities;
- the experience of Our Calling fails to be integrated into the mission and ministry pathways of the Circuit;
- sudden change in policy or strategic direction enforced by The Circuit Meeting;
- dependency on limited income sources (Assessments, investment income and donations);
- the impact of economic fluctuations on our assets, liabilities and our ability to raise funds to enable us to continue our work;
- an unforeseen increase in the actuarial shortfall on the pension funds for which the Circuit Meeting could be deemed responsible;
- loss of key personnel;
- the continuing effects of 'Brexit' and the coronavirus pandemic;
- we have a large number of lay employees but no Circuit HR Officer.

Many of these risks are likely to remain equally relevant throughout 2024 and beyond.

Risk management

The Methodist Church in Great Britain has a risk management policy, which has been set by the Methodist Council for use both by the Trustees and by Circuits.

The risk management policy is designed to identify and analyse key strategic and operational risks facing the Methodist Church and, where at unacceptable levels, to take steps to mitigate the risks.

We define key strategic and operational risks as those that, without effective or appropriate mitigation, are highly likely to occur and would have a positive or negative impact on the Church's ability to fulfil its purpose of advancing the Christian faith in accordance with its doctrinal standards. These risks are reported to the Managing Trustees through a risk management process, which allows them both to challenge any assumptions the Circuit Leadership team has made about risks and also to understand the context in which decisions are taken. This helps to ensure that the most serious risks are being managed effectively.

The trustees recognise that it is neither possible nor appropriate to seek to eliminate risk entirely. We recognise that risk-taking is inherent within the task of communicating the Gospel; John Wesley himself took risks in establishing the Methodist communities.

Our task, therefore, is to embrace risks that aim to advance the Church's purposes while ensuring that we avoid or minimise those risks that might have a negative impact. Effective risk management processes will help to increase the likelihood of the Church fulfilling its mission. The risk management report is reviewed and revised annually.

INVESTMENT POLICY

Since 2019-2020, the Circuit had built up significant reserves, generated from the sale of West Moor, Allen Memorial, Longbenton and Heaton Methodist Churches and the Burn Terrace flats. The Circuit's unrestricted reserves in August 2023 were £1.4million.

The Circuit Meeting (Trustees) had discussed and considered the notion of investing a significant part of the free reserves, over a couple of meetings. At the May 2022 meeting it was agreed to invest £750,000 in the Central Finance Board (CFB) Managed Mixed Fund which had shown a positive return over a long period. See https://www.cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk/managedfunds/.

The decision of the Trustees was based on the following considerations:

1. The Circuit Meeting has a responsibility, as far as is possible, to protect, manage and conserve the capital for future mission and ministry.
2. The Charities Commission has provided guidance to Charities, seeking to invest cash funds. See https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-and-investment-matters-a-guide-for-trustees-cc14
3. The proposed fund for our investment – The Managed Mixed Fund – is a medium risk investment (that is risk 5 on the scale 0-10).
4. There is much evidence to be confident that the CFB Managed Mixed Fund is both an ethical and a sound medium risk investment. See also the CFB ethics page: https://www.cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk/ethics/ which indicates their ethical policy regarding investments.
5. The staff at the CFB are all salaried employees and are not paid on commission or performance.
6. If the Circuit Meeting wishes to draw from capital that is held in the CFB Managed Mixed Fund then it is possible to do this with about two weeks notice.
7. Interest received from the investments will be used to fund mission and ministry within the Circuit.
8. This will be an investment for the long term and will be reviewed regularly.

PAYMENTS TO STAFF

Ministers

Stipends for Methodist Ministers are determined annually by the Methodist Conference. The Circuit, as the employing body, contributes to their pension fund. They are also given an annual computer allowance.

Lay employees

In 2010 the Methodist Conference agreed that the rates of the Real Living Wage, as published by the Living Wage Foundation, should form the minimum basic salary for people employed by a district, circuit or a local church. This policy also includes young people below the age of 18. In addition, a 9-point salary scale is applied to a person specification, which is based on qualifications, experience and responsibilities. The Circuit is scrupulous in following this policy. Guidelines are available on the Methodist Church website. See https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/employees-and-volunteers/lay-employment-resource/

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The circuit's safeguarding policy is reviewed annually and is now presented at September's Circuit Meeting. All managing trustees are regularly reminded of their responsibilities. The circuit takes its safeguarding responsibilities very seriously, ensuring every church/project is aware of and adheres to its responsibilities, such as displaying its policy, updating its safeguarding information, reviewing its safeguarding policy on an annual basis, and retaining its records in accordance with proper guidelines. We appoint a Circuit Safeguarding Officer who works closely with the Circuit Superintendent, Circuit Administrator, and Circuit Stewards to ensure that our safeguarding responsibilities are reviewed on a regular basis.

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Regular meetings are held with all Church Safeguarding Officers and the Circuit Stewards, to remind them of the forms/declarations which all volunteers need to sign, depending on their individual roles, together with the training which they need to undertake. DBS checks are required for any volunteer whose work brings them into contact with users of our services and projects, and the general public.

COMPLAINTS HANDLING

It is hoped that any conflict situations will be dealt with sensitively by leaders of our local church groups. However, where this is not possible then the Methodist Complaints process will need to be invoked. This will require contact being made with the Local Complaints Officer who is our Circuit Superintendent Minister, Revd Paul Cleever-Thorpe. The process would then be put into effect with the appropriate support being given by our District Reconciliation group.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

To comply with Methodist Church guidance, Trustees are asked at the Circuit Meeting to declare any conflict of interest as soon as they are aware of any possibility that his or her personal or wider interests could influence decision-making within the Circuit. This is a standard agenda item at the beginning of each meeting to allow trustees to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

GRANTMAKING POLICY

The Circuit meeting is minded to make occasional grants from one of the funds. These grants are discretionary and full details are given in the accounts. The funds are:

- The general fund, for example grants to the District Benevolence fund.
- The Model Trust [formerly the Circuit Advance Fund] is exhausted.
- The District City Centre Fund, this is used in the same way as a Model Trust - it is controlled by the Managing Trustees of the District.
- The Susannah Gibson Memorial Fund – grants were awarded for "the sustenance of Wesleyan Methodist Ministers" - no grants have been awarded for a number of years.
- The Doris Nuttall bequest - funds were to be used at the discretion of the Circuit Meeting, but in practice money is used at and on the former South Gosforth Methodist Church – now known as the Trinity Christian Community Centre - which Doris Nuttall attended. The funds in this Trust were exhausted in 2022-2023, and it was closed.
- The Elizabeth Ann Burton bequest - money was left to the former Willington Quay Methodist Church. The Circuit subsequently obtained a Charity Commission Order which allows it to control all the assets of the bequest. It should be noted that, although Mrs Burton passed away in 1972, it was only in February 2011 that the Circuit became aware that there was a substantial sum of money and two Tyneside flats to be transferred to the Circuit. The flats were refurbished and were let to people in need, via the charity Oasis Aquila. Due to problems with the maintenance of the flats, it was decided to sell them in 2020. The proceeds of the sale (£110,028) were received in November 2021 and are to be used for mission in the Circuit. The funds have now been expended and the fund is now closed.
- Bequest funds – these are various small funds that may be used at the discretion of the Circuit meeting, for mission.
- The Deacons' Fund - this fund was created by a vote at the Spring Circuit Meeting 2019, by agreeing to bring together the three remaining small Model Trusts and the balance of the general fund of the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church. In order to achieve this, a Charity Commission Order has been obtained and in the case of trust 1486 the Methodist Council voted to approve the transfer of the W R Dixon gift to the Deacons' Fund. Trust 1486 is a permanent endowment; Trust 5377, capital and income can be used; and Trust 5377B, income can be used and the capital with restrictions. In practice, it is the intention that a Deacon can use the income only, for work in the Wallsend area at their discretion.

There is a further fund which is held and used to maintain the manses and other property owned by the Circuit and two manses owned by the United Reformed Church.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The following reports have been submitted by the individual churches or projects within the Circuit.

Brunswick Methodist Church

Brunswick Methodist Church continues to be a church worshipping and serving at the heart of Newcastle City Centre. In acting as a 'community hub', our building plays host to a number of user groups. We are thankful to both our paid staff and to all our dedicated volunteers who enable our church to be a safe and hospitable space. Our church building is well maintained and an attractive location for groups to meet within.

Brunswick Methodist Church plays host to two congregations - the traditional Brunswick Methodist Church congregation and the Newcastle Chinese Methodist Church congregation. The latter is a Chinese/Hong Konger congregation which has welcomed, over the past three years, over two hundred new people, the majority of whom have moved from Hong Kong under the government's BNO+1 programme. This has meant a far greater usage of our building, as we now work cross-culturally in areas like baptisms, weddings and church membership. Both Cantonese and Mandarin languages are used within our Chinese congregation, but many are wishing to use and to learn English more as they seek to integrate into UK society.

One significant achievement over this period has been the refurbishment of a suite of rooms which were no longer in use and which we intend to repurpose in an exciting way to host a new expression of church called 'Recovery Church'. This is a community of people, many with a non-church background, who are being supported as they seek to recover from an addiction. 'Recovery Church' aims not only to provide consistent support but also to see people in a holistic way and so offer a spiritual 'step programme' which allows them an opportunity to explore the Christian faith in a caring community.

The challenge for a well-used city centre church building always revolves around how it is maintained to a high standard. We currently are budgeting for major anticipated works focusing upon the replacement of our boilers. This will require not only a funding strategy to be put in place for the next church year, but also a longer-term vision which can be embraced by both congregations mentioned above.

Newcastle Chinese Methodist Church.
Since the launch of the Government's BNO+1 scheme in 2021, three years have passed. Over the past year our church has continued to experience a steady influx of new families, with two to three new families visiting and joining worship services each week. At its peak, the congregation grew to between 200 and 300 people. However, over time, due to various reasons, some have left, and the church now has around 200 people attending. Those who have remained are actively involved in the Chinese church, with some receiving baptism and others becoming new members.

In October 2023, the church appointed a new lay employee to help lead the youth fellowship and children's ministry. This gave important support to the Lay Pastor. At the end of his 12 months contract this worker resigned for personal reasons to pursue his own development. The Chinese church is still considering whether to hire a new worker. We hope to find someone who loves God and the church and who can communicate openly and work well with colleagues.

In January 2024, the church elected a new Church Council and Leadership Team. Each newly elected leader is a mature believer with a good reputation both within and outside the church. They are humbly serving the church, quietly and faithfully carrying out good works. It is our belief that through our united services to God and the church, both the congregation and the leadership team will receive God's approval and blessings.

We continue to work in partnership with our friends in the English-speaking congregation at Brunswick and our Leadership Team meets three times each year with the equivalent group from the English church so that we can agree areas of common working. These include united worship services, outreach activities and serving in the Coffee Shop which runs over four mornings each week in our church building.

The Church of the Good Shepherd, Battle Hill
(Anglican, Methodist and United Reformed Church (URC) Local Ecumenical Partnership)
We are thrilled to have welcomed a number of new people into church over this last year and, for the first time in about 10 years, held a Confirmation and Reception into Membership Service for two people. Another is planned for 2025 with three more candidates. This is a direct result of our intentional mission and evangelism, forging relationships with people in the community and those in community groups. Closer working with Uniformed Groups has encouraged greater engagement in church worship services, as well as helping us become more eco-friendly as they built bird, insect and hedgehog boxes for our church and vicarage grounds.

Our strategy to mission and evangelism is one that incorporates all ages:

- Little Shepherds Baby and Toddler Group continues to support families in the local community and share the Christian faith. It is wonderful that some of the little ones have been baptised this year. Pastoral and prayer support for the adults is a significant part of this too.
- Kidz Rock engages with primary age school children, as does our commitment to Open the Book school assemblies. We are members of Wallsend Churches Working Together (our minister chairs the group) and we deliver Bible stories every half term to around 3,000 children in nine Wallsend schools. This has resulted in strong relationships with local schools and more requests for church visits.
- The governance of Hot Chocolate Youth Group now lies with the North Tyneside Local Council (who have successfully secured three years' worth of funding for activities and cost of leaders) but the church engagement continues with our minister present as a volunteer leader on most weeks. This engagement helps reduce anti-social behaviour around church as well as incorporating Christian fellowship and Christian teaching with Secondary school pupils.

- Our new Honest to God twice monthly drop-in session is aimed at adults wanting to find out more about the Christian faith or ask questions and share faith experience in a safe environment. We have also run Advent and Lent courses in person and online. These are valuable sessions of fellowship and faith. The many social activities – Open Mic, music events, quizzes, Warm Space – are wonderful opportunities to invite people into church. Our fellowship and frequency of visits between church and the local care home has grown significantly as a result. Furthermore, and in partnership with Cedarwood Trust, we opened a Pop-Up Shop from January to April to support our community in these difficult financial times.

As one of the original founders we remain committed to outreach through Rising Sun Neighbours (a small group of churches engaging with people in the Rising Sun Country Park). We told the Christmas story and sang carols in December then held a craft stall at the Summer Festival, distributing over 1,000 church invitation leaflets at these events.

Christmas services were once again well supported with over 200 in the congregation on Christmas Eve. There was also incredible support with toy donations for the Salvation Army Christmas Appeal. Our congregation continue to be generous with several other charities. Walking With North Tyneside is supported every week through our food and money donations, as well as volunteer time. Additionally, the generosity of the congregation (plus the generosity of the Circuit with a grant) enabled us to renew our condemned heating boiler (a huge cost!) and we now have a more efficient, more eco-friendly heating system. We have also paid our financial commitments in full again.

We feel blessed by God as we serve Him and our community as a church family.

Jesmond Methodist Church
The congregation at Jesmond continues to flourish. Highlights include a new work with youth and developing links with Shieldfield by releasing the Lay Pastor to build links between the two communities.

The new kitchen and doors have had an immediate result in making the Church more accessible. We find people often just come in, something we have hoped would happen. The new configuration of the church has allowed more space downstairs for continued growth, and a baby and toddler area has been welcomed by new parents.

JMC continued its presence at the Jesmond Community Festival hosting a Quiz Night, our usual Taste event and a Try Church Sunday. Following up with last year's climate change discussion, we have developed our eco policy and introduced systems for recycling, and tweaking what we do to move towards a more sustainable pattern of being.

One significant environmental change was to give plants away as a 'student welcome' event instead of printing lots of information for students, wasting paper and resources. This was highly successful with church members growing cuttings for months so we could give away 200 plants.

JMC has faced challenges but has seen growth in new people being drawn into the community. Space remains an issue and different ways of configuring the chairs to ensure we can get everyone in remains a joyful challenge. We flourish with the support of many who serve in voluntary ways in Leadership, Welcome, Hosting, Preaching, Technology, Musicians, running house groups, and leading kids and youth work. Volunteers help us maintain our building and we have regular user groups providing income through bookings. We continue to have good working relationships with Caffe 1901, which leases our main hall.

JMC has changes coming to its staffing from September 2024 and there are new opportunities to fulfil our mission. We continue to look forward with hope.

St Andrew's Church, Benton
(Methodist and URC LEP)
We continue to be blessed with a rich and varied worship experience with worship leaders provided by the Methodist and URC churches. We offer free refreshments after Sunday morning service which enhances the fellowship shared by regular worshippers and enables us to offer a warm welcome to visitors. We have worshipped outside the church on special occasions; offered a live stream from St Andrew's for some services; run a monthly midweek worship and fellowship as well as Messy Church, which has also delighted all who attend, both young and old.

In addition to our minister, a team of volunteer pastoral carers keep in touch with people on a regular basis. The pastoral team meet at least twice a year to review pastoral needs and ensure that everyone is included in the care coverage. A group also pray on a weekly basis for people or situations. Volunteers deliver flowers each week to those who are unwell or in need of support and sometimes to celebrate a happy event. We supported an Iranian family seeking asylum in the UK who have been granted refugee status and moved to Sheffield. The family expressed their gratitude in an open letter to the church. Members of the congregation keep in touch and provide support when appropriate, reminding us that distance does not preclude fellowship.

Junior Church has been led by two dedicated church volunteers with the regular assistance of one enthusiastic church member and the occasional support of parents. The number of children attending Junior Church continues to fluctuate and there is a wide age range. In recent months the Junior Church has returned to join the rest of the congregation at the end of services and join when communion is shared.

Currently we have 8 families who have children on the cradle roll with whom we keep in touch. They all receive the church magazine and the children receive birthday, Easter, and Christmas cards. During the year our minister officiated at two infant baptisms and two infant blessing/thanksgiving services. Our cradle roll secretary encourages the families and children to attend relevant church services or events that will help them on their Christian journey.

The 4th Newcastle Girls' Brigade meets in the church each week, is growing in number and is run by trained volunteer leaders. Each age group follows their own appropriate themed programme materials. All girls and young women work towards badges to reward and celebrate their achievements. The group has taken part in a Sunday service which included leading the singing and sharing a video podcast of what being brave means to them as women.

At the end of the year the membership numbers were calculated to be 107. Whilst some of our members are now unable to attend church services, we do enjoy welcoming other regular churchgoers or visitors each week. We are normally blessed to have a full congregation of over 70 attenders at Sunday morning services.

We have a dedicated editor who puts together a church magazine – Tidings - on 10 occasions each year covering the whole year. The magazine has been a part of church life for many decades and is appreciated by many inside and outside the church far and wide. The magazine content features a message from the minister, a diary of church activities, church news and looking forward or back at church related events.

Many from the church participated in the Christmas knitted angels outreach project. Over 1000 angels were distributed by the churches in our area, providing blessing and encouragement to recipients.

The premises are also well used by many external groups, and some have been carrying out their activities in the church for many years and are well known in the local communities.

We support the connexional funds of the Methodist and United Reform Churches in Britain. The church regularly supports several UK charities that operate locally or globally. This year money was sent to support local causes through the Cedarwood Trust, the Newcastle West End Foodbank and Walking With. Appeals for the Middle East crisis; Gaza; the Libya floods and the Morocco earthquake were also supported. Church donations are made from the church CARE Fund, which represents 2% of all offerings and related Gift Aid, or by special collections during the year. In total we donated £8,305 this year.

As well as routine maintenance on the building, the church is seeking to make the building more energy efficient, with an initial focus on renewing older windows with double glazed units.

St Cuthbert's Church, Heaton
(Methodist and URC LEP)
After a time of uncertainty following the retirement of our minister, Revd Grant Wilson, in January 2024, we were advised that Revd Paul Cleever-Thorpe had been appointed as our minister, sharing his time with Brunswick and the Chinese church. We look forward to welcoming Paul at his first service on 1st September, hopefully with a lunch where he can meet the congregation informally. We are looking forward to working with Paul.

Our Wives & Friends Group continues to meet on alternate Tuesday afternoons which means that the ladies (most of whom are older) are able to enjoy mixing with others and then go home before dark. There are around 20 ladies most afternoons. Sadly, the Girl's Brigade closed in July. Their numbers had been dropping over the years and after many years the decision was taken to close. We wished the Team leader and others connected best wishes and our thanks for their loyal service over the years.

The building is still being used by Newcastle Christian Tabernacle on two evenings each week and on Sunday afternoons. St Cuthbert's are still part of Heaton Churches Together and take part on events which are shared by the churches of Heaton and High Heaton.

The church gardens at the side of the church which are maintained by two of our congregation are still appreciated by the local community who, it seems, still think of St Cuthbert's as "their church" even though not many of them attend church services.

On the recommendation of the Finance Committee, the church agreed to undertake the necessary repairs to the building as highlighted in the 2019 quinquennial survey. Although the church had to utilise an extensive amount of its reserves to cover the cost of the repairs, we were grateful to be awarded funds from various grant making bodies. The quinquennial reports of 2014 and 2019 highlighted problems with the roof/chimneys etc - and this work was completed in the summer of 2023. However, there was a further URC Synod quinquennial survey undertaken in March 2024 which highlighted major problems with the exterior wall on the premises. This is now being dealt with as a matter of urgency.

Church of St John the Evangelist, Kingston Park
(Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and URC LEP)
This has been a year of steady progress. Recorded membership has increased slightly, and attendance at services has grown throughout the year, with over 100 people regularly attending services. We continue our initiative to encourage new attendees to become members and, just as importantly, to volunteer in supporting our work. Our Bible study groups have expanded both online via Zoom and in person, and this has been positively received with increased attendance.

We have continued to offer a range of outreach events to the community, including a successful Easter egg hunt and Harvest activities, combined with Messy Church sessions, with each event attracting over 50 children. The major event of the year was our Party in the Park fun family day, which featured fairground rides, local community groups, stalls, and faith-based music. It was a great success. We held our carol singing events at Marks & Spencer and Tesco to raise funds for West End refugees and Action for Children. Members have been very active in the collection of shoeboxes from across Northumberland and North Durham.

Our bookings have improved throughout the year. We are blessed to have accommodated new groups, whose activities have placed St John's at the centre of our community.

We are in the throes of fundraising for the renewal of our heating boilers. To date, we have been blessed to receive grants from the following: Wesley Orphan House Trust (£2,000), Benefact Trust (£1,750), Northumbria Historic Trust (£3,000), and Garfield Weston Foundation (£3,500). We hope to complete the installation in the new year.

Our Methodist minister, Adele Moorhouse, retires in August 2024. She will be greatly missed, but we are delighted that the Methodist Church has arranged for Deacon Jill Henderson to join us on a part-time basis from 1st September. We are hopeful that our longstanding Anglican vacancy will be filled in early 2025.

Trinity Church, Gosforth
(Methodist and URC LEP)
Trinity Church is a Local Ecumenical Partnership of the Methodist and United Reformed Churches.
"The purpose of the charity is to advance the Christian faith in the area of benefit in accordance with the principles and practices of the participating churches."

We have continued to benefit from our prominent location on Gosforth High Street. Every Sunday there are newcomers in worship, and we aim to provide a hospitable welcome and spiritual support to all. We have taken steps to make our worship more accessible, e.g. providing large-print hymn books for people who have difficulty reading words from the screens, along with sermon notes. We continue to stream our services on YouTube, with between 50 and 100 weekly views. Additionally, a printed service is posted out every week to about 25 housebound members without internet access. In-person attendance at Sunday morning worship averages 100.

Christmas 2023 was successful with well attended carol service, children's crib service, and Christmas Day celebrations, including many visitors. Easter was similarly celebrated with well attended Good Friday & Easter Day services.

Our ministry with children and young people continues to thrive, facilitated by our part-time Children and Families Worker. We have enjoyed welcoming class visits from nearby schools. Our popular Toddler Group always has a waiting list. Our Sunday evening youth group is still meeting. Several of our families went to the Cedarwood Festival in July, supported by a grant from Northern Synod & help from Trinity.

Our various groups and activities for adults are also doing well. Our Warm Welcome Space on Friday mornings continues, most of the people who come relate to the Church, but there are often others who come in for a warm drink and some company. This provision will continue through the coming winter. We have opened our Church on Tuesdays & Fridays for private prayer & reflection, with visitors attending. A Men's Shed continues to operate weekly & is attended by non-church people who appreciate it. This year we have conducted several child baptism/dedications & an adult baptismal service.

Our Community Centres are important hubs for the local community. We enjoy a good relationship with our hirers, most of whom are community-based groups or businesses, and we view the hospitality we give in our well-appointed and serviced rooms as an expression of our faith and mission. Caffe 1901 provides a welcoming introduction to the Centre. Both Centres are open 7 days a week. About 2,500 people come into Trinity in a typical week, and another 250 at Trinity Christian Community Centre in South Gosforth.

Trinity, both Church and Centres, values the participation of dozens of volunteers, who give a huge amount of their time and skills in a variety of ways, including Young Church, music, welcoming, catering, leading Bible-study groups, pastoral care, buildings maintenance, finance and much more.

Church finances are always challenging, but our members continue to give generously. We covered all payments in the year, including £4,100 to local charities, agreed by Church Council. Also, from specified members' giving we raised £9500 for the Walker & District Foodbank. Property maintenance has been in the region of £21,000 which has been managed well.

It has been another good year for Trinity. We don't take this for granted but continually look to God to lead and equip us to fulfil His purpose in the coming years. We look forward to welcoming our new Deacon in September, who will no doubt take us forward.

Trinity Methodist Church, Wallsend
The congregation on Sunday's is fairly constant with an average of 20 – 25. We have welcomed into our church community someone who comes with their carer. His carer says they feel so welcomed and part of the church family. We continue to record worship which goes out on the YouTube channel and continues to enable people to feel connected in all parts of the world.

Our church hall continues to be used by Scouts, Bloom Babies, Line Dancing and the Circuit's project, Hand in Hand. There is an appreciation of the facilities on offer. We have an active Girls Brigade Group which has grown considerably in the last twelve months. This is in part a result of our involvement and building of relationships in a local school.

The Youth Club regularly has about 30 young people each week. This has been held at Trinity on a Friday evening for decades. There is nowhere for young people to go in Wallsend, so this is a much-needed service. These groups rely on volunteers, and we are pleased that we have people not connected with church to enable these groups to function. We have a team who continue to go into schools offering Open the Book, this has resulted in visits to the Church by Year 1 and a deepening of relationships.

We held a harvest meal which was welcomed and well received by 60 people mainly from the community. We have a new Fellowship Group that meets once a month. We share lunch and have a varied conversation. In response to Warm Space initiative, we opened on a Saturday morning. People from the community, usually around 25, were welcomed and offered hospitality. Following the ending of the Warm Space in initiative, we have introduced a coffee morning as part of our mission. We regularly welcome 25 – 30 people and relationships are forming.

For a small church, Trinity is a hub for the community and welcomes all into its midst.

The Wesley Orphan House Trust (WOHT)
The WOHT derives its income from ground rent from the site of the former 'Orphan House' on Northumberland Street in Newcastle upon Tyne. The trust also receives a small sum from investments.

The trust budgets to have approximately £25,000 available annually for grants and favours work with children, the vulnerable, education purposes and property works.
In 2023/2024, thirteen grants were made totalling £34,175. These grants were a numeric and financial increase to those made in 2022/2023 whereby we were able to exceed our budget.

Rolling grants were maintained over three or five years to Action for Children (Newcastle) and The Wesley Study Centre (Durham).

Individual grants were made to: St John's Kingston Park, Church of the Good Shepherd, Battle Hill, Lanchester Boys Brigade, Newcastle West End Refugees Service, Shieldfield Art Works @ The Holy Biscuit, FOCUS at Easington Methodist Church, Ponteland Methodist Church, Trinity Christian Community Centre at South Gosforth Methodist Church, Brunswick Methodist Church, SEARCH West End Project and Houghton le Spring Methodist Church.

Further information about the trust and grant application forms are available via our website which is linked to the Newcastle Central and East Circuit website, see Wesley Orphan House Trust - Newcastle Central and East Methodist Circuit (newcastlecentralmethodist.org.uk)

Hand in Hand
There are two Hand in Hand Clubs in the circuit.

Wallsend
Hand in Hand meets weekly on a Tuesday in Trinity Methodist Church. The aim is to reduce and prevent loneliness and social isolation in older people. We have had some new members join and there is an average of 18 attending weekly.

Each week our members are welcomed with a cup of tea and then enjoy a two-course home cooked traditional lunch. This is followed by a wide range of activities including reminiscing, quizzes, slide shows, games, chair exercises and crafts.

The kitchen team (both volunteers) provide good quality food every week. The menu is varied and nutritious, and the feedback from our members always enthusiastic. For those who come it is something to look forward to during the week, a reason to get dressed and go out. It is an opportunity to meet up with friends and make new friendships. It is a time to relax and have fun, to laugh with friends and forget everyday fears and worries. It's a community whose members care for and support one another.

All this couldn't be done without the dedicated help of our five volunteers and one paid circuit lay worker, the Co – Ordinator.

With the cost of living rising all the time we know we cannot raise what members pay each week, and therefore we rely on grants. The circuit agreed to give us a grant of £5,000 towards the salary for the year 2023 – 2024. This generous act, along with our own fund raising, enables us to continue to offer a much-needed service.

Heaton
Hand in Hand meets in St George's URC, High Heaton, and is run by two retired Salvation Army officers who work hard to create a welcoming atmosphere.

Since moving to St George's, they have had new members join and the number attending averages 15. They enjoy quizzes, talks and photograph afternoons. Once a month they have a hot lunch.

St George's see the Club as part of their mission and did not want any rent. The Club gives them a donation towards heating and lighting every term. We are grateful for their generosity, which means the Club is financially viable.

Methodist Women in Britain (MWIB)
The twice a year retreats at Minsteracres continue to be highlights of the Newcastle District's MWiB calendar.

The MWiB always feel warmly welcomed and the staff there say that 'the place comes alive' when they visit as the singing nearly lifts the roof off!

A well-attended Away Day in September 2023 was a good time of fellowship, incorporating a service and craft activity. On 25th November 2023 at Brunswick Methodist Church the MWiB held their annual service to dedicate their President Designate, Rosemary Gray, and recommission all their other officers. As in previous years, Rev. Stephen Lindridge was the preacher.

For World Church Day on 22nd June 2024 the MWIB enjoyed a talk by Sheila Holland, former Mission Partner in Nepal and Togo, at Wylam Methodist Church, followed by a shared lunch. A bring and share District dinner was held at Prudhoe Methodist Church on 14th August 2024 and included a quiz and musical entertainment.

During the year £9,000 was raised for the President's projects, All We Can and Médecins sans Frontiéres and was equally allocated.

A new email newsletter is being circulated three times a year which keeps everybody up to date with any events taking place.

Presence Project, Walker
Heather Farrow continued to work from Treetops village, providing support to the residents and community users in this space, and working in partnership with the other community projects in the area. However, lack of support has taken its toll on her and in early summer 2024 she became ill and was on sick leave for some time. Eventually, she decided to resign with immediate effect in September. This was discussed at Circuit level and a decision was made to end the project. We did wish Heather well in the future and she has maintained contact at District Level.

Shieldfield Art Works (SAW) @ The Holy Biscuit

***Shieldfield Grows*:** This year we have had 98 individuals engage in total, 30 weekly growing sessions, 7 local families without their own garden space adopted a growing plot within the SAW Garden, 6 workshops with professionals, 5 trips to local community gardens, 3 community festivals, bringing people together in celebration, 3 'Little Growers' children's sessions and 8 'Lettuce Eat' bring & share lunches.
"I love the Shieldfield grows group helping to create the garden, planting apple trees and learning so much about growing and eating your own produce is such a joy!"

SAW Reflects: An informal discussion event at SAW where we gather to reflect on how an art work or occasion relates to ourselves, our world and our beliefs. In our 2023-24 programme: 109 individuals took part across 8 events, considering 5 different art exhibitions at SAW and 3 wider themes. We formed a 'SAW Reflectors' focus group to provide insight and feedback about SAW Reflects events.
"I felt really connected and inspired by the discussions happening around me, and SAW provide a great space for being with open hearted people".

Craft Action Collective: This year, we've thought about: hope and how to find it; river and ocean pollution (to tie in with *Oceans of Kindness);* climate change and eco-friendly materials. Crafts have included: drypoint printing, mobile making, making stamps with cork, letterpress printing and paper marbling. There is a committed group of regular attendees whose confidence continues to grow.
"Craft action collective has helped my self-confidence. I have met some lovely people which has helped with loneliness. Doing whichever craft activity we are doing makes me feel more positive and happier."

Painting for Fun: This year we have increased our classes from two sessions to three sessions a week! With a focus on painting as a way to relax, the group provides a weekly safe haven to chat, be creative and be with other people in a no-pressure environment.
"I suffer from anxiety and depression and having somewhere calming to come to and be creative has a positive uplifting effect"

Exhibitions

SAW's programme of exhibitions and events is expansive, and always goes beyond simply displaying artworks. This year we had 6 exhibitions looking at historical and current tendencies toward victim blaming, an experimental approach to film-making to collaboratively identify and articulate the stories of Shieldfield, the cumulative power of words, creativity and kindness (engaging 55 local school children), and wellbeing.
"There may be no steeple, or rows of pews to sit on. No stained glass windows. However the love that wraps around this building just continues to grow."
'The exhibition provided real food for thought."
"The film was very thought-provoking and made me think about my own connection to the community, and my role in shaping it. I really enjoyed different people's stories and perspectives, it made me laugh."
"I hadn't picked up a paint brush since O Level art, nearly 50 years ago. It was a scary prospect. However, I have produced two paintings for the SAW exhibition."

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position

Income for the year ended 31 August 2024 totaled £795,979 (2023: £818,704) resulting in a surplus for the year of £330,454 (2023: £150,383). Funds totaled £2,308,156 at the year end, of which £14,849 are restricted funds, which are held for special purpose of The Holy Biscuit, and £2,393 are endowment funds. Unrestricted reserves total £656,230 which includes those held for special purpose of £70,882 The Holy Biscuit, £4,776 Hand in hand and £320 Methodist Women in Britain. Designated funds at the end of the year amounted to £1,634,684.

Reserves policy - general funds
The definition of reserves is: "income which becomes available to the charity and is to be expended at the trustees' discretion in furtherance of the charity's objects, but which is not yet spent, committed or designated." The free reserves of the charity therefore exclude endowments, restricted funds, designated funds and funds already invested in fixed assets. Free reserves of the charity at the year end amounted to £67,992.

The reserves policy for the general and manse funds of the Circuit agreed by the trustees is to hold the equivalent of the relevant annual expenditure, plus an estimate of any known fluctuations. These reserves are held in the Central Finance Board deposit account. The unrestricted funds are currently below the policy, the Circuit Managing Trustees are concerned about this and mindful to address the situation as soon as possible. There are plans to balance the budget over the following two or three years and then start to re-build reserves. Should there be a funding crisis then the Managing Trustees would make an appeal to the Local Churches.

Structure, governance and management
The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust and constitutes an unincorporated charity. The charity's treasurers of the Circuit Funds are the lay Circuit Stewards. Of the Managing Trustees listed previously, all are lay people excepting the fourteen ministerial staff, two of whom are retired; one is Principal of St John's College Durham, one is chaplain at Pilgrims Court Methodist Homes Jesmond. Circuit meetings are generally held three times a year and include representatives of all the Societies (local churches) and projects in the Circuit. The Superintendent Minister (who supervises the work of the other Ministers in the Circuit) reports to this meeting as do the Circuit Stewards.

The governing body of the Circuit is the annual conference of The Methodist Church. The Methodist Church Act 1976 gives the authority under which The Methodist Church acts. The constitution practice and discipline of The Methodist Church (2019 edition) together with The Deed of Union (Act of 1929 adopted 1932) govern the activities of the Circuit.

In general, The Methodist Church is excepted from the need to register as a charity by the combined effects of Section 46(4) (A) of the Charities Act 1993 and Paragraph 4(2) (C) of the Charities (exception from registration) Regulations 1996 as amended by Statutory Instrument 2014 No 242. The Circuit, however, is a separate Registered Charity, number 1134265, in England and Wales.

The Trustees who have served during the year and since the year-end are set out on the legal and administration pages. The treasurers (Circuit Stewards) are appointed annually by the Circuit Meeting and the Managing Trustees are appointed either by: (a) the Societies of which they are members; (b) the Preachers' Meeting; or (c) by being ex-officio (Ministers in good standing or holding a District or Connexional Office or duly appointed Lay Workers). In practice, up to seven Circuit Stewards may be appointed who serve, generally, for a minimum of 3 years and a maximum of 6.

The principal address of the Circuit's auditors, bankers, solicitors and other advisors are given as part of the reference and administrative details.

The Circuit Stewards, acting as Treasurers, are responsible for the detailed examination of the Financial Statements and for recommending their adoption by the Circuit Meeting. One of their number is designated 'Treasurer' and her main role is to manage the finances of the Circuit, assisted by the Circuit Accounts Administrator.

The Circuit is one of 12 of the Newcastle District and has 9 Local Churches [12 premises], of which 5 are Local Ecumenical Partnerships. They are contactable via the principal address of the Circuit. Funds are transferred to the Circuit on a regular basis to meet the commitments to the District and the upkeep of the Circuit.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

Alison Wilkinson

Rev A Wilkinson - Trustee
Dated: 20-7-2025

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The Newcastle Central and East Circuit of the Methodist Church (the charity) for the year ended 31 August 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of ACCA, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3 the financial statements 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 financial statements to be reached.

NC

Nicholas Cunningham FCCA
Robson Laidler Accountants Limited
Fernwood House
Fernwood Road
Jesmond
Newcastle Upon Tyne
Tyne and Wear
NE2 1TJ

Dated: 5-b-2025

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Current financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Endowment funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Income from:						
Donations and legacies	**2**	649,307	3,317	-	652,624	717,462
Other trading activities	**3**	6,475	-	-	6,475	6,224
Investments	**4**	136,817	-	63	136,880	95,018
Total income and endowments		792,599	3,317	63	795,979	818,704
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds		15	-	6	21	21
Charitable activities	**5**	727,256	509	-	727,765	636,095
Total resources expended		727,271	509	6	727,786	636,116
Net gains/(losses) on investments		262,074	-	187	262,261	(32,205)
Net movement in funds		327,402	2,808	244	330,454	150,383
Fund balances at 1 September 2023		1,963,512	12,041	2,149	1,977,702	1,827,319
Fund balances at 31 August 2024		2,290,914	14,849	2,393	2,308,156	1,977,702

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Prior financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Endowment funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	2	476,758	240,704	-	717,462
Other trading activities	3	6,224	-	-	6,224
Investments	4	28,322	66,632	64	95,018
Total income and endowments		511,304	307,336	64	818,704
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		15	-	6	21
Charitable activities	5	599,235	36,860	-	636,095
Total resources expended		599,250	36,860	6	636,116
Net gains/(losses) on investments		(217)	(31,929)	(59)	(32,205)
Net incoming resources before transfers		(88,163)	238,547	(1)	150,383
Gross transfers between funds		1,598,303	(1,598,179)	(124)	-
Net movement in funds		1,510,140	(1,359,632)	(125)	150,383
Fund balances at 1 September 2022		453,372	1,371,673	2,274	1,827,319
Fund balances at 31 August 2023		1,963,512	12,041	2,149	1,977,702

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	12		272,260		309,585
Investment properties	11		240,000		-
			512,260		309,585
Current assets					
Debtors	13	9,539		17,063	
Investments	14	783,503		727,234	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,056,185		929,594	
		1,849,227		1,673,891	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	(53,331)		(5,774)	
Net current assets			1,795,896		1,668,117
Total assets less current liabilities			2,308,156		1,977,702
Capital funds					
Endowment funds - general	20		2,393		2,149
Income funds					
Restricted funds	18		14,849		12,041
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds	19	1,634,684		1,522,391	
General unrestricted funds		656,230		441,121	
			2,290,914		1,963,512
			2,308,156		1,977,702

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 20.3.2025

C Susan Wilkinson

Rev A Wilkinson - Trustee

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	26		(10,281)		100,446
Investing activities					
Proceeds from disposal of investments		(8)		5	
Investment income received		136,880		95,018	
Net cash generated from investing activities			136,872		95,023
Financing activities					
Payment of finance leases obligations		-		(3,297)	
Net cash used in financing activities			-		(3,297)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents			126,591		192,172
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			929,594		737,422
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			1,056,185		929,594

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Newcastle Central and East Circuit of the Methodist Church is a unincorporated charity (charity number (1134265).

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

1.5 Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Freehold land and buildings	straight line over 100 years
Computers	straight line over 3 years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Investment properties

Investment property, which is property held to earn rentals and/or for capital appreciation, is initially recognised at cost, which includes the purchase cost and any directly attributable expenditure. Subsequently it is measured at fair value at the reporting end date. The surplus or deficit on revaluation is recognised in profit or loss.

1.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

2 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2024	2024	2024	2023	2023	2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Donations and gifts	155	-	155	-	-	-
Assessments	358,255	-	358,255	363,123	-	363,123
Grants receivable	-	-	-	10,000	2,815	12,815
Administration	79,402	3,317	82,719	84,454	15,980	100,434
Other	211,495	-	211,495	19,181	221,909	241,090
	649,307	3,317	652,624	476,758	240,704	717,462

Other
Included in other income is a £182,000 in relation to a refund of a previous contribution towards the pension fund deficit.

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Unrestricted funds 2023
	£	£
Other trading activities		
Books & telephone income	6,375	5,996
Sundry income	100	228
	6,475	6,224

4 Investments

	Unrestricted funds	Endowment funds general	Total	Total
	2024	2024	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Rental income	56,844	-	56,844	45,333
Income from unlisted investments	21,749	-	21,749	22,178
Interest receivable	58,224	63	58,287	27,507
	136,817	63	136,880	95,018

5 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Charitable activities 2024 £	Charitable activities 2023 £
Direct costs		
Staff costs	329,979	326,260
Depreciation and impairment	3,325	3,665
Gifts and donations	1,230	628
Assessments	109,065	98,290
Travel	12,405	13,786
Repairs and property costs	88,377	66,761
Connexional funds	-	376
Pulpit supply	2,004	2,025
The Holy Biscuit costs	109,097	82,426
Hand in Hand costs	7,625	8,639
	663,107	602,856
Grant funding of activities (see note 6)	24,781	12,652
Share of support and governance costs (see note 7)		
Support	21,700	15,662
Governance	18,177	4,925
	727,765	636,095
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	727,256	599,235
Restricted funds	509	36,860
	727,765	636,095

6 Grants payable

	Charitable activities 2024 £	Charitable activities 2023 £
Grants to institutions:		
Trinity Christian Community Centre	-	375
MINE	5,375	7,143
Newcastle Chinese Methodist Church	4,939	-
Brunswick Methodist Church	7,467	4,934
Jesmond Methodist Church	7,000	200
	24,781	12,652

7 Support costs allocated to activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Telephone	9,399	8,663
Postage & stationery	6,802	4,666
Sundries	5,499	2,333
Governance costs	18,177	4,925
	39,877	20,587
Analysed between:		
Charitable activities	39,877	20,587

Governance costs comprise:	2024 £	2023 £
Independent examiner's fee	4,663	4,452
Professional services	13,514	473
	18,177	4,925

8 Trustees

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 August 2024 nor for the year ended 31 August 2023.

Trustees expenses
The aggregate amount of travelling and subsistence expenses reimbursed to the trustees during the year was £15,685 (2023: £13,596). The number of persons reimbursed was 13 (2023: 9).

9 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2024 Number	2023 Number
Direct charitable expenditure	9	9
Management and admin of the charity	2	2
Total	11	11

Employment costs	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	255,085	250,987
Social security costs	20,942	20,744
Other pension costs	53,952	54,529
	329,979	326,260

The key management personnel of the charity include the circuit stewards, the superintendent and other ministers who are all managing trustees. Total employee benefits of the key management personnel for the year were £37,584 (2023: £34,788).

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

10 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

11 Investment property

	2024 £
Fair value	
At 1 September 2023	-
Transfers from owner-occupied property	34,000
Net gains or losses through fair value adjustments	206,000
At 31 August 2024	240,000

The investment properties were revalued by trustees on 31 August 2024. The valuation was made on an open market basis by reference to market evidence of transaction prices for similar properties, which the trustees believe represents fair value.

11 Investment property (Continued)

	2024	2023
	£	£
Freehold	240,000	-

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings	Computers	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1 September 2023	366,467	10,827	377,294
Transfer to investment property	(34,000)	-	(34,000)
At 31 August 2024	332,467	10,827	343,294
Depreciation and impairment			
At 1 September 2023	56,882	10,827	67,709
Depreciation charged in the year	3,325	-	3,325
At 31 August 2024	60,207	10,827	71,034
Carrying amount			
At 31 August 2024	272,260	-	272,260
At 31 August 2023	309,585	-	309,585

13 Debtors

	2024	2023
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Other debtors	3,800	7,593
Prepayments and accrued income	5,739	9,470
	9,539	17,063

14 Current asset investments

	2024	2023
	£	£
Unlisted investments	783,503	727,234

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Accruals and deferred income	53,331	5,774

16 Retirement benefit schemes

Defined contribution schemes	2024 £	2023 £
Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes	53,952	54,529

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund.

17 Operating lease commitments

Lessee

Amounts recognised in profit or loss as an expense during the period in respect of operating lease arrangements are as follows:

At the reporting end date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Within one year	3,593	3,593
Between two and five years	8,983	12,576
	12,576	16,169

18 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

	At 1 September 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Gains and losses	At 31 August 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Shieldfield Arftworks	12,041	3,317	(509)	-	-	14,849

18 Restricted funds (Continued)

Previous year:	At 1 September 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Gains and losses	At 31 August 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Dorris Nuttal bequest	5	-	-	(5)	-	-
Property Fund	1,360,468	288,541	(18,906)	(1,598,174)	(31,929)	-
Shieldfield Arftworks	11,200	18,795	(17,954)	-	-	12,041
	1,371,673	307,336	36,860	(1,598,179)	(31,929)	12,041

19 Designated funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

	Balance at 1 September 2023	Transfers	Balance at 31 August 2024
	£	£	£
Property Fund	1,522,391	112,293	1,634,684
	1,522,391	112,293	1,634,684

The Property Fund
This fund represents funds relating to the sale, letting or other disposition of land which is Circuit property. The authority to sanction schemes for the application of capital money in the fund rests with the Circuit meeting, subject to approval by the Synod. The fund is represented by investments and or cash.

20 Endowment funds

Endowment funds represent assets which must be held permanently by the charity. Income arising on the endowment funds can be used in accordance with the objects of the charity and is included as unrestricted income. Any capital gains or losses arising on the assets form part of the fund.

		Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 September 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Gains and losses	Balance at 31 August 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Permanent endowments						
The Susannah Gibson memorial fund	518	12	(2)	-	64	592
WR Dixon gift	1,631	51	(4)	-	123	1,801
	2,149	63	(6)	-	187	2,393

21 Unrestricted funds

General Funds
These are funds that are available to be spent for any purpose by the charity.

Methodist Women in Britain
The Methodist Women in Britain, previously known as The Network Group and sometimes referred to as the Circuit Network, is a fellowship aimed at women of all ages within the church, who support each other and raise funds each year for 'the Easter offering', a Connexionally designated charity of the year. There are pastoral groups, fellowships and social activities. A small amount of the group's income is used for administrative costs, but most money is handed on to support the wider church.

Hand in Hand
A project was founded more than ten years ago by the former Heaton and Wallsend Circuit, based at Trinity Church Wallsend, serving the elderly and isolated in Wallsend. As time passed, the project expanded and provided lunch clubs, reminiscence and activity clubs as well as a befriending and visiting in homes service in Wallsend, Heaton, Longbenton and other places in North Tyneside. About seven years ago the project grew rapidly because of Lottery grant funding. Sadly when the grant finished in 2017, the management committee was unable to find a follow on funder and the project shrank significantly and now only operates from Trinity and Heaton Methodist Churches. Consequently, Hand in Hand has returned to be completely controlled by the Circuit with a small management group chaired by Rev'd Gavin Hume and legacy funds are being used to ensure that there are high quality lunch and activity clubs.

Shieldfield Art Works At The Holy Biscuit
Shieldfield Methodist Church closed as Local Church or Society, and in about 2006 the premises were rented to various organisations including a local radio station. By 2009 there was a proposal to sell the site but Rev'd Rob Hawkins in consultation with local businessman Ramy Zac, proposed a radical suggestion to develop and arts expression of Church, a form of Fresh Expressions of Church, using the premises. Mr Zac said that he would carry out, at his expense, a major refurbishment and Rob would set up the organisation of what quickly became known as The Holy Biscuit - it being opposite the Biscuit Factory art gallery. Until recently it has operated as a separate fund, but it is now felt that it should be an internal organisation of the Circuit, which 'owns' it.

The project has grown and now receives significant grants from the Methodist Connexional grants committee and is seen as an integral part of the arts scene in Newcastle. There are links to both universities in Newcastle and the one in Sunderland as well as the Ouseburn arts community. The Holy Biscuit is now reaching out to the local community, schools and other churches in Shieldfield. As well as providing gallery space, the premises are well used, for example, painting for fun (working with those who have health problems), schools work and church with a difference mid-week services.

The Walker Benevolent Fund
This fund represents funds that have been set aside for use at the discretion of the Deacon and had been exhausted during the year.

The Deacon Fund
This fund represents Model Trust funds transferred from the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church, the capital and income from which can be used at the discretion of the Deacon.

The Dixon bequests
This fund represents Model Trust funds transferred from the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church, the income from which can be used at the discretion of the Deacon and capital may be used with certain restrictions.

22 Restricted and endowment funds

Restricted Funds

The Doris Nuttal bequest

This fund represents funds donated to the Circuit, in practice used to provide for the repair and refurbishment of the Trinity Christian Community Centre. The fund is held in cash.

The Property Fund

This fund represents funds relating to the sale, letting or other disposition of land which is Circuit property. The authority to sanction schemes for the application of capital money in the fund rests with the Circuit meeting, subject to approval by the Synod. The fund is represented by investments and or cash.

Shieldfield Art Works At The Holy Biscuit

Shieldfield Methodist Church closed as Local Church or Society, and in about 2006 the premises were rented to various organisations including a local radio station. By 2009 there was a proposal to sell the site but Rev'd Rob Hawkins in consultation with local businessman Ramy Zac, proposed a radical suggestion to develop and arts expression of Church, a form of Fresh Expressions of Church, using the premises. Mr Zac said that he would carry out, at his expense, a major refurbishment and Rob would set up the organisation of what quickly became known as The Holy Biscuit - it being opposite the Biscuit Factory art gallery. Until recently it has operated as a separate fund, but it is now felt that it should be an internal organisation of the Circuit, which 'owns' it.

The project has grown and now receives significant grants, some of which are restricted, from the Methodist Connexional grants committee and is seen as an integral part of the arts scene in Newcastle. There are links to both universities in Newcastle and the one in Sunderland as well as the Ouseburn arts community. The Holy Biscuit is now reaching out to the local community, schools and other churches in Shieldfield. As well as providing gallery space, the premises are well used, for example, painting for fun (working with those who have health problems), schools work and church with a difference mid-week services.

Endowment Funds

The Susannah Gibson Memorial Fund

This fund represents monies left to the church in 1880 by the late Susannah Gibson, the income from which can be used 'for the sustenance of Wesleyan Ministers'.

The WR Dixon Gift

This fund represents Model Trust funds transferred from the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church and is used at the discretion of the deacon.

23 Transfers

Transfers between restricted and unrestricted reserves relate to restrictions no longer applied to the Property Fund. The balance on this fund has been transferred to a designated fund for use within the Newcastle area.

24 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2023 - none).

25 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Endowment funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Fund balances at 31 August 2024 are represented by:					
Tangible assets	272,260	-	-	272,260	309,585
Investment properties	240,000	-	-	240,000	-
Current assets/(liabilities)	1,778,654	14,849	2,393	1,795,896	1,668,117
	2,290,914	14,849	2,393	2,308,156	1,977,702

26 Cash generated from operations

	2024 £	2023 £
Surplus for the year	330,454	150,383
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(136,880)	(95,018)
Fair value gains and losses on investment properties	(206,000)	-
Fair value gains and losses on investments	(56,261)	32,205
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	3,325	3,665
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease in debtors	7,524	8,575
Increase in creditors	47,557	636
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	(10,281)	100,446

27 Analysis of changes in net funds

The charity had no material debt during the year.

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1134265

Accounts

Charity registration number 1134265

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Charity number	1134265
Principal address	Brunswick Methodist Church Brunswick Place Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear NE1 7BJ
Independent examiner	Robson Laidler Accountants Limited Fernwood House Fernwood Road Jesmond Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 2TJ
Bankers	Lloyds Bank plc 102 Grey Street Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7BJ Central Finance Board of the Methodists Church 9 Bonhill Street London EC2A 4PE
Solicitors	Sintons LLP The Cube Barrack Road Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 6DB
Surveyors and Valuers	Lambert Smith Hampton 41-51 Grey Street Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 6DB
Custodian Trustees	The Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes Central Buildings Oldham Street Manchester M1 5JQ

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

Rev A D Mabbs
V Choi
D W Thornton - resigned 12.06.23
J C Kelsall
K A Brindley - resigned 18.12.22
P H Martin
Rev J M Thornton - resigned 12.06.23
T F Rogers
W F Filmer
A Ilderton
R E Bourne
T Yip - resigned 31.05.23
R Lai - Appointed 31.05.23
E Leung - resigned 15.11.23
A Lambert - resigned 24.10.22
P Short - appointed 24.10.22
J Keltie
Deacon A Carter
Deacon T Hume
A Nicholson
R Taglione
R Wilkinson - resigned 24.05.23
A Wilkinson
L Lawson - resigned 21.05.23
M Burdon - appointed 21.05.23
J Shuen
J Atherton
D Lowry
M S Ball
R Ward
E Fellows
Rev A F Moorhouse
D Pigeon
N Pigeon
A Weightman - resigned 18.12.22
K Stewart
P Newman - resigned 12.01.23
Rev G R Hume
Rev P D Cleever-Thorpe (Chair)
Revd Professor D A Wilkinson
Rev J Mooney
Rev M A Newman - resigned 12.01.23
Revd A Wilkinson
R Pickard
Deacon G I Morgan
M E Graham
C L Eke
D J Cowans
K I Gilfillan
I Leung
S M Fuller - resigned 01.09.23
H J Chapman

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

L Morley
M E Goldfinch - resigned 11.09.22
J G Patrick
Rev K M Reader
J Bell
C Brindley - resigned 18.12.22
S D Richardson
S Walker
A Barker
J Anderson
D A Stabler
C Hall
S Hutchinson
M Harrison - apponted 13.09.22

Circuit Stewards
The Circuit Stewards, who are the treasurers of the Circuit fund, who served during the year and until the date of this report were as follows:
Margaret Graham (Finance)
Carolyn Hall
Keith Gilfillan J.P.
Audrey Ilderton (Senior Circuit Steward)

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

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THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2023. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

PREAMBLE

The Methodist Church is said to have been created after John Wesley's conversion on 24th May 1738; it is a Free Church. The Newcastle Central and East Circuit came into being on 1st September 2009 at the merger of the former Newcastle Heaton & Wallsend and Newcastle Brunswick Central Circuits. The latter was, in itself, formed from a merger in the early 1970's from the Brunswick and Central & Sandyford Circuits.

The calling of The Methodist Church is:

Worship: to Increase awareness of God's Presence and celebrate God's love.
Learning and caring: to help people to grow and learn as Christians.
Service: to be a good neighbour to people in need and challenge injustice.
Evangelism: we make more followers of Jesus Christ.

The Circuit's Vision Statement, agreed in May 2023, is as follows:
"Our vision is to be a Circuit of welcoming churches who look to reach and serve our communities, foster values of inclusion and acceptance, nurture and equip our preachers, leaders of worship and lay leaders, and who work in partnership with others to make God's love tangible and accessible to all".

We commit to worship, pray together and celebrate our good news stories; to review our local ministry and mission annually; to identify key strengths and challenges; and to form plans not just for future sustainability but also to include strategies for growth.

OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE

The Circuit is constituted to advance the effective deployment of the resources of ministry, which include people, property and finance, as they relate to the Methodist Churches in the Circuit, the District and Connexion, to Churches of other denominations and to participation in the communities served by the Circuit and in ecumenical work in the area. The Constitution and Enumeration of Circuits is set out year by year in the Stations appointed by the Methodist Conference.

The public benefit can be clearly demonstrated by the Trustees as they have fulfilled the calling of the Methodist Church in maintaining the witness of the church throughout the area which the Circuit serves in parts of Newcastle and North Tyneside. The grants made have enabled the work to continue and people to develop themselves and grow in faith.

The Circuit continues to fulfil its basic role of providing ministers to be in pastoral charge of the Societies (Local Churches) which make up the Circuit and support the churches in various ways including providing financial help for their work. We provide ministers with manses (two manses are owned by The United Reformed Church, Northern Synod) and see that, through the Methodist Church and United Reformed Church Central Services, they are paid their stipends and allowances. Those manses not immediately required have been let on assured short hold leases.

During the year under review, our small team of four Circuit Stewards have managed their various tasks and responsibilities, guided as needed by the CPD (Constitutional Practice and Discipline): see https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/governance/cpd/. . The Circuit Leadership Team is comprised of all ministers in the Circuit and the Circuit Stewards. The Superintendent Minister and the Stewards meet monthly and the Circuit Leadership Team meets bi-monthly.

The Circuit Stewards are the Lay Leaders of The Circuit. They are Managing Trustees, as are all members of The Circuit Meeting, and as Stewards they are responsible for managing the day-to-day operation of all Circuit affairs in consultation with the Superintendent Minister. The Circuit Meeting (Managing Trustees) meet three times in the year.

The life, work, and ministry of the Circuit is underpinned by prayer, public worship and personal commitment to follow Christ. We continue to base our Circuit's mission and our churches growth plans upon the four aspects of 'Our Calling' of The Methodist Church: 'Worship', 'Service', 'Learning & Caring' & 'Evangelism'.

Our churches have continued to explore and develop new ways of worship, learning and caring, introduced during 2020-2021 due to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, often in an on-line context as well as face-to-face gatherings. Whilst this is difficult for those who are less able to access on-line worship and other activities, churches who have been able to expand their on-line presence have continued to see significant numbers of new people engaging with their church's life. This is very encouraging to witness.

Sadly, another of our Societies, Coxlodge Methodist Church, requested to 'cease to meet' in September 2022. This request was granted and so the final service of the Church was held in December 2022, followed by a Celebration Service in February 2023. Our hope at that point was that Christian worship and witness would continue on the site or that it could be used for community work. Happily, we have been able to lease the building to a Community Interest Company, Owl Tree Children's Café (https://theowltreechildrenscafe.co.uk/). The arrangement brings in some welcome rental income which is earmarked for mission related activity elsewhere within the Circuit.

There were a few changes to Circuit office holders, as noted in the minutes of our Circuit Meetings. The Circuit is also served by Ministers of other traditions. The Circuit now contributes an annual assessment to The United Reformed Church Northern Synod, to cover the stipends and other expenses of ministry of the two URC ministers stationed in the Circuit.

The Circuit continues to be blessed with the continuing ministry of our Supernumeraries; thanks go to Revd Malcolm Newman, Revd Derek Aldridge, Revd Susan Richardson and Revd Ann Shepherdson. Local Preachers and Worship Leaders continue to serve the Circuit in their calling. There were four preachers in training, at various stages, during the year: two on trial, one of whom is now candidating for presbyteral ministry; one who has failed to complete his training and has now been removed from the plan; and one who had paused her training but is now back on note.

The Circuit Leadership Team have not led a specific annual review of our Churches and projects, as required by the Annual Conference of The Methodist Church. Growth or end of life plans were still not feasible, as our churches continued to recover from the pandemic restrictions. However, we were able to review our vision at the February 2023's Circuit Meeting, resulting in a revised Vision statement as outlined above.

CIRCUIT POLICIES

All policies conform as appropriate with guidance and principles as stipulated by the Methodist Church (https://www.methodist.org.uk/).

RISK POLICY

Our Risk Policy covers the following areas:

Financial Risk

The Circuit Meeting is faced with the following financial risks:

- dependency on limited income sources (assessments, investment income and donations);
- managing the capital resources;
- fluctuations in investment income and rental income;
- inability to attract additional donations from the general public and members;
- an unforeseen rise in demand for expenditure (for example on Manses and Chapels);
- an unforeseen increase in the actuarial shortfall on the pension funds for which the Circuit Meeting could be deemed responsible (the Circuit has already contributed to a shortfall);
- an unforeseen increase in the requirement for an additional manse or other property;
- a sustained fall in the value of investments and property held by the Circuit and appearing in the balance sheet.

Operation, Reputation and Strategy

We have identified the most significant risks as follows:

- inability to create new Methodist disciples resulting in further decline, ultimately resulting in the Methodist Church ceasing to exist;
- failure to provide adequate resources that enable the Circuit Meeting to discharge its responsibilities;
- the experience of Our Calling fails to be integrated into the mission and ministry pathways of the Circuit;
- sudden change in policy or strategic direction enforced by The Circuit Meeting;
- dependency on limited income sources (Assessments, investment income and donations);
- the impact of economic fluctuations on our assets, liabilities and our ability to raise funds to enable us to continue our work;
- an unforeseen increase in the actuarial shortfall on the pension funds for which the Circuit Meeting could be deemed responsible;
- loss of key personnel;
- the continuing effects of 'Brexit' and the coronavirus pandemic;
- we have a large number of lay employees but no Circuit HR Officer.

Many of these risks are likely to remain equally relevant throughout 2023 and beyond.

Risk management

The Methodist Church in Great Britain has a risk management policy, which has been set by the Methodist Council for use both by the Trustees and by Circuits.

The risk management policy is designed to identify and analyse key strategic and operational risks facing the Methodist Church and, where at unacceptable levels, to take steps to mitigate the risks.

We define key strategic and operational risks as those that, without effective or appropriate mitigation, are highly likely to occur and would have a positive or negative impact on the Church's ability to fulfil its purpose of advancing the Christian faith in accordance with its doctrinal standards. These risks are reported to the Managing Trustees through a risk management process, which allows them both to challenge any assumptions the Circuit Leadership team has made about risks and also to understand the context in which decisions are taken. This helps to ensure that the most serious risks are being managed effectively.

The trustees recognise that it is neither possible nor appropriate to seek to eliminate risk entirely. We recognise that risk-taking is inherent within the task of communicating the Gospel; John Wesley himself took risks in establishing the Methodist communities.

Our task, therefore, is to embrace risks that aim to advance the Church's purposes while ensuring that we avoid or minimise those risks that might have a negative impact. Effective risk management processes will help to increase the likelihood of the Church fulfilling its mission. The risk management report is reviewed and revised annually.

INVESTMENT POLICY

Since 2019-2020, the Circuit had built up significant reserves, generated from the sale of West Moor, Allen Memorial, Longbenton and Heaton Methodist Churches and the Burn Terrace flats. The Circuit's free reserves in August 2023 were £1.4million.

The Circuit Meeting (Trustees) had discussed and considered the notion of investing a significant part of the free reserves, over a couple of meetings. At the May 2022 meeting it was agreed to invest £750,000 in the Central Finance Board (CFB) Managed Mixed Fund which had shown a positive return over a long period. See https://www.cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk/managedfunds/.

The decision of the Trustees was based on the following considerations:

1. The Circuit Meeting has a responsibility, as far as is possible, to protect, manage and conserve the capital for future mission and ministry.
2. The Charities Commission has provided guidance to Charities, seeking to invest cash funds. See https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-and-investment-matters-a-guide-for-trustees-cc14
3. The proposed fund for our investment – The Managed Mixed Fund – is a medium risk investment (that is risk 5 on the scale 0-10).
4. There is much evidence to be confident that the CFB Managed Mixed Fund is both an ethical and a sound medium risk investment. See also the CFB ethics page: https://www.cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk/ethics/ which indicates their ethical policy regarding investments.
5. The staff at the CFB are all salaried employees and are not paid on commission or performance.
6. If the Circuit Meeting wishes to draw from capital that is held in the CFB Managed Mixed Fund then it is possible to do this with about two weeks notice.
7. Interest received from the investments will be used to fund mission and ministry within the Circuit.
8. This will be an investment for the long term and will be reviewed regularly.

PAYMENTS TO STAFF

Ministers

Stipends for Methodist Ministers are determined annually by the Methodist Conference. The Circuit, as the employing body, contributes to their pension fund. They are also given an annual computer allowance.

Lay employees

In 2010 the Methodist Conference agreed that the rates of the Real Living Wage, as published by the Living Wage Foundation, should form the minimum basic salary for people employed by a district, circuit or a local church. This policy also includes young people below the age of 18. In addition, a 9-point salary scale is applied to a person specification, which is based on qualifications, experience and responsibilities. The Circuit is scrupulous in following this policy. Guidelines are available on the Methodist Church website. See https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/employees-and-volunteers/lay-employment-resource/

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The circuit's safeguarding policy is reviewed annually and presented at the February Circuit Meeting. All managing trustees are regularly reminded of their responsibilities. The circuit takes its safeguarding responsibilities very seriously, ensuring every church/project is aware of and adheres to its responsibilities, such as displaying its policy, updating its safeguarding information, reviewing its safeguarding policy on an annual basis, and retaining its records in accordance with proper guidelines. We appoint a Circuit Safeguarding Officer who works closely with the Circuit Superintendent, Circuit Administrator, and Circuit Stewards to ensure that our safeguarding responsibilities are reviewed on a regular basis.

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Regular meetings are held with all Church Safeguarding Officers and the Circuit Stewards, to remind them of the forms/declarations which all volunteers need to sign, depending on their individual roles, together with the training which they need to undertake. DBS checks are required for any volunteer whose work brings them into contact with users of our services and projects and the general public.

COMPLAINTS HANDLING

It is hoped that any conflict situations will be dealt with sensitively by leaders of our local church groups. However, where this is not possible then the Methodist Complaints process will need to be invoked. This will require contact being made with the Local Complaints Officer who is our Circuit Superintendent Minister, Revd Paul Cleever-Thorpe. The process would then be put into effect with the appropriate support being given by our District Reconciliation group.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

To comply with Methodist Church guidance, Trustees are asked at the Circuit Meeting to declare any conflict of interest as soon as they are aware of any possibility that his or her personal or wider interests could influence decision-making within the Circuit. This is a standard agenda item at the beginning of each meeting to allow trustees to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

GRANTMAKING POLICY

The Circuit meeting is minded to make occasional grants from one of the funds. These grants are discretionary and full details are given in the accounts. The funds are:

- The general fund, for example grants to the District Benevolence fund.
- The Model Trust [formerly the Circuit Advance Fund] is exhausted.
- The District City Centre Fund, this is used in the same way as a Model Trust - it is controlled by the Managing Trustees of the District.
- The Susannah Gibson Memorial Fund – grants were awarded for "the sustenance of Wesleyan Methodist Ministers" - no grants have been awarded for a number of years.
- The Doris Nuttall bequest - funds were to be used at the discretion of the Circuit Meeting, but in practice money is used at and on the former South Gosforth Methodist Church – now known as the Trinity Christian Community Centre - which Doris Nuttall attended. The funds in this Trust were exhausted in 2022-2023, and it was closed.
- The Elizabeth Ann Burton bequest - money was left to the former Willington Quay Methodist Church. The Circuit subsequently obtained a Charity Commission Order which allows it to control all the assets of the bequest. It should be noted that, although Mrs Burton passed away in 1972, it was only in February 2011 that the Circuit became aware that there was a substantial sum of money and two Tyneside flats to be transferred to the Circuit. The flats were refurbished and were let to people in need, via the charity Oasis Aquila. Due to problems with the maintenance of the flats, it was decided to sell them in 2020. The proceeds of the sale (£110,028) were received in November 2021 and are to be used for mission in the Circuit.
- Bequest funds – these are various small funds that may be used at the discretion of the Circuit meeting, for mission.
- The Deacons' Fund - this fund was created by a vote at the Spring Circuit Meeting 2019, by agreeing to bring together the three remaining small Model Trusts and the balance of the general fund of the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church. In order to achieve this, a Charity Commission Order has been obtained and in the case of trust 1486 the Methodist Council voted to approve the transfer of the W R Dixon gift to the Deacons' Fund. Trust 1486 is a permanent endowment; Trust 5377, capital and income can be used; and Trust 5377B, income can be used and the capital with restrictions. In practice, it is the intention that a Deacon can use the income only, for work in the Wallsend area at their discretion.

There is a further fund which is held and used to maintain the manses and other property owned by the Circuit and two manses owned by the United Reformed Church.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Brunswick Methodist Church

Brunswick Methodist Church continues to be a church worshipping and serving at the heart of Newcastle City Centre. In acting as a 'community hub', our building plays host to an increasing number of user groups. We are thankful to both our paid staff and to all our dedicated volunteers who enable our church to be a safe and hospitable space. Our church building is well maintained and an attractive location for groups to meet within.

In recognition of how our church works in partnership with agencies and charities who serve the most vulnerable in our city, in October 2022 our church building was chosen as part of a royal visit made by the Earl of Wessex, Prince Edward, who was keen to meet representatives of community groups working in our city centre. This visit was veiled in secrecy for security reasons, but we were still able to give the Earl a warm welcome and to allow him time to interact with our Coffee Shop volunteers, as well as meeting with staff from organisations like 'Junction 42' and 'Changing Lives' who work with ex-offenders and with recovering addicts respectively.

The 'open door' policy which undergirds Brunswick Methodist Church's ministry and mission is aided by our Coffee Shop which, over the past year, has been open on four days each week. We have seen a gradual increase in the number of customers accessing our Coffee Shop which has also meant a higher level of income generated for the church and its mission. A new, larger visible sign has been purchased and this helps to raise awareness of the Coffee Shop during its opening hours.

Our 'Listening Post', a non-appointment based one-to-one listening service, continues to be run for one day each week with several people accessing this service during the year.

We also opened our doors through the winter months in a positive response to the cost-of-living crisis, with our building being one of the City Centre's 'Winter Wellbeing Hubs' or 'Warm Spaces'. This is a weekly, afternoon 'space' in which we have offered refreshments and a listening ear to any who may wish to save on their home energy bills.

Brunswick Methodist Church is pleased to host two congregations, the second of which is a Chinese/Hong Konger congregation. Over the past three years, over two hundred new people have joined, the majority of whom have moved from Hong Kong under the government's BNO+1 programme. This larger congregation has meant requests being made for weddings held in our church and for a greater usage of our building, especially on a Saturday and Sunday, by small groups, which includes many students and younger adults. Both Cantonese and Mandarin languages are used within our Chinese congregation, but many are wishing to use and to learn English more as they seek to integrate into UK society and into our Methodist Church and Circuit.

In our traditional congregation we have run a church membership group during the past year and, in this coming October, we will welcome four new members into our church family. This is always a joyous time! Our Church Leadership Team has begun to meet with those lay leaders now serving in our Chinese Methodist congregation as we seek to work more closely and explore common areas of worship, witness, and service. In this way we are evolving into a more international, multi-cultural church.

Over the past year our Centre-Based worker has completed a Community Audit which has provided the church with more up-to-date information concerning the needs of communities in and close to our city centre. The specific needs identified have been around mental health and wellbeing, support to the growing student population, an increased use of our local foodbanks, a need for greater coordination and cooperation by those agencies seeking to alleviate homelessness and rough sleeping in our city. This last number is significantly less since the pandemic.

Brunswick has continued to offer warm hospitality to those from many different parts of the world, including international students, running language courses in our building and offering pastoral support through university chaplaincy.

Newcastle Chinese Methodist Church
The growth and development of the Chinese church this year, overall has been positive and constructive. In January 2023 we celebrated with 65 new members who were welcomed into the life of our church. This increased our total membership to over 100 members but we have almost 200 who may attend on any given Sunday.

The theme of the church this year has been centered around "Training Disciples to Follow Jesus," aiming for members to emulate the life of Jesus Christ and practice His teachings. Currently, there is an adult fellowship in the church, and beneath it, there are 8 small groups, each led by a married couple. Each small group consists of around ten to fifteen members, and when a group reaches 20 members, it splits.

The content of our small groups includes song sharing, Bible sharing, sermon responses, testimony sharing, spiritual sharing, etc. Through the life of these small groups, the goal is to deepen members' sense of belonging to the church and to foster healthy friendships and church life, becoming companions on the journey of faith and to grow in Christian discipleship.

Additionally, there are three classes in the children's Sunday school, with ages ranging from 5 to 10 years old, totaling 20 children. The primary languages used are Cantonese and English.

The youth fellowship comprises approximately fifty members, aged from 11 to 18, meeting twice a month. The activities include worship and praise, Bible teachings by pastors and mentors, group games, and more. In terms of adult worship, it is gradually maturing, progressing in a positive direction. Finally, we have a 'TAP' (Teach and Pray) group for our students and young adults which is around 20-25 in total.

Our church faces a significant potential challenge as the majority of members are from Hong Kong, and there are various denominations within Hong Kong Christianity, such as Baptist, Evangelical, Anglican, Pentecostal, and some independent churches. Each denomination wishes the church to follow their model of operation. Therefore, there are diverse opinions on this matter, and the church is actively seeking positive solutions to address this issue.

The Church of the Good Shepherd, Battle Hill
(Anglican, Methodist and United Reformed Church (URC) Local Ecumenical Partnership)
Our ongoing commitment to spread the Good News of Jesus in Battle Hill and beyond is apparent in our church and was clear with our 40th Anniversary Celebration Service in April 2022. It was so lovely to be joined by so many people whose lives have been supported and touched by God through our church. Regular weekly worship services, including live streaming, continue and our worshipping community is growing with new members attending. At Christmas 2022 our church was once again full of worshippers, in particular for the Christmas Eve Christingle service. Good use of social media is helping to extend invitations to our services and events, as is handing out invitations at mission events, including carol singing at the local shops and handing out sweets and prayers at Halloween. In our partnership of Wallsend Churches Working Together we have delivered Open the Book School Assemblies (Bible stories) to over 3,000 children during the year.

We have developed a close relationship with the local care home through visits from our Minister and regular monthly sacramental worship. Residents and staff now attend church events such as the fair and music/social nights.

Little Shepherds Baby and Toddler Group continues to thrive and build wonderful relationships. The Christian input is intentional, our Minister attends weekly and offers pastoral support. One of the highlights of each session is the Bubble Prayers.

Hot Chocolate Youth Group (with gentle and appropriate Christian input) continues to reach the youth in the community and offers a variety of activities, a listening and guidance role, and a safe space for young people to gather. This has helped reduce anti-social behaviour in the area.

As one of the founding members of Rising Sun Neighbours (a small group of churches reaching out to people from new housing estates around the Rising Sun Country Park) we actively took part in the Summer Festival, engaging families through crafts and distributing church information/invitations.

We started a number of new initiatives this year which have successfully engaged people who do not normally worship in church. In addition, these events have proved very successful in offering fellowship to our church members as well as the wider community.

Following our "Chill out with a cuppa" project in the summer of 2022 we opened up a weekly 'Warm Space' from November to March, supported by a £1,000 grant from North Tyneside Council. The number of people attending each week varied from single figures to mid 30's and everyone appreciated the fellowship as well as the free food, drinks and games.

Kidz Rock started at Pentecost as a way in which we could continue to engage with our toddlers once they moved on to school, and also engage with families in the community. It is run on Sundays at 4pm every two months and includes Bible stories, games, crafts, puppet show and lots of fun, all followed by light refreshments. This has been very successful and helped us reach out to 'new' people.

We started Open Mic Nights every few months from March. This is a wonderful night of fellowship and outreach and is well supported by church members, friends and people from the community.

The generosity of church members has helped us pay all our financial commitments in our three-way LEP. Furthermore, we have donated £1,500 to a number of charities and continue to support Walking With North Tyneside and Fairshare St Paul's, Willington Quay, through weekly food donations and volunteers.

We are thrilled to report that we were awarded a Bronze Certificate which reflects the way in which we are caring for our creation and church.

Jesmond Methodist Church
The congregation at Jesmond continues to grow. This past year we have welcomed some new students, along with young adults and older members. The flourishing family ministry continues as JMK (Jesmond Methodist Kids).

It has been a year of challenges with our building – and we have had to spend money on the external back wall, boiler, internal decoration of corridor and toilets. We have been grateful for the support of the Circuit. We continued to plan and work towards building a new kitchen and changing the external doors which we hope will be completed early on 2023-2024.

We began to explore the relationship between Jesmond Methodist Church and Shieldfield, partly through links with JMC's Play Space, the Saturday morning space for refugee families, residing in a nearby hotel. The church began to explore links and ways we could collaborate together. Could we church plant? What are the initial steps and how do we take this forward? It was agreed to release the Lay Pastor for one day a week in the next year, to see what might develop and grow.

Our minister had a significant time off with stress and exhaustion and our Lay Pastor stepped up into a new leadership role to help cover this.

JMC was also very active in the annual Jesmond Festival, hosting a Disney Quiz, a climate conversation panel discussion, and our Taste event which is always very popular. The climate conversation enabled us to foster links with Northumbria University Environmental Sciences Department. This has resulted in having a small team of Masters students come to undertake a project in how we could move to net zero as a church.

The Church has continued to work with the 1901 Café which leases part of the building.

We set up an Eco Working Group which has begun to work with church members in ways we can reduce our carbon footprint and be more aware of the resources we use. They are exploring how we might be able to become an eco-church.

The five bible study groups are thriving, along with a new daytime student group, which seems to fit their timetables better than evenings. We also have had a focus on prayer for 2023 – with a prayer event or challenge on the 23rd of each month.

A highlight of the year was undoubtably the baptisms on Easter Sunday. Two candidates braved the freezing water of a portable baptismal pool to be baptised. The celebration shared with family and friends was a real joyful occasion.

JMC has faced challenges but has seen growth as new people are drawn into the community. Space remains an issue and different ways of configuring the chairs to ensure we can get everyone in remains a joyful challenge. We continue to flourish with the support of many who serve in voluntary ways in leadership including the Welcome team, Hosting, Preaching, Technical support, Musicians, Running house groups, and JMK teachers.

St Andrew's Church, Benton
(Methodist and URC LEP)
We have continued to provide a rich and varied worship experience over this last year. We have been delighted to welcome many new friends to share worship with us including a small family of refugees from Iran. We have also returned to offering free refreshments after our Sunday morning service to which all are welcome.

In addition to the indoor worship, we also take advantage of our church grounds at various points in the year to offer outdoor worship – reaching out to those who pass by, or who find in difficult to cross the threshold of the church building. We also continue to provide regular online worship, as well as a monthly midweek worship and fellowship.

Apart from the ongoing work of our minister, the church has a team of volunteer pastoral carers who each take responsibility to help and keep in touch with a number of our people on a regular basis. Other volunteers deliver flowers each week when we become aware of someone being unwell or in need of support and sometimes to celebrate a happy event.

Junior church is currently led by two dedicated and accredited church volunteers, with more volunteers expected to join the team soon. The number of children attending Junior Church continues to fluctuate and there is a wide age range.

Links with the cradle roll and junior church families are maintained during school holidays by the delivery of age relevant bible-based activity packs, greetings cards and seasonal treats.

Currently we have ten families who have children on the cradle roll with whom we keep in touch. They receive the church magazine and the children receive birthday, Easter, and Christmas cards. During the year our minister officiated at three infant baptisms and two infant blessing/thanksgiving services. Our cradle roll secretary encourages the families and children to attend relevant church services or events that will help them on their Christian journey.

At the end of the year the membership numbers were calculated to be just over 100 divided between Methodist, United Reformed and joint members, who entered membership after the LEP was formed. We are normally blessed to have a full congregation of over 70 attendees at Sunday morning services.

We are blessed to have a dedicated editor who puts together a church magazine on ten occasions each year covering the whole year. The magazine has been a part of church life for many decades and is appreciated by many inside and outside of the church far and wide.

Messy Church meetings are an important part of church life in reaching out beyond our regular attendees once every few months. One of our church based groups, the 4th Newcastle Girls' Brigade regularly meet in the church each week. The group is growing in number and is run by an enthusiastic group of trained volunteer leaders. Our other church based group, the Forest Hall Carpet Bowls Club also meet each week in one of the church halls with a good mix of church members and locals from the community.

The church supports 'Walking Within North Tyneside' every week with donations of food and other items to support and relieve the hardship of asylum seekers or refugees who reside in North Tyneside and within our local community. Other charities and causes are supported at different times during the year.

Many from the church participated in the Christmas knitted angels outreach project. Over 1000 angels were distributed by the churches in our area, providing blessing and encouragement to those who received them.

The premises are also well used by many external groups and some have been carrying out their activities in the church for many years and are well known in the local communities.

As well as routine maintenance on the building, the church is seeking to make the building more energy efficient, with an initial focus on renewing older windows with double glazed units.

St Cuthbert's Church, Heaton
(Methodist and URC LEP)
This year has again been quite a difficult year with the continued sick leave of our minister, Rev Grant Wilson. We have been drifting a bit without definite leadership.

The one group which continues to flourish is the Wives & Friends which, after starting again after lockdown, changed the time of their meetings to alternate Tuesday afternoons from the evening. This means that the members (most of whom are old) are able to enjoy mixing with others and then go home before dark. There are around 20 members most afternoons.

We have enjoyed the fellowship of an afternoon tea celebrating the coronation of King Charles and some other similar events.

The Girl's Brigade is still meeting on Monday evenings although their numbers are not as high as previous years.

The building is still being used by Newcastle Christian Tabernacle on two evenings each week and on Sunday afternoons. St Cuthbert's are still part of Heaton Churches Together and the joint service to celebrate the life of the Queen was well attended by members of St Cuthbert's.

The church gardens at the side of the church, which are maintained by two of our congregation, are still appreciated by the local community who, it seems, still think of St Cuthbert's as "their church" even though not many of them attend church services.

On the recommendation of the Finance Committee the church agreed to undertake the necessary repairs to the building as highlighted in the 2019 quinquennial survey. Although the church had to utilise an extensive amount of its reserves to cover the cost of the repairs, we were grateful to be awarded funds from various grant making bodies, including the Circuit.

Church of St John the Evangelist, Kingston Park
(Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and URC LEP)
This has been a year of steady progress. Though recorded membership is slightly lower, actual attendance at services has increased through the year. We have begun an initiative to encourage new attendees to become members.

Having reviewed their effectiveness, we have decided to end the online versions of our services, though we may still opt to upload special services. We have expanded our Bible study both online via Zoom and in person. This has been received positively with increased attendance.

We have continued to offer a range of outreach events to the community including successful Easter egg hunt and Harvest activities, which were combined with Messy Church sessions. We will again hold our community carol singing event at Tesco. The choir, and others, will be carol singing at Marks & Spencer & Tesco to raise funds for West End Refugees and Action for Children. Members have been very active in the collection of shoeboxes from across Northumberland and north Durham.

Our commitment to providing a Warm Space, to help those struggling with rising energy costs, re-started in September.

In line with our net-zero commitment, we completed the installation of solar panels and we are starting to see the benefit in terms of reduced electricity usage. We are also beginning to look at options for upgrade/renewal of our heating systems.

Our bookings have improved throughout the year and we are blessed to have been able to accommodate new groups, the activities for which have placed St John's at the centre of our community.

We are currently in the process of looking at our options for ministry at St John's to fill the vacancy following the departure of our Methodist minister in 2024.

Trinity Church, Gosforth
(Methodist and URC LEP
Trinity Church is a Local Ecumenical Partnership of the Methodist and United Reformed Churches.
"The purpose of the charity is to advance the Christian faith in the area of benefit in accordance with the principles and practices of the participating churches."

We benefit from our prominent location on Gosforth High Street. Every Sunday there are newcomers in worship, and we aim to provide a hospitable welcome and spiritual support to all. We have taken steps to make our worship more accessible. For example, providing large-print hymn books for people who have difficulty reading words from the screens. We stream our services on YouTube, with between 50 and 100 weekly views. Additionally, a printed service is posted out every week to about 25 housebound members without internet access. In-person attendance at Sunday morning worship averages 100.

Christmas 2022 was the first festival since lockdown without any Covid restrictions. Our carol service, children's crib service, and Christmas Day celebration were all well-attended, including many visitors. Easter was similarly celebrated with enthusiasm and joy.

Our ministry with children and young people continues to thrive, ably facilitated by our part-time Children and Families Worker. We have enjoyed welcoming class visits from nearby schools. Our popular Toddler Group always has a waiting list. Our Sunday evening youth group is now well-established again after lockdown. Two of our teens have enjoyed Christian holidays run by the United Reformed Church Northern Synod's youth advisor, and one is attending a young leaders' course. Several of our families went to the Cedarwood Festival in July, supported by a grant from Northern Synod.

Our various groups and activities for adults are also doing well. In response to the cost-of-living crisis and the social isolation in our community, we opened up a Warm Welcome Space on Friday mornings in September 2022. Most of the people who come are connected with the Church, but there are often others who come in for a warm drink and some company. This provision will continue through the coming winter. A Men's Shed has been operational for a couple of years and has undergone a successful transition into a space that is inclusive of both genders. The number of attendees is rising slowly, indicative of the Shed's growing appeal. The group has visited local craft workshops and attended a local maker's market at Axminster Tools. The junior woodcrafters have been meeting on a fortnightly basis.

Use of our Community Centre grew during the year and is back at pre-covid levels. We enjoy a good relationship with our hirers, most of whom are community-based groups or businesses, and we view the hospitality we give in our well-appointed and serviced rooms as an expression of our faith and mission. Caffe 1901 provides a welcoming introduction to the Centre. They started opening on Sundays in 2022, so Trinity's door is now open seven days a week. About 2,500 people come into Trinity in a typical week, and another 250 at Trinity Christian Community Centre in South Gosforth.

Trinity, both Church and Centre, values the participation of dozens of volunteers, who give a huge amount of their time and skills in a variety of ways, including Young Church, music, welcoming, catering, leading Bible-study groups, pastoral care, buildings maintenance and much more.

Church finances are always challenging, but our members continue to give generously. We covered all payments in the year, including £4,105 to local charities, agreed by Church Council. Also, from specified members' giving we raised £8,483 for the Walker & District Foodbank.

It has been a good year for Trinity. We don't take this for granted but continually look to God to lead and equip us to fulfil our purpose (i.e. God's purpose) in the coming years.

Trinity Methodist Church, Wallsend
The congregation on Sundays is fairly constant with an average of 20– 25. We continue to record worship which goes out on the YouTube channel. What has been lovely this year is the amount of feedback we have received from the people who watch each week ... they feel connected and part of the church family. We have introduced Family News into the service. This enables people to hear about what is happening and offers opportunity for sharing how God is at work in people's lives.

Our church hall continues to be used by Scouts, Bloom Babies and Line Dancing. There is an appreciation of the facilities on offer. The Tea Dance now run as a church group and is well received by those who attend. It provides a social gathering in a warm space and dancing which, as the folk who go say, 'keeps us active.'

We have an active Girls Brigade Group. Numbers are small but a full programme of activities are offered. The Girls Brigade leaders work hard to enable the girls to reach their full potential. One of the leaders was awarded an MBE for her services to Girls Brigade. The Youth Club regularly has about 30 young people attending each week. There is nowhere for young people to go in Wallsend, so this is a much-needed service. These groups rely on volunteers and we are pleased that we have people not connected with church to enable these groups

In the autumn of 2022, we decided to lay down our Messy Church. We felt that we had got the right model but perhaps not the right day or time. We have a team who go into schools offering Open the Book and this has resulted in visits to the Church by Year 1 and a deepening of relationships with the schools involved.

We held a really successful community afternoon tea for the King's coronation. Following this we recognised that we had a real ministry for hospitality and have decided that we will put on more events during the coming year.

The Wesley Orphan House Trust (WOHT)
The Trust derives its income from ground rent from the site of the former 'Orphan House' on Northumberland Street in Newcastle upon Tyne. The trust also receives a small sum from investments.

The Trust budgets to have approximately £25,000 available annually for grants and favours work with children, the vulnerable, for education purposes and property works.

In 2022/2023 a total of ten grants were made. Four were rolling grants over either three or five years: Action for Children, Together Mission NE, Wesley Study Centre, Grace Place (West Harton Shop in South Shields). The other grants were to Blaydon Methodist Church, Shieldfield Art Works @ The Holy Biscuit, Prudhoe Methodist Church, Men's Shed (Trinity Gosforth), FACT (Fighting All Cancers Together) and Lemington Methodist Church.

These grants totalled £19,485.

During the year, we have opened an on-line presence with a web page linked to the Newcastle Central and East Circuit website. See Wesley Orphan House Trust - Newcastle Central and East Methodist Circuit (newcastlecentralmethodist.org.uk) Plans are in hand to further extend our reach via a link from the website of the Newcastle upon Tyne District. We hope this will increase our visibility and bring further grant applications for consideration.

An application form and written guidance are available from the Secretary (woht@brunswickmethodist.org.uk) or from our website.

Hand in Hand Project
Hand in Hand has two clubs, one in Wallsend and one in Heaton

Wallsend
Hand in Hand meets weekly on a Tuesday in Trinity Methodist Church, Wallsend. The aim is to reduce and prevent loneliness and social isolation in older people. There are 23 members with an average of 18 attending weekly.

Each week our members are welcomed with a cup of tea and then enjoy a two-course home cooked traditional lunch. This is followed by a wide range of activities including reminiscing, quizzes, slide shows, games, chair exercises and crafts.

The kitchen team provides good quality food every week. The menu is varied and nutritious, and the feedback from our members is always enthusiastic. For those who come, it is something to look forward to during the week, a reason to get dressed and go out. It is an opportunity to meet up with friends and make new friendships. It is a time to relax and have fun, to have a laugh with friends and forget everyday fears and worries. It's a community whose members care for and support one another. So, as you can imagine the club is greatly valued by all the members and we are regularly told how much we are appreciated.

All this couldn't be done of course without the dedicated help of our volunteers and two paid staff members, the Co–Ordinator and Cook.

With the cost of living rising, we know we cannot cover costs with what members pay each week and we rely on grants. Hadrian House Trust gave us £1,000 and the circuit has agreed to give us a grant of £5,000 for the year 2023–2024. This generous act, along with our own fundraising, will enable us to continue to offer a much-needed service.

Heaton
Hand in Hand continues to meet in Christ Church and is run by two retired Salvation Army officers who work hard to create a welcoming atmosphere.

The number attending is fairly constant and averages 14. They enjoy quizzes, talks and photograph afternoons. Once a month they have a hot lunch.

Although the club has been made exceedingly welcome in Christ Church, some weeks it has been too cold. We are therefore seeking a new place to meet for Autumn 2023.

Presence Project, Walker
I have been able to develop a relationship with Treetops village supported living accommodation. Together with several volunteers from Walker Parish Church, I have been hosting a weekly drop-in coffee morning in Treetops for several months. The aim is to be a welcoming space for anyone in the community, recognising the lack of gathering spaces in the area. There are regular attenders from Treetops and the wider community and it is beginning to attract several other service providers who know they will be able to meet members of the community on a Wednesday morning. Building trust and relationships in this context has proven to be slow work, however the team of volunteers are developing consistent relationships and we are beginning to hear more of peoples' stories and to see people connect.

It has become apparent that exploring ways of encountering and connecting with others and God in new and neutral spaces is complex as a lone worker. The role may be funded by the church but it is by no means understood or supported by it.

In discussion with the Treetops manager, there is clear interest in providing a chaplaincy service to the residents, who are more vulnerable, housebound, and experiencing significant changes in their lives. Our weekly presence, in conjunction with a chaplaincy service, offers several ways of being with the community. I have also discussed with the manager and several residents the possibility of holding a short service of worship/reflection around key times of the year.

Partnership working has proven to be essential for me in a new community. I have developed strong links with Lifting Neighbourhoods Together (LNT), a 5-year project run by Community Renewal in conjunction with Building Futures East. I have been running a wellbeing group with LNT for some months. This has given me the opportunity to journey with a group, getting to know their stories and build deeper relationships.

I meet several of the women from the wellbeing group on a 1:1 basis for deeper conversations, discipleship/ pastoral support. There are several other groups including addiction support and mental health which I am loosely connected to.

From September 2023, following two years of renting a small room in Pottery Bank Community Centre, the Presence Steering Group has reached a joint decision to stop paying for the use of the room. This decision represents a move away from the original job description by bringing an end to the formal agreement to have a community pioneer presence in Pottery Bank. It was agreed that paying for an underused room was not a good use of resources. I will continue to stay in touch with the Community Centre, meeting their new staff team and exploring opportunities for joint working.

Methodist Women in Britain

The twice a year retreats at Minsteracres continue to be highlights of the MWiB calendar. The MWiB always feel warmly welcomed and have been told that 'the place comes alive' when they visit as singing with gusto is the order of the day.

A well-attended Away Day to Newbiggin-by-the-Sea in September 2022 was a good time of fellowship, incorporating a service and craft activity.

Each November the MWiB hold their annual service to commission their new President, followed by a faith lunch, and on 25th November 2022 Rev. Stephen Lindridge was the preacher, as he had been the previous year too.

During the year £14, 695.73 was raised for the President's project, Children's Cancer North, a slight increase on the amount raised the previous year for the Knitted Knockers charity.

Unfortunately, nobody has 'stepped into the shoes' of Margaret Wingfield, former editor of the MWIB magazine, and therefore no magazines have been produced in the last two years.

Shieldfield Art Works @ The Holy Biscuit

We have been established and working in Shieldfield for 13 years; committed to being here long term and supporting this community. Most of our participants are long-term and short-term residents of Shieldfield, but we also work with people from across the city. Anyone is welcome, whether or not they live in Shieldfield. Between September 2022 and August 2023 we supported 5,436 people. We measure success by talking to participants and collecting data before and after each activity. We collect data and feedback from all of our groups, including postcode data, and ask what activities/topics participants would like to cover in future. Recently, this has informed planning for the Craft Action Collective activity.

Our work has connected isolated people. One Shieldfield Grower said "Growing here has connected me with people in the neighbourhood I otherwise would never have met. It's not just the plants that are growing."

After surveying 63 individuals, 100% of participants in Shieldfield Grows and Craft Action Collective and 95% of participants in Painting for Fun agreed somewhat or strongly that these groups have increased their connection with others. 94% of participants said that being part of the 100 People project has increased their level of connection with others in the Shieldfield community.

Our work has built creative collective agency, improving mental wellbeing, confidence and collective activism. One Craft Action Collective participant said "I have found the workshops so welcoming, gently challenging and personally nurturing."

After surveying 63 individuals, 100% of participants in Shieldfield Grows, Craft Action Collective and Painting for Fun agreed somewhat or strongly that these groups have had a positive impact on their mental wellbeing.

100% of people attending the Breaking Through to Freedom exhibition said that it helped them see the value of the creative process as a way to deal with trauma and help us move on.

We have engaged with 3,303 people through arts activity and exhibitions. Our work has improved access to the arts, creating a space where everyone feels they can participate and they have a voice. One co-creator of the 100 People project (an experimental approach to film-making which has created a multi-voiced portrait of Shieldfield) said "being part of this has given me a sense of belonging... like an adopted family. It's made me aware that everyone has something to contribute."

Our work has given space for dialogue and debate connected with insufficiently recognised local issues like the housing crisis; the impact of gentrification on Shieldfield; growing food and climate change; telling stories with the people of Shieldfield.
At Craft Action Collective: 67% of people agreed somewhat or strongly that it has increased their awareness of social action issues and 56% of people agreed somewhat or strongly that the sessions have inspired them to make positive change in their own community.

At our SAW Reflects day on friendship 67% of participants said that it gave them ideas for practical ways in how friendship can speak into and tackle loneliness.

87% of people attending the Breaking Through to Freedom exhibition said that it helped them to spot abuse and to be better at supporting friends or family who find themselves in this situation.

We have engaged with 289 people through our gardening activity. This facilitates exercise (through planting, digging, harvesting) and being engaged in group activity and regularly being in nature benefits mental health. The shared activity of gardening encourages conversation without relying too much on a high level of spoken English. One of our Shieldfield Growers said "I have seen people from other countries who have been rather introverted when they just arrived, gradually come out of themselves and blossom like the flowers."

Over five 'SAW Reflects' events have been held since January 2023 engaging with 106 people. These days allowed participants to think more deeply around the topic of friendship, with 100% of participants saying that they engaged with the Christian themes during the event. One participant said "It's encouraging to reflect on the goodness of friendship, that it's something we are made for and to reflect on good friendships I have had and still have." Another visitor to our Friendship exhibition stated "I appreciated the thinking behind the exhibition and the questions it raises."

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position

Income for the year ended 31 August 2023 totaled £818,704 (2022: £706,328) resulting in a surplus for the year of £150,383 (2022: Deficit £103,718). Funds totaled £1,977,702 at the year end, of which £12,041 are restricted funds, which are held for special purpose of The Holy Biscuit, and £2,149 are endowment funds. Unrestricted reserves total £441,121 which includes those held for special purpose of £54,208 The Holy Biscuit, £2,107 Hand in hand and £165 Methodist Women in Britain. Designated funds at the end of the year amounted to £1,522,391.

Reserves policy - general funds

The definition of reserves is: "income which becomes available to the charity and is to be expended at the trustees' discretion in furtherance of the charity's objects, but which is not yet spent, committed or designated." The free reserves of the charity therefore exclude endowments, restricted funds, designated funds and funds already invested in fixed assets. Free reserves of the charity at the year end amounted to £75,056.

The reserves policy for the general and manse funds of the Circuit agreed by the trustees is to hold the equivalent of the relevant annual expenditure, plus an estimate of any known fluctuations. These reserves are held in the Central Finance Board deposit account. The unrestricted funds are currently below the policy, the Circuit Managing Trustees are concerned about this and mindful to address the situation as soon as possible. There are plans to balance the budget over the following two or three years and then start to re-build reserves. Should there be a funding crisis then the Managing Trustees would make an appeal to the Local Churches.

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Structure, governance and management

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust and constitutes an unincorporated charity. The charity's treasurers of the Circuit Funds are the lay Circuit Stewards. Of the Managing Trustees listed previously, all are lay people excepting the fourteen ministerial staff, two of whom are retired; one is Principal of St John's College Durham, one is chaplain at Pilgrims Court Methodist Homes Jesmond. Circuit meetings are generally held three times a year and include representatives of all the Societies (local churches) and projects in the Circuit. The Superintendent Minister (who supervises the work of the other Ministers in the Circuit) reports to this meeting as do the Circuit Stewards.

The governing body of the Circuit is the annual conference of The Methodist Church. The Methodist Church Act 1976 gives the authority under which The Methodist Church acts. The constitution practice and discipline of The Methodist Church (2019 edition) together with The Deed of Union (Act of 1929 adopted 1932) govern the activities of the Circuit.

In general, The Methodist Church is excepted from the need to register as a charity by the combined effects of Section 46(4) (A) of the Charities Act 1993 and Paragraph 4(2) (C) of the Charities (exception from registration) Regulations 1996 as amended by Statutory Instrument 2014 No 242. The Circuit, however, is a separate Registered Charity, number 1134265, in England and Wales.

The Trustees who have served during the year and since the year-end are set out on the legal and administration pages. The treasurers (Circuit Stewards) are appointed annually by the Circuit Meeting and the Managing Trustees are appointed either by: (a) the Societies of which they are members; (b) the Preachers' Meeting; or (c) by being ex-officio (Ministers in good standing or holding a District or Connexional Office or duly appointed Lay Workers). In practice, up to seven Circuit Stewards may be appointed who serve, generally, for a minimum of 3 years and a maximum of 6.

The principal address of the Circuit's auditors, bankers, solicitors and other advisors are given as part of the reference and administrative details.

The Circuit Stewards, acting as Treasurers, are responsible for the detailed examination of the Financial Statements and for recommending their adoption by the Circuit Meeting. One of their number is designated 'Treasurer' and her main role is to manage the finances of the Circuit, assisted by the Circuit Accounts Administrator.

The Circuit is one of 12 of the Newcastle District and has 10 Local Churches [12 premises], of which 5 are Local Ecumenical Partnerships. The Circuit also has one other preaching place and one other set of premises that are used for 'fresh expressions of Church' - Shieldfield Art Works @ The Holy Biscuit, and has a 'presence' in Walker at The Pottery Bank Community Centre. They are contactable via the principal address of the Circuit. Funds are transferred to the Circuit on a regular basis to meet the commitments to the District and the upkeep of the Circuit.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

P. Cleever-Thorpe

Rev P Cleever-Thorpe (chair) - Trustee
Dated: 13.3.24

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The Newcastle Central and East Circuit of the Methodist Church (the charity) for the year ended 31 August 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of ACCA, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3 the financial statements 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 financial statements to be reached.

Nicholas Cunningham FCCA
Robson Laidler Accountants Limited
Fernwood House
Fernwood Road
Jesmond
Newcastle Upon Tyne
Tyne and Wear
NE2 1TJ

Dated: 14.3.24

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Current financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Endowment funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	2	476,758	240,704	-	717,462	541,663
Other trading activities	3	6,224	-	-	6,224	7,400
Investments	4	28,322	66,632	64	95,018	49,486
Other income	5	-	-	-	-	107,779
Total income and endowments		511,304	307,336	64	818,704	706,328
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	6	15	-	6	21	-
Charitable activities	7	599,235	32,982	-	632,217	811,244
Other		-	3,878	-	3,878	118
Total resources expended		599,250	36,860	6	636,116	811,362
Net gains/(losses) on investments		(217)	(31,929)	(59)	(32,205)	1,316
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		(88,163)	238,547	(1)	150,383	(103,718)
Gross transfers between funds		1,598,303	(1,598,179)	(124)	-	-
Net movement in funds		1,510,140	(1,359,632)	(125)	150,383	(103,718)
Fund balances at 1 September 2022		453,372	1,371,673	2,274	1,827,319	1,931,037
Fund balances at 31 August 2023		1,963,512	12,041	2,149	1,977,702	1,827,319

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Prior financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Endowment funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	2	501,989	39,674	-	541,663
Other trading activities	3	7,400	-	-	7,400
Investments	4	26,684	22,743	59	49,486
Other income	5	-	107,779	-	107,779
Total income and endowments		536,073	170,196	59	706,328
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	7	601,040	210,204	-	811,244
Other		16	12	90	118
Total resources expended		601,056	210,216	90	811,362
Net gains/(losses) on investments		(342)	1,828	(170)	1,316
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		(65,325)	(38,192)	(201)	(103,718)
Gross transfers between funds		56,809	(56,809)	-	-
Net movement in funds		(8,516)	(95,001)	(201)	(103,718)
Fund balances at 1 September 2021		461,888	1,466,674	2,475	1,931,037
Fund balances at 31 August 2022		453,372	1,371,673	2,274	1,827,319

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 AUGUST 2023

	Notes	2023 £	£	2022 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		309,585		313,250
Current assets					
Debtors	14	17,063		25,638	
Investments	15	727,234		759,444	
Cash at bank and in hand		929,594		737,422	
		1,673,891		1,522,504	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	16	(5,774)		(6,875)	
Net current assets			1,668,117		1,515,629
Total assets less current liabilities			1,977,702		1,828,879
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	17		-		(1,560)
Net assets			1,977,702		1,827,319
Capital funds					
Endowment funds - general	20		2,149		2,274
Income funds					
Restricted funds	21		12,041		1,371,673
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds	19	1,522,391		-	
General unrestricted funds		441,121		453,372	
			1,963,512		453,372
			1,977,702		1,827,319

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 13th March, 2024

P. Cleever-Thorpe

Rev P Cleever-Thorpe (chair) - Trustee

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	27		100,446		(259,273)
Investing activities					
Proceeds from disposal of tangible fixed assets		-		110,029	
Proceeds from disposal of investments		5		(746,006)	
Investment income received		95,018		49,486	
Net cash generated from/(used in) investing activities			95,023		(586,491)
Financing activities					
Payment of obligations under finance leases		(3,297)		(1,413)	
Net cash used in financing activities			(3,297)		(1,413)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents			192,172		(847,177)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			737,422		1,584,599
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			929,594		737,422

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Newcastle Central and East Circuit of the Methodist Church is a unincorporated charity (charity number (1134265).

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

1.5 Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Freehold land and buildings	straight line over 100 years
Computers	straight line over 3 years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.9 Leases

Leases are classified as finance leases whenever the terms of the lease transfer substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to the lessees. All other leases are classified as operating leases.

Assets held under finance leases are recognised as assets at the lower of the assets fair value at the date of inception and the present value of the minimum lease payments. The related liability is included in the balance sheet as a finance lease obligation. Lease payments are treated as consisting of capital and interest elements. The interest is charged to net income/(expenditure) for the year so as to produce a constant periodic rate of interest on the remaining balance of the liability.

2 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2023	**2023**	**2023**	2022	2022	2022
	£	**£**	**£**	£	£	£
Donations and gifts	-	-	-	1,668	-	1,668
Assessments	363,123	-	363,123	393,086	-	393,086
Grants receivable	10,000	2,815	12,815	18,730	-	18,730
Administration	84,454	15,980	100,434	56,672	17,577	74,249
Other	19,181	221,909	241,090	31,833	22,097	53,930
	476,758	240,704	717,462	501,989	39,674	541,663

Other

Included in other donations and legacies are the net proceeds of £221,909 from the sale of Westmoor Methodist Church.

3 Other trading activities

	Other trading activities 2023	Other trading activities 2022
	£	**£**
Books & telephone income	5,996	5,413
Sundry income	228	1,987
	6,224	7,400

4 Investments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds general	Total	Total
	2023	**2023**	**2023**	**2023**	2022
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**	£
Rental income	25,313	20,020	-	45,333	43,853
Income from unlisted investments	-	22,178	-	22,178	-
Interest receivable	3,009	24,434	64	27,507	5,633
	28,322	66,632	64	95,018	49,486

5 Other income

	Total	Restricted funds
	2023	2022
	£	£
Net gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	107,779

6 Raising funds

	Unrestricted funds	Endowment funds general	Total	Total
	2023	**2023**	**2023**	**2022**
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Investment management	15	6	21	-
	15	6	21	-

7 Charitable activities

	Charitable activities 2023 £	Charitable activities 2022 £
Staff costs	326,260	484,218
Depreciation and impairment	3,665	5,997
Gifts and donations	628	1,268
Assessments	98,290	103,524
Travel	13,786	10,548
Repairs and property costs	66,761	55,164
Connexional funds	376	-
Pulpit supply	2,025	1,134
The Holy Biscuit costs	78,548	109,015
Hand in Hand costs	8,639	7,411
	598,978	778,279
Grant funding of activities (see note 8)	12,652	6,300
Share of support costs (see note 9)	15,662	15,323
Share of governance costs (see note 9)	4,925	11,342
	632,217	811,244
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	599,235	601,040
Restricted funds	32,982	210,204
	632,217	811,244

8 Grants payable

	Charitable activities 2023 £	Charitable activities 2022 £
Grants to institutions:		
SAW THB	-	2,500
Trinity Christian Community Centre	375	3,000
MINE	7,143	300
Newcastle City Cetre Chaplaincy	-	500
Brunswick Methodist Church	4,934	-
Rob Wylie	200	-
	12,652	6,300

9 Support costs

	Support costs £	Governance costs £	2023 £	Support costs £	Governance costs £	2022 £
Telephone	8,663	-	8,663	10,357	-	10,357
Postage & stationery	4,666	-	4,666	3,378	-	3,378
Sundries	2,333	-	2,333	1,588	-	1,588
Independent examiner's fees	-	4,452	4,452	-	4,200	4,200
Professional fees	-	473	473	-	7,142	7,142
	15,662	4,925	20,587	15,323	11,342	26,665
Analysed between Charitable activities	15,662	4,925	20,587	15,323	11,342	26,665

10 Trustees

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 August 2023 nor for the year ended 31 August 2022.

Trustees expenses
The aggregate amount of travelling and subsistence expenses reimbursed to the trustees during the year was £13,596 (2022: £12,238). The number of persons reimbursed was 9 (2022: 9). During the year trustees' indemnity insurance was provided of £224 (2022: £245).

11 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Direct charitable expenditure	9	12
Management and admin of the charity	2	2
Total	11	14

Employment costs	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	250,987	233,319
Social security costs	20,744	17,402
Other pension costs	54,529	233,497
	326,260	484,218

The key management personnel of the charity include the circuit stewards, the superintendent, other ministers and the circuit services manager who are all managing trustees. Total employee benefits of the key management personnel for the year were £34,788 (2022: £35,711).

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

12 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxationof Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

13 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings	Computers	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1 September 2022	366,467	17,827	384,294
Disposals	-	(7,000)	(7,000)
At 31 August 2023	366,467	10,827	377,294
Depreciation and impairment			
At 1 September 2022	53,217	17,827	71,044
Depreciation charged in the year	3,665	-	3,665
Eliminated in respect of disposals	-	(7,000)	(7,000)
At 31 August 2023	56,882	10,827	67,709
Carrying amount			
At 31 August 2023	309,585	-	309,585
At 31 August 2022	313,250	-	313,250

14 Debtors

	2023	2022
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Other debtors	7,593	2,529
Prepayments and accrued income	9,470	23,109
	17,063	25,638

15 Current asset investments

	2023	2022
	£	£
Unlisted investments	727,234	759,444

16 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2023	2022
		£	£
Obligations under finance leases		-	1,737
Accruals and deferred income		5,774	5,138
		5,774	6,875

17 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Obligations under finance leases		-	1,560

18 Operating lease commitments

At the reporting end date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Within one year	3,593	-
Between two and five years	12,576	-
	16,169	-

19 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

	Balance at 1 September 2022 £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2023 £
Property Fund	-	1,522,391	1,522,391
	-	1,522,391	1,522,391

The Property Fund

This fund represents funds relating to the sale, letting or other disposition of land which is Circuit property. The authority to sanction schemes for the application of capital money in the fund rests with the Circuit meeting, subject to approval by the Synod. The fund is represented by investments and or cash.

20 Endowment funds

Endowment funds represent assets which must be held permanently by the charity. Income arising on the endowment funds can be used in accordance with the objects of the charity and is included as unrestricted income. Any capital gains or losses arising on the assets form part of the fund.

		Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 September 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Revaluations gains and losses	Balance at 31 August 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Permanent endowments						
The Susannah Gibson memorial fund	496	13	(1)	-	10	518
WR Dixon gift	1,778	51	(5)	(124)	(69)	1,631
	2,274	64	(6)	(124)	(59)	2,149

21 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds				
	Balance at 1 September 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Revaluations, gains and losses	Balance at 31 August 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Dorris Nuttal bequest	5	-	-	(5)	-	-
Property Fund	1,360,468	288,541	(18,906)	(1,598,174)	(31,929)	-
Shieldfield Arftworks	11,200	18,795	(17,954)	-	-	12,041
	1,371,673	307,336	(36,860)	(1,598,179)	(31,929)	12,041

22 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Endowment funds 2023	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 August 2023 are represented by:					
Tangible assets	309,585	-	-	309,585	313,250
Current assets/(liabilities)	1,653,927	12,041	2,149	1,668,117	1,515,629
Long term liabilities	-	-	-	-	(1,560)
	1,963,512	12,041	2,149	1,977,702	1,827,319

23 Unrestricted funds

General Funds
These are funds that are available to be spent for any purpose by the charity.

Methodist Women in Britain
The Methodist Women in Britain, previously known as The Network Group and sometimes referred to as the Circuit Network, is a fellowship aimed at women of all ages within the church, who support each other and raise funds each year for 'the Easter offering', a Connexionally designated charity of the year. There are pastoral groups, fellowships and social activities. A small amount of the group's income is used for administrative costs, but most money is handed on to support the wider church.

Hand in Hand
A project was founded more than ten years ago by the former Heaton and Wallsend Circuit, based at Trinity Church Wallsend, serving the elderly and isolated in Wallsend. As time passed, the project expanded and provided lunch clubs, reminiscence and activity clubs as well as a befriending and visiting in homes service in Wallsend, Heaton, Longbenton and other places in North Tyneside. About seven years ago the project grew rapidly because of Lottery grant funding. Sadly when the grant finished in 2017, the management committee was unable to find a follow on funder and the project shrank significantly and now only operates from Trinity and Heaton Methodist Churches. Consequently, Hand in Hand has returned to be completely controlled by the Circuit with a small management group chaired by Rev'd Gavin Hume and legacy funds are being used to ensure that there are high quality lunch and activity clubs.

Shieldfield Art Works At The Holy Biscuit
Shieldfield Methodist Church closed as Local Church or Society, and in about 2006 the premises were rented to various organisations including a local radio station. By 2009 there was a proposal to sell the site but Rev'd Rob Hawkins in consultation with local businessman Ramy Zac, proposed a radical suggestion to develop and arts expression of Church, a form of Fresh Expressions of Church, using the premises. Mr Zac said that he would carry out, at his expense, a major refurbishment and Rob would set up the organisation of what quickly became known as The Holy Biscuit - it being opposite the Biscuit Factory art gallery. Until recently it has operated as a separate fund, but it is now felt that it should be an internal organisation of the Circuit, which 'owns' it.

The project has grown and now receives significant grants from the Methodist Connexional grants committee and is seen as an integral part of the arts scene in Newcastle. There are links to both universities in Newcastle and the one in Sunderland as well as the Ouseburn arts community. The Holy Biscuit is now reaching out to the local community, schools and other churches in Shieldfield. As well as providing gallery space, the premises are well used, for example, painting for fun (working with those who have health problems), schools work and church with a difference mid-week services.

The Walker Benevolent Fund
This fund represents funds that have been set aside for use at the discretion of the Deacon and had been exhausted during the year.

The Deacon Fund
This fund represents Model Trust funds transferred from the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church, the capital and income from which can be used at the discretion of the Deacon.

The Dixon bequests
This fund represents Model Trust funds transferred from the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church, the income from which can be used at the discretion of the Deacon and capital may be used with certain restrictions.

24 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2022 - none).

25 Restricted and endowment funds

Restricted Funds

The Doris Nuttal bequest

This fund represents funds donated to the Circuit, in practice used to provide for the repair and refurbishment of the Trinity Christian Community Centre. The fund is held in cash.

The Property Fund

This fund represents funds relating to the sale, letting or other disposition of land which is Circuit property. The authority to sanction schemes for the application of capital money in the fund rests with the Circuit meeting, subject to approval by the Synod. The fund is represented by investments and or cash.

Shieldfield Art Works At The Holy Biscuit

Shieldfield Methodist Church closed as Local Church or Society, and in about 2006 the premises were rented to various organisations including a local radio station. By 2009 there was a proposal to sell the site but Rev'd Rob Hawkins in consultation with local businessman Ramy Zac, proposed a radical suggestion to develop and arts expression of Church, a form of Fresh Expressions of Church, using the premises. Mr Zac said that he would carry out, at his expense, a major refurbishment and Rob would set up the organisation of what quickly became known as The Holy Biscuit - it being opposite the Biscuit Factory art gallery. Until recently it has operated as a separate fund, but it is now felt that it should be an internal organisation of the Circuit, which 'owns' it.

The project has grown and now receives significant grants, some of which are restricted, from the Methodist Connexional grants committee and is seen as an integral part of the arts scene in Newcastle. There are links to both universities in Newcastle and the one in Sunderland as well as the Ouseburn arts community. The Holy Biscuit is now reaching out to the local community, schools and other churches in Shieldfield. As well as providing gallery space, the premises are well used, for example, painting for fun (working with those who have health problems), schools work and church with a difference mid-week services.

Endowment Funds

The Susannah Gibson Memorial Fund

This fund represents monies left to the church in 1880 by the late Susannah Gibson, the income from which can be used 'for the sustenance of Wesleyan Ministers'.

The WR Dixon Gift

This fund represents Model Trust funds transferred from the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church and is used at the discretion of the deacon.

26 Transfers

Transfers between restricted and unrestricted reserves relate to restrictions no longer applied to the Property Fund. The balance on this fund ahs been transferred to a designated fund for use within the Newcastle area.

27	**Cash generated from operations**	**2023**	**2022**
		£	**£**
	Surplus/(deficit) for the year	150,383	(103,718)
	Adjustments for:		
	Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(95,018)	(49,486)
	Gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	(107,779)
	Fair value gains and losses on investments	32,205	(1,316)
	Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	3,665	5,997
	Movements in working capital:		
	Decrease in debtors	8,575	7,832
	Increase/(decrease) in creditors	636	(10,803)
	Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	100,446	(259,273)

28 Analysis of changes in net funds

	At 1 September 2022	**Cash flows**	**At 31 August 2023**
	£	**£**	**£**
Cash at bank and in hand	737,422	192,172	929,594
Obligations under finance leases	(3,297)	3,297	-
	734,125	195,469	929,594

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1134265

Accounts

Charity registration number 1134265

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Charity number	1134265
Principal address	Brunswick Methodist Church Brunswick Place Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear NE1 7BJ
Independent examiner	Robson Laidler Accountants Limited Fernwood House Fernwood Road Jesmond Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 2TJ
Bankers	Lloyds Bank plc 102 Grey Street Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7BJ Central Finance Board of the Methodists Church 9 Bonhill Street London EC2A 4PE
Solicitors	Sintons LLP The Cube Barrack Road Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 6DB
Surveyors and Valuers	Lambert Smith Hampton 41-51 Grey Street Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 6DB
Custodian Trustees	The Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes Central Buildings Oldham Street Manchester M1 5JQ

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

Rev A D Mabbs - Appointed 30/09/2021
A Brown - Resigned 31/12/2021
J E Hawdon - Resigned 31/12/2021
P Stewart - Resigned 31/12/2021
K I McKenzie - Resigned 31/10/2021
A P Mason - Retired 19/05/2022
V Choi
D W Thornton
G L Wilkinson
J C Kelsall
K A Brindley
P H Martin
Rev J M Thornton
T F Rogers
W F Filmer
A Ilderton
W Ho
R E Bourne
T Yip
Mr E Leung
A Lambert
J Keltie
Deacon A Carter
Deacon T Hume
Mr A Nicholson
Ms R Taglione
R G Hamil
Mrs R Wilkinson
Mr A Wilkinson
Mr L Lawson
Ms J Shuen
Mrs J Atherton
Mr D Lowry
M S Ball
R Ward
R Wylie - Resigned 01/04/22
E Fellows
Rev A F Moorhouse
D Pigeon
N Pigeon
A Weightman
K Stewart
P Newman
Rev G R Hume
Rev P D Cleever-Thorpe (Chair)
Revd Professor D A Wilkinson
M C Ward - Resigned 01/04/22)
Rev J Mooney
Rev M A Newman
Revd A Wilkinson
R Pickard
Deacon G I Morgan

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

M E Graham
C L Eke
D J Cowans
K I Gilfillan
I Leung
S M Fuller
H J Chapman
L Morley
M E Goldfinch
Rev Dr G F Wilson
J G Patrick
Rev K M Reader
J Bell
C Brindley
S D Richardson
S Walker
A Barker
J Anderson
D A Stabler
C Hall
Dr L Graham
I Moore - resigned 01/04/22
S Hutchinson - appointed 01/03/22

Circuit Stewards

The Circuit Stewards, who are the treasurers of the Circuit fund, who served during the year and until the date of this report were as follows:

Mrs M Graham (Finance)
Mr K McKenzie (resigned 31/10/21)
Mrs Carolyn Hall (appointed 22/12/22)
Mr David Lowry (resgined 31/12/21)
Mr Keith Gilfillan J.P.
Miss Audrey Ilderton (Senior Circuit Steward)

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT

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THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2022. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

PREAMBLE

The Methodist Church is said to have been created after John Wesley's conversion on 24th May 1738; it is a Free Church. The Newcastle Central and East Circuit came into being on 1st September 2009 at the merger of the former Newcastle Heaton & Wallsend and Newcastle Brunswick Central Circuits. The latter was, in itself, formed from a merger in the early 1970's from the Brunswick and Central & Sandyford Circuits. The calling of The Methodist Church is:

Worship: to Increase awareness of God's Presence and celebrate God's love.
Learning and caring: to help people to grow and learn as Christians.
Service: to be a good neighbour to people in need and challenge injustice.
Evangelism: we make more followers of Jesus Christ.

OBJECTIVES AND PERFORMANCE

The Circuit is constituted to advance the effective deployment of the resources of ministry, which include people, property and finance, as they relate to the Methodist Churches in the Circuit, the District and Connexion, to Churches of other denominations and to participation in the communities served by the Circuit and in ecumenical work in the area. The Constitution and Enumeration of Circuits is set out year by year in the Stations appointed by the Conference.

The public benefit can be clearly demonstrated by the Trustees as they have fulfilled the calling of the Methodist Church in maintaining the witness of the church throughout the area which the Circuit serves in parts of Newcastle and North Tyneside. The grants made have enabled the work to continue and people to develop themselves and grow in faith.

The Circuit has continued to fulfil its basic role of providing ministers to be in pastoral charge of the Societies (Local Churches) which make up the Circuit and support the churches in various ways including providing financial help for their work. We provide ministers with manses (two manses are owned by The United Reformed Church, Northern Synod) and see that, through the Methodist Church and United Reformed Church Central Services, they are paid their stipends and allowances. Those manses not immediately required have been let on assured short hold leases.

During the year under review, there has been a change to our team of Circuit Stewards with the number reducing to four, resulting in increased workload on the remaining members of this lay leadership group. The Circuit Leadership Team is comprised of all ministers in the Circuit and Stewards. The Superintendent Minister and the Stewards meet monthly and the Circuit Leadership Team meets bi-monthly.

The Circuit Stewards are the Lay Leaders of The Circuit. They are Managing Trustees, as are all members of The Circuit Meeting, and as Stewards they are responsible for managing the day-to-day operation of all Circuit affairs in consultation with the Superintendent Minister. The Circuit Meeting (Managing Trustees) meet three times in the year.

The life, work, and ministry of the Circuit is underpinned by prayer, public worship and personal commitment to follow Christ. We continue to base our Circuit's mission and our churches growth plans upon the four aspects of 'Our Calling' of The Methodist Church: 'Worship', 'Service', 'Learning & Caring' & 'Evangelism'.

The start of the year saw many of the restrictions brought on by the pandemic lessen. Out churches have continued to explore new ways of worship, learning and caring, often in an on-line context as well as face-to-face gatherings. Whilst this has been difficult for those who are less able to access on-line worship and other activities, churches who have been able to expand their on-line presence have continued to see significant numbers of new people engaging with their church's life. This has been very encouraging to witness.

Sadly, another of our Societies, West Moor Methodist Church, requested to 'cease to meet' in September 2021. This request was granted and so the final service of the church was held in November 2021. Our hope at that point was that Christian worship and witness would continue on the site or that it could be used for community work. However, the highest offer received was from a building developer and in accordance with Charity Commission Rules and Regulations that offer had to be accepted.

There were a few changes to Circuit office holders, as noted in the minutes of our Circuit Meetings. The Circuit is also served by Ministers of other traditions. The Circuit now contributes an annual assessment to The United Reformed Church Northern Synod, to cover the stipends and other expenses of ministry of two URC ministers stationed in the Circuit.

The Circuit continues to be blessed with the continuing ministry of our Supernumeraries; thanks go to Revd Derek Aldridge and Revd Malcolm A. Newman. We are also grateful to Rev. Barrie Morris, a Minister without Appointment, who came to reside in our Circuit in mid- 2022 and kindly takes an occasional preaching appointment. Local Preachers and Worship Leaders continue to serve the Circuit in their calling. There were four preachers in training, at various stages, during the year. Two have now paused their training and two are currently on trial.

During the year the Superintendent and Circuit Leadership Team have not led a specific annual review of our Churches and projects, as required by the Annual Conference of The Methodist Church. Growth or end of life plans were still not feasible, as our churches recovered from the pandemic restrictions. It is planned that the programme of review commenced initially in 2018/2019 will be continued into the next year, with Vision as the theme of February 2023's Circuit Meeting.

CIRCUIT POLICIES

All policies conform as appropriate with guidance and principles as stipulated by the Methodist Church (https://www.methodist.org.uk/).

RISK POLICY

During the year under review the Circuit Stewards and Superintendent once again reviewed the 'Risk policy statement' which covers the following areas:

Financial Risk

The Circuit Meeting is faced with the following financial risks:

- dependency on limited income sources (assessments, investment income and donations);
- managing the capital resources;
- fluctuations in investment income and rental income;
- inability to attract additional donations from the general public and members;
- an unforeseen rise in demand for expenditure (for example on Manses and Chapels);
- an unforeseen increase in the actuarial shortfall on the pension funds for which the Circuit Meeting could be deemed responsible (the Circuit is already contributing to a shortfall);
- an unforeseen increase in the requirement for an additional manse or other property;
- a sustained fall in the value of investments and property held by the Circuit and appearing in the balance sheet.

Operation, Reputation and Strategy

In 2021/2022, we identified the most significant risks as follows:

- inability to create new Methodist disciples resulting in further decline, ultimately resulting in the Methodist Church ceasing to exist;
- failure to provide adequate resources that enable the Circuit Meeting to discharge its responsibilities;
- the experience of Our Calling fails to be integrated into the mission and ministry pathways of the Circuit;
- sudden change in policy or strategic direction enforced by The Circuit Meeting;
- dependency on limited income sources (Assessments, investment income and donations);
- the impact of economic fluctuations on our assets, liabilities and our ability to raise funds to enable us to continue our work.
- an unforeseen increase in the actuarial shortfall on the pension funds for which the Circuit Meeting could be deemed responsible;
- loss of key personnel;
- the effects of 'Brexit' and the coronavirus pandemic;
- we have a large number of lay employees but no Circuit HR Officer.

Many of these risks are likely to remain equally relevant throughout 2022 and beyond.

Risk management

The Methodist Church in Great Britain has a risk management policy, which has been set by the Methodist Council for use both by the Trustees and by Circuits.

The risk management policy is designed to identify and analyse key strategic and operational risks facing the Methodist Church and, where at unacceptable levels, to take steps to mitigate the risks.

We define key strategic and operational risks as those that, without effective or appropriate mitigation, are highly likely to occur and would have a positive or negative impact on the Church's ability to fulfil its purpose of advancing the Christian faith in accordance with its doctrinal standards. These risks are reported to the Managing Trustees through a risk management process, which allows them both to challenge any assumptions the Circuit Leadership team has made about risks and also to understand the context in which decisions are taken. This helps to ensure that the most serious risks are being managed effectively.

The trustees recognise that it is neither possible nor appropriate to seek to eliminate risk entirely. We recognise that risk-taking is inherent within the task of communicating the Gospel; John Wesley himself took risks in establishing the Methodist communities.

Our task, therefore, is to embrace risks that aim to advance the Church's purposes while ensuring that we avoid or minimise those risks that might have a negative impact. Effective risk management processes will help to increase the likelihood of the Church fulfilling its mission. The risk management report is reviewed and revised annually.

INVESTMENT POLICY

Since 2019-2020, the Circuit had built up significant reserves, generated from the sale of Allen Memorial, Longbenton and Heaton Methodist Churches and the Burn Terrace flats. The capital will be increased further when the proceeds of the sale of West Moor Methodist Church are received (less 40% levy). The Circuit's free reserves in May 2022 were £1.4million.

The Circuit Meeting (Trustees) had discussed and considered the notion of investing a significant part of the free reserves over a couple of meetings. At the May meeting it was agreed to invest £750,000 in the Central Finance Board (CFB) Managed Mixed Fund which had shown a positive return over a long period. See https://www.cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk/managedfunds/.

The decision of the Trustees was based on the following considerations:

1. The Circuit Meeting has a responsibility, as far as is possible, to protect, manage and conserve the capital for future mission and ministry.
2. The Charities Commission has provided guidance to Charities, seeking to invest cash funds. See https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-and-investment-matters-a-guide-for-trustees-cc14
3. The proposed fund for our investment – The Managed Mixed Fund – is a medium risk investment (that is risk 5 on the scale 0-10).
4. There is much evidence to be confident that the CFB Managed Mixed Fund is both an ethical and a sound medium risk investment. See also the CFB ethics page: https://www.cfbmethodistchurch.org.uk/ethics/ which indicates their ethical policy regarding investments.
5. The staff at the CFB are all salaried employees and are not paid on commission or performance.
6. If the Circuit Meeting wishes to draw from capital that is held in the CFB Managed Mixed Fund then it is possible to do this with about two weeks notice.
7. Interest received from the investments will be used to fund mission and ministry within the Circuit.
8. This will be an investment for the long term and will be reviewed regularly.

PAYMENTS TO STAFF

Ministers

Stipends for Methodist Ministers are determined annually by the Methodist Conference. The Circuit, as the employing body, contributes to their pension fund. They are also given an annual computer allowance.

Lay employees

In 2010 the Methodist Conference agreed that the rates of the Living Wage, as published by the **Living Wage Foundation**, should form the minimum basic salary for people employed by a district, circuit or a local church. This policy also includes young people below the age of 18. In addition, a 9-point salary scale is applied to a person specification, which is based on qualifications, experience and responsibilities. The Circuit is scrupulous in following this policy. Guidelines are available on the Methodist Church web-site. See https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/employees-and-volunteers/lay-employment-resource/

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The circuit's safeguarding policy was reviewed in May 2022 and will next be reviewed at our February 2023 Circuit Meeting. All managing trustees are regularly reminded of their responsibilities. The circuit takes its safeguarding responsibilities very seriously, ensuring every church/project is aware of and adheres to its responsibilities such as displaying its policy, updating its safeguarding information, reviewing its safeguarding policy on an annual basis, and retaining its records in accordance with proper guidance. We appoint a Circuit Safeguarding Officer who works closely with the Circuit Superintendent, Circuit Administrator, and Circuit Stewards to ensure that our safeguarding responsibilities are reviewed on a regular basis.

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

In June 2022, safeguarding meetings were held with all Church Safeguarding Officers and the Senior Steward, to remind them of the forms/declarations which all volunteers need to sign, depending on their individual roles, together with the training which they need to undertake. DBS checks are required for any volunteer whose work brings them into contact with users of our services and projects and the general public.

COMPLAINTS HANDLING

It is hoped that any conflict situations will be dealt with sensitively by leaders of our local church groups. However, where this is not possible then the Methodist Complaints process will need to be invoked. This will require contact being made with the Local Complaints Officer who is our Circuit Superintendent Minister, Revd Paul Cleever-Thorpe. The process would then be put into effect with the appropriate support being given by our District Reconciliation group.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

To comply with Methodist Church guidance, Trustees are asked at the Circuit Meeting to declare any conflict of interest as soon as they are aware of any possibility that his or her personal or wider interests could influence decision-making within the Circuit. This is a standard agenda item at the beginning of each meeting to allow trustees to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

GRANTMAKING POLICY

The Circuit meeting is minded to make occasional grants from one of the funds. These grants are discretionary and full details are given in the accounts. The funds are:

- The general fund, for example grants to the District Benevolence fund.
- The Model Trust [formerly the Circuit Advance Fund] is exhausted.
- The City Centre Fund, this is used in the same way as a Model Trust - it is controlled by the Managing Trustees of the District.
- The Susannah Gibson Memorial Fund – grants were awarded for "the sustenance of Wesleyan Methodist Ministers" - no grants have been awarded for a number of years.
- The Doris Nuttall bequest - funds may be used at the discretion of the Circuit Meeting, but in practice money is used at and on the former South Gosforth Methodist Church – now known as the Trinity Christian Community Centre - which Doris Nuttall attended.

GRANTMAKING POLICY (Continued)

- The Elizabeth Ann Burton bequest - money was left to the former Willington Quay Methodist Church. The Circuit subsequently obtained a Charity Commission Order which allows it to control all the assets of the bequest, it should be noted that although Mrs Burton passed away in 1972 it was only in February 2011 that the Circuit became aware that there was a substantial sum of money and two Tyneside flats to be transferred to the Circuit. The flats were refurbished and were let to people in need, via the charity Oasis Aquila. Due to problems with the maintenance of the flats, it was decided to sell them in 2020. The proceeds of the sale (£110,028) were received in November 2021 and are to be used for mission in the Circuit.
- Bequest funds – these are various funds that may be used at the discretion of the Circuit meeting, for mission.
- The Deacons' Fund - this fund was created by a vote at the Spring Circuit Meeting 2019, by agreeing to bring together the three remaining small Model Trusts and the balance of the general fund of the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church. In order to achieve this, a Charity Commission Order has been obtained and in the case of trust 1486 the Methodist Council voted to approve the transfer of the W R Dixon gift to the Deacons' Fund. Trust 1486 is a permanent endowment; Trust 5377 capital and income can be used; and Trust 5377B income can be used and the capital with restrictions. In practice, it is the intention that a Deacon can use the income only, for work in the Wallsend area at their discretion.

There is a further fund which is held and used to maintain the manses and other property owned by the Circuit and two manses owned by the United Reformed Church.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Brunswick Methodist Church

Our church year has begun to see more face-to-face gatherings take place with a desire on the part of many to reconnect and to value social gatherings as well as those for the purpose of Christian worship.

Our weekly pattern of worship continues to focus upon a Sunday morning. Traditional forms of worship have been punctuated by more informal, all age worship services given the name of 'Brunch Church' which has reached over 130 people, the majority being from our Chinese Methodist congregation. A recent questionnaire was circulated to invite feedback upon this very different kind of worship and these responses have been overwhelmingly positive.

The fellowship life of our church has been maintained through our restarting again regular bible study and also through the continuation of our weekday morning prayers which have been held both face-to-face and also online. Both of these have been sustained through the work of our Lay Worker for Worship and Discipleship whose leadership has also been crucial in the 'Brunch Church' all age worship services mentioned above.

Our church membership has continued to see a gradual decline due to the deaths of some much loved and valued members over the past year. Our hope is that some of our new attenders will seek to make a commitment to the life of Brunswick Methodist Church through becoming church members. We recognise, like any organisation, how crucial it is to have succession planning in place for those times when key office holders will step down from their existing roles.

On a very positive note, Brunswick Methodist Church has recently been privileged to receive a visit by a member of the Royal family, HRH, The Earl of Wessex. This took place just after the year to which this achievement report relates but reaffirms the importance of our worshipping and witnessing presence in Newcastle city centre.

Over the course of the past year the community usage of our church building has grown significantly to continue the 'bounce back' from the Covid lockdowns which had such a huge impact upon our room usage and the associated loss in 'letting' income. New users of our premises now include Joseph Cowan Lifelong Learning who now have a paid worker based in one of our offices. We have given very positive feedback to our Centre Manager who has been instrumental in how our building has 'sprung back to life'.

The 'open door' policy which undergirds so much of Brunswick's mission has almost returned to the same place as pre-Covid with our Coffee Shop open on four days per week and our Listening Post, a non-appointment based one-to-one listening service, open on one day per week. These outreach forms of service are staffed solely by volunteers whom we meet with on a regular basis to provide them with the support which they need as well as giving them the opportunity to help to give input into how these services can operate more effectively.

Brunswick Methodist Church (Continued)
Over the past year, one further lay employee has been appointed to work as part of our church's outreach to the vulnerable in our city. This Outreach Worker is employed for 15 hours per week and gives personalised support to those individuals, especially rough sleepers, who often require a multi-agency approach when it comes to meeting their needs. Our church therefore acts as one part of this coordinated support and liaises with other agencies to ensure that the best outcomes can be secured for the most vulnerable in our city centre.

Our city centre church building has continued to play host to two other congregations over the course of the year, although one of these, The Salvation Army, is shortly to move to a new building of their own after fourteen years of being based in our building. Our second congregation, the Chinese Methodist Church, has increased greatly in number following the arrival of many BNO's (British Nationals from Overseas) from Hong Kong. Our Methodist Circuit has begun to integrate this congregation more into our UK context and ways of working and this has given rise to many opportunities to share together ranging from united acts of worship to Brunswick's Minister and Lay Worker for Discipleship helping to lead baptismal and church membership groups.

Overall, we have had a positive year with many opportunities still to be grasped and many challenges which lie ahead.

Newcastle Chinese Methodist Church
The Sunday service of the Newcastle Chinese Methodist Church (NCMC) resumed in December 2021. Since then, our Church has received a large number of Hong Kong BNO migrants. Most of them are young families with children studying in primary or secondary schools. Some also emigrated to Newcastle with their elderly parents.

With the influx of BNO migrants, NCMC has experienced and faced challenges in providing support to the newcomers in different aspects:

- provision of pastoral care to and establishing a relationship with these families
- assisting to solve their immigration problems in settling down in Newcastle
- helping young children to assimilate into the UK's education system
- supporting and caring for the elderly to assist them in adapting to the UK's cultural environment.

NCMC has very limited pastoral manpower. Rev. Lawrence Law of NCMC retired in August 2021 and recruitment to fill the post was unsuccessful. The church is now left with only one full-time pastoral worker (Jacqueline Shuen) whose work is being overseen by Rev. Paul Cleever-Thorpe. The influx of BNO migrants has demanded a lot of additional work from the pastoral worker. These include pastoral care and visits, developing and overseeing the running of new worshipping services/activities, assisting the migrants to settle down in Newcastle etc. To alleviate her workload, NCMC has raised funds for one year to employ a part-time Pastoral worker (16 hours/week) from August 2021-July 2022. This has released some of her workloads but, with no additional funding, NCMC is now resuming its original minimal pastoral manpower establishment.

With God's blessing, during the year, the church has raised a lot of volunteers to help the pastoral worker cope with her heavy workload. The church has now set up:

- two Sunday school classes in Cantonese and one Sunday school class in English
- one youth fellowship group pastoring around 40 young people (numbers increasing on a weekly basis)
- adult (adults, postgraduate, young professionals, families) fellowship groups
- a caring team to provide support and pastoral care for NCMC members
- Bible study groups
- regular prayer meetings.

We have also seen the glory of our God in NCMC. In June 2022, fourteen members were baptised in NCMC and around 60 will formally join as members of NCMC in January 2023.

Newcastle Chinese Methodist Church (Continued)
Notwithstanding the above, NCMC will definitely require at least one more full-time pastoral worker to cope with the need of the continuous incoming BNO migrants. With more manpower resources, we could step up the work in the fellowship of the Church and the Church's many contacts with people at important parts of their lives. Through more pastoral care, we could establish a relationship with BNO migrants, and encompass support in times of trouble and personal and/or spiritual growth. Through visiting the households or the sick, we could have a deeper understanding of the migrants, evangelise and instruct them in the Christian faith, and prepare them for the reception of the sacraments. Without additional manpower support, both Pastor Jacqueline and Rev Paul will be overstretched to a limit that they will be completely burnt out. In addition, the Church could not fulfil God's mission to serve the newly arrived migrants.

We know that the Church will face a lot of challenges. However, we have faith in our mighty God. We believe that He will always be with us, lead us and give us the strength to serve Him. With His guidance, we could fulfil his mission to serve the newly arrived immigrants and the local community of Newcastle.

The Church of the Good Shepherd, Battle Hill
(Anglican and Methodist LEP)
Our focus on mission and outreach has strengthened well this year, enabled by some partnerships that we have established.

Little Shepherds Baby and Toddler Group reopened after Covid lockdown and in school term time continues to provide play, fellowship and Christian support to an average of 25 children and 25 adults each week. The 'bubble prayers' session were a highlight, and we gave each family the gift of a bottle of bubbles to encourage them to pray at home. Prayer requests are made often and this outreach has resulted in a number of baptisms.

Working around the lockdown restrictions we continued to stream services via Zoom which encouraged people to join church services for the first time and encouraged one person to become our Treasurer. We held an outdoor Christingle service and, in spite of Covid, 137 people attended to hear the good news of Jesus – many of these were not regular church attenders.

With four other churches in the area we formed a partnership called Rising Sun Neighbours, reaching out in mission to people in the community, in particular to those who live in the new housing estates around the Rising Sun Country Park. On 12th February we held a fun Valentine's Trail in the park called 'Love is in the air' which attracted 200 visitors and subsequently attracted over 1,000 people on our Facebook site - many of these for the first time. Feedback and engagement was extremely positive.

We worked with North Tyneside Council to help plan and launch Spaces of Reflection around The Wagonways. Our suggestion of including a Prayer Box at the Wallsend site was accepted and this has been put in place. To continue that partnership, we also held Death Cafés in church, which encouraged non-church attenders to attend, in particular those members of the Mindfulness Group – a group that we ran for a number of months.

Our partnership with a local dance group, and their dance performance, was a super addition to our Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebration. Many families came to support and share in the joy. We value making connections with families and young people and these connections are further strengthened with a presence at Hot Chocolate Youth Group and our assemblies work with schools.

In June and July we opened a free café space in church called 'Chill out with a cuppa' and on several days attracted up to a dozen people from the community, as well as residents from the local nursing home where we resumed church services and pastoral visits. This was a valuable time of fellowship which paved our way to open our new Warm Space, for which we received funding from North Tyneside Council.

The personal giving and fundraising in church has been very generous and, with some church bookings resuming, has enabled us to pay all our financial commitments. In line with making the best use of resources we have changed our lighting to save energy and costs, and have followed eco-church guidelines to help save our planet, achieving a Bronze Award for the changes we made.

Coxlodge Methodist Church
Coxlodge has a small, welcoming congregation and a lively Messy Church which meets each month.

At the beginning of the year, we welcomed two new groups to use our premises, the regional recorder orchestra and also a recorder group. We said farewell to the Brownies who were able to return to their former meeting place. Closer links have been formed with the Caddyshacks, a group for adults with learning disabilities, who meet one day per week in our hall. Members of the church have helped provide one to one help in craft sessions and we have shared in some of their musical activities.

In June our church council made the difficult decision that Coxlodge Methodist Church should cease to meet. Our membership has declined and our congregation of mostly older people were less able to undertake the roles and responsibilities required of us. This is a sad time for us, but we have continued to provide support during the last months and are determined that we celebrate the worship and witness of 205 years of Methodism on this site. Our final Sunday service will be in December 2022 with a thanksgiving and celebration service in the Spring of 2023. Before then we are planning to do as much as we can to raise money to support local, national and international charities with a series of events and concerts.

Jesmond Methodist Church
After a year and a half of predominantly online Worship, we were pleased to come back into our church building officially, in September 2021, and to share with one another again. But we were aware of everything we had learnt during our time online and were committed to continuing to stream our services live from the building. With two separate and gracious legacies we were able to invest in cameras and streaming equipment with one with the other to invest heavily in sound equipment, giving us a new mixing desk, microphones and more. Now, our services each week are held in the building and streamed online and we are thankful that we are able to bring together these seemingly two separate groups into our whole congregation.

An exciting development in the last year has been the formation of a 'Community of Learning.' This is a group of 7-10 people of all ages who gather once a month to explore preaching & worship leading. These sessions have involved bible study, following different parts of the Methodist local preacher course, and interviews with current local preachers and ministers. The group has developed three new 'Host' team members who lead the prayers and parts of our Sunday services and two new preachers in training, in addition to those who are already serving in these capacities as part of the group. The team currently go once a quarter to the local Methodist care home to lead an evening service and the hope is that a new occasional evening service will start where more people can worship lead, host and preach for the first time.

Our Sunday morning congregation has gained much life through an increase in the number of children attending our worship. We set up a new team of volunteers who run Jesmond Methodist Kids (JMK), our Sunday School. The children are able to engage in our worship but also have a regular and consistent time to learn about God and the love He has for each of them. The leaders' feedback into our service what JMK have been doing each week, teaching us through this. We are thankful for those serving this new ministry and, as the children remind us regularly, "JMK is awesome."

We have also launched new cross-generational house groups. There are currently five house groups that meet across the city every two weeks and they are spaces where members can focus upon recent sermons and bible passages together. The meetings are led by group members, following a cell structure of looking at the four Ws: Welcome, Worship, Word and Witness.

We set up new task groups that meet to discuss different aspects of church governance. These are: Property & finance; Gathered worship; Evangelism, Justice and Outreach; Discipleship; and Safeguarding. Each of these task groups report back to Church Council and the Leadership Team. Any member of the congregation can get involved in these groups, helping to share jobs, responsibilities, and expertise.

Throughout this last year we have seen continued growth with new members, new people serving, new students and families becoming part of our community. We are thankful to God as we explore and discern his plans for our Church. We are spending some time exploring our future and our calling as a community to the people of Jesmond and beyond. We will continue to seek to be a community of faith that orientates itself on the worship of God and the sharing of God's love within the places we find ourselves to be.

St. Andrew's Church, Benton
(Methodist and United Reformed LEP)

The church continues serving the communities of Benton and Forest Hall with regular public worship of a variety of styles to meet the needs of different people. Learning and Caring is expressed through Discipleship Groups and the Pastoral Team, as well as through groups and activities that serve the community. The church offers service to the community through raising money for many causes and contributions from the CARE fund (a percentage of our church giving), providing practical help to those in need, and hosting many community groups and activities. The church has been seeking to reach out to the community through things such as community activities at particular times of year - especially Easter and Christmas – through gifts, acts of kindness, prayers, and building relationships with those who use our building.

While many activities were put on hold, or moved online during Covid, the members have done all they can to continue worshipping, caring and serving their community in these difficult times. Membership has increased due to transfers from other churches in the circuit which have sadly ceased to meet, and the new members are integrating into the enlarged Church Family.

The church also continues to be a visible expression of Christian unity, with Methodist and URC traditions working in harmony.

St. Cuthbert's Church, Heaton
(Methodist and United Reformed LEP)

Like most congregations the past two years have been difficult. We are only now starting to get back to "normal". Most of our people have returned, although one or two are suffering from age and not being so mobile.

This has obviously had an impact on our finances as we have tried still to maintain the upkeep of the building. None of the people hiring our premises have returned.

However, we have recently agreed a hiring agreement with Newcastle Christian Tabernacle who started worshipping in our premises on Sunday afternoons and Tuesday and Thursday evenings in August. They started their meetings with a joint faith lunch with our congregation following our usual morning service. Everyone has spoken well of the fellowship between the two groups. With the fee they pay there will be quite an impact on our finances, even allowing for extra use of lighting and heating. This will obviously increase costs during the winter months. They have requested a Broadband facility which we don't have at present so we are looking into this. It has been agreed that the leasing time will be for an initial 3 months trial and if everything is agreeable then this will be increased to one year.

Church of St. John the Evangelist, Kingston Park
(Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and United Reformed LEP)

This has been a year of steady progress and emergence from the pandemic. Though recorded membership is slightly lower, actual attendance at services has increased through the year and we are hopeful of converting these to members over the coming years. Services are supported by a band and, occasionally, by the church choir and many are now lay-led. We have continued to deliver online versions of our worship services and Bible study by Zoom, both of which attracted interest from those beyond the immediate church. Junior Church has been growing slowly but steadily since the pandemic.

St John's hold regular Prayer meetings online and a prayer group prays for any concerns. The church also has an outdoor prayer space.

We have offered a range of outreach events to the community including a successful Easter egg hunt and Harvest activities, which were combined with Messy Church sessions. A smaller family sports day was a good opportunity to highlight the pending renovation of the local play area, which our members have been actively supporting. Our Holiday Club was held as a physical event. A celebration event for the Queen's Jubilee included live music, food trucks and fairground rides and there were church tents for prayer, Messy Church and refreshments. We plan to hold our community carol singing event at Tesco with the Newcastle Choral Society and the local primary school - last year's was very well attended – this year in aid of Action for Children and West End Refugee Services. Support is offered to asylum seekers in the nearby Novotel.

The weekly Beacon coffee drop-in attracts a wide range of people and the Tinytots group for babies up to 2 ½ years old is well attended too.

Church of St. John Evangelist, Kingston Park (continued)
(Anglican, Methodist, Baplist and United Reformed (LEP)
We have committed to becoming a net zero carbon church and, consequently, we have improved recycling facilities, installed a bike rack and created a 'bee friendly' wildflower garden. Later in 2022 we will have solar panels installed which will contribute to our aim and cut our energy costs. In May we were delighted to be given a Bronze Eco Church award and we are working towards the Silver award.

Our bookings have improved throughout the year – grants were obtained to help cover the shortfall during building closure. We are blessed to have been able to accommodate new groups, the activities for which have placed St John's at the centre of our community.

We are currently in the process of looking at our worship life and considering ways in which we can continue to deliver the Word to Kingston Park.

Trinity Methodist Church, Wallsend
Trinity Wallsend welcomed the return of most groups following the Covid restrictions - Scouts, Bloom Babies, Line Dance and Weightwatchers. Unfortunately, Little Learners could not continue. The Church groups, Girls Brigade and Youth Club returned face to face and numbers have grown.

Age UK were unable to continue with the Tea Dance so Trinity has taken over the running of it and it is doing quite well.

Messy Church opened in December with Christingle; however, numbers were low and the church is reflecting on the future. Mission may well go in a different direction.

For many different reasons - mainly a lack of volunteers – it has been decided that the Toddler Groups will remain closed. It is the end of an era but energies will go into something else.

Trinity has reopened its Saturday Coffee Morning, now titled the Blue Door Drop In and this is being advertised as a Warm Space.

The congregation has slowly returned but there are members who are now unable to worship face-to-face. Trinity Church is continuing to record worship which goes out on the YouTube channel and is watched regularly by a number of people.

The Wesley Orphan House Trust
The Trust derives most of its income from rent of the site of the former 'Orphan House' on Northumberland Street, plus a limited sum from investments. Annually, the trust budgets to have approximately £25,000 available for grants and favours work with children, vulnerable people, education and, occasionally, for property improvements where the outcome is mission based.

During the year we were pleased to respond to sixteen grant applications. This exactly matched the number of grants made the previous year. This also represented a welcome increase in our funding total back to our normal £25,000, compared with £17,000 in the previous period.

These figures include our rolling grants of between £1,000 to £5,000 per annum, usually committed over five years, made to Together Mission NE, The South Shields Bede Circuit Mission Outreach Shop and The Wesley Study Centre.

Other grant recipients have included: Marie Curie, Action for Children, Calvert Trust Northumberland, Trinity Church & Community Centre, West End Foodbank (for stock and Scotswood Garden Project), Cornerstone, Trinity Blaydon, Shieldfield Art Works, Hand in Hand, Blyth Methodist Church, Heaton Festival and the Peoples Kitchen. Each received a grant of between £500 and £2,000.

We are hoping that soon the Wesley Orphan House Trust will have a web site, accessible via the Circuit website. Meanwhile, a grant application form and written guidance can be obtained via the secretary, at woht@brunswickmethodist.org.uk

Presence Project, Walker
This has been a year of significant change for the Presence Project, with a change in project personnel and the project itself becoming an ecumenical partnership with Mission Initiative Newcastle East (MINE). Initially the post was for eight hours a week, increasing to sixteen towards the end of the year. The priority has been for the me, as the new Project worker, to get to know Pottery Bank Community Centre staff and volunteers, some regular centre users and where possible, make connections with the wider community.

The steering group consists of Paul Cleever-Thorpe (Methodist Circuit), Audrey Ilderton (Methodist Circuit) and Phil Medley (Parish Priest and Chair of MINE) and we have met six times over the year. This group exists for accountability and for collaborative reflection on the role and its development.

The Presence Project does not have a formal relationship with Pottery Bank. For example, I do not have a voice to contribute to decision making, planning of events or response to community need from within the centre itself. I have been learning how to navigate the tension of being a guest in the space. I have explored what 'Presence' means, as a newcomer to the Centre and to the community, often through the lens of power and the many manifestations of the imbalance of it.

There is a Heritage Lottery funded project being run by the Community Centre, entitled 'In the Footsteps of Walker Women'. It includes supporting women through a 'writing for wellbeing' course, learning to share stories and producing a display of Walker Women stories. Through involvement in this project, which is resonant with the Presence Project, I have been able to develop relationships, work collaboratively and deepen my understanding of the community.

The increase in hours has opened opportunities for me to make links with other service providers in the area, finding out how people are working together for the flourishing of the community. I have been giving my time to the Neighbourhood Transformation Team by joining their door knocking programme which seeks to connect with every household in the area. This connection has led to some creative ideas for joint working.

Looking forward, there seems to be a need for a clearer articulation of the relationship between the Presence Project, Pottery Bank Community Centre, and the wider Walker community – underpinned by theological reflection and experiences of the last year? In addition, more resources may beneeded to develop the role of being present in the community, increasing collaborative working among faith groups and other organisations for the flourishing of community?

Hand in Hand project
Hand in Hand has two clubs, one in Heaton and one in Wallsend.

Wallsend
The club re - opened in early September 2021 and numbers were quite low. We initially started with refreshments and cake. Then in early October members were asking when we were going to be doing lunch again, so we decided that was possible. However, numbers remained low until the Spring when we began to get a few more. The club has two-part members of staff and 3 regular volunteers with others being willing to fill in when needed. Members tell us they love coming and look forward to a quiz and conversation and a really good meal. We were very grateful for the grant we received helping towards costs.

Heaton
Following lockdown Heaton's club returned in early September. They meet in Christ Church who are very welcoming and do not want any rent. However, as a club we feel we should give a donation which will go towards heating. This makes a massive difference and the club continues to thrive. They enjoy quizzes, talks and photograph afternoons. Once a month they have a hot lunch.

Shieldfield Art Works @ The Holy Biscuit
Between September 2021-August 2022 we have achieved much at SAW. As part of *Prospect Us* we explored the social, emotional and political impact of commodification of land, rapid urban development and studentification in Newcastle. We collaborated with BxNU institute, Newcastle University, artists and researchers. We were also able to host two events at the renowned art space called the Baltic which attracted a wide range of people from diverse backgrounds. At our Harvest Festival we shared food, live music, crafts and a time of thanksgiving. We also launched our Shieldfield Seasonal Recipe Zine which encourages sustainable food practices and celebrates the diverse cultures of our area. We hosted two Painting for Fun exhibitions, one in December (which was the first one back after lockdown and celebrated their 10th birthday) and one in the summer. Both of these exhibitions boost the confidence and positive wellbeing of class members. In February and March we hosted Take Over where, over four exciting exhibitions, seven artists were supported to develop and curate their work. In the spring *Bee Lines Through the City* explored the importance and interconnectedness of bees to nature's diverse ecosystems. We investigated how humans can support bees in the city through sustainable, local food growing and better urban planning.

We co-designed and co-built our new garden space with community members and it is now a community asset in the area of Shieldfield where there are minimal green spaces. The garden was opened by community members, community supporters in our local Methodist Circuit and Mayor Jamie Driscoll, who financially supported the project. The garden is a further embodiment of our core values: a space for hospitality, art and activism, where we can continue to flourish our community together. Jamie Driscoll described SAW as 'one of those places and events which inspires and energises... a green, wildlife-friendly oasis in the heart of a busy urban area... space for gatherings and for contemplation...building a sense of community in the middle of a dense urban area.'

We started SAW Reflects, which are events where we think about the themes in our exhibition programme or the wider world, and explore how art and theology can speak to each other. We also started Craft Action Collective in the spring: a creative group which seeks to think deeply and respond to injustices in a gentle, careful way through craft and printmaking. We continued Painting for Fun where nearly all of our members have now returned in person after lockdown. Within our Shieldfield Grows group we had five adopt a plot growers where residents who don't have a garden cared for a plot. We also held many workshops in order to upskill local residents in growing and sustainability skills. We have also collaborated with Life Vineyard and City Church to begin a Pop up Pantry in our building every Wednesday which seeks to help tackle food poverty within the area. Finally, we have spoken at university conferences and invited university students to participate in our programme.

We have been successful in receiving funding from SHED, Sir James Knott Trust, All Churches Trust, Newcastle City Council and SpaceHive, as well as receiving some anonymous one-off donations. We have achieved a good increase in our personal givers. We have also increased our number of long term hirers and individual bookings. This all aids our financial security and sustainability. God has provided in incredibly generous ways, through individuals, small grants and bigger funders.

Trinity Church, Gosforth
(Methodist and United Reformed LEP)
We have experienced significant challenges throughout the year. Whilst Sunday services recommenced in the building, offerings have been smaller than they were pre-Covid. We run a monthly Saturday coffee morning which is earmarked for the Church. It only re-started late in 2022 and it usually raises £500 per month, so we did not receive 12 months benefit.

A few members died during the financial year, which unfortunately contributed to less income.

The nature of Trinity Gosforth is that the Trinity Centre in pre-Covid times used to make a Charity donation in the region of £16,000 per annum to the church. Last year it only managed £8,000 and the difference had to come out of reserves.

Trinity Church, Gosforth
(Methodist and United Reformed LEP) (continued)
Despite the above we managed to cover our Assessment month on month. We allocated from Church income financial support to the local Charities. Through collections in 2020-2021, we managed to send substantial donations to:

- Walker & District Foodbank
- UN Appeal for Ukraine
- Tear Fund Afghanistan Appeal
- Oprie (A Haiti Educational support scheme)
- Ebenezer (South African Church link)

Looking Forward, Trinity Centre is starting to get busier with hirers, so its income & possible Charitable donations will help..

The Same Sex marriage decision has had an impact and this will result in significant loss of income from those members who leave.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position

Income for the year ended 31 August 2022 totalled £706,328 (2021: £1,808,740) resulting in a deficit for the year of £103,718 (2021: surplus £1,168,337). Funds totalled £1,827,319 at the year end, of which £1,317,673 are restricted funds, of which £11,200 are held for special purpose of The Holy Biscuit, and £2,475 are endowment funds. Unrestricted reserves total £401,277 which includes those held for special purpose of £55,049 The Holy Biscuit, £4,305 Hand in hand and £82 Methodist Women in Britain.

Reserves policy - general funds

The definition of reserves is: "income which becomes available to the charity and is to be expended at the trustees' discretion in furtherance of the charity's objects, but which is not yet spent, committed or designated." The free reserves of the charity therefore exclude endowments, restricted funds, designated funds and funds already invested in fixed assets. Free reserves of the charity at the year end amounted to £80,686.

The reserves policy for the general and manse funds of the Circuit agreed by the trustees is to hold the equivalent of the relevant annual expenditure, plus an estimate of any known fluctuations. These reserves are held in the Central Finance Board deposit account. The unrestricted funds are currently below the policy, the Circuit Managing Trustees are concerned about this and mindful to address the situation as soon as possible. There are plans to balance the budget over the following two or three years and then start to re-build reserves. Should there be a funding crisis then the Managing Trustees would make an appeal to the Local Churches.

Structure, governance and management

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust and constitutes an unincorporated charity. The charity's treasurers of the Circuit Fund are the lay Circuit Stewards, of the Managing Trustees listed previously all are lay people excepting the seventeen ministerial staff, four of whom are retired (Rev'd A Glynn Lister passed away on 7th April 2020, Rev'd John F Cook on 17th January 2020 and Rev'd Brian Dann, on 3rd June 2020 and they were promoted to glory) and one is Principal of St John's College Durham, one is chaplain at Pilgrims Court Methodist Homes Jesmond, and fourteen Lay workers all of whom are, or were, employed either by The Methodist Church, The United Reformed Church or The Church of England. Circuit meetings are generally held three times a year and include representatives of all the Societies (local churches) and projects in the Circuit. The Superintendent Minister (who supervises the work of the other Ministers in the Circuit) reports to this meeting as do the Circuit Stewards.

The governing body of the Circuit is the annual conference of The Methodist Church. The Methodist Church Act 1976 gives the authority under which The Methodist Church acts. The constitution practice and discipline of The Methodist Church (2019 edition) together with The Deed of Union (Act of 1929 adopted 1932) govern the activities of the Circuit.

In general, The Methodist Church is excepted from the need to register as a charity by the combined effects of Section 46(4) (A) of the Charities Act 1993 and Paragraph 4(2) (C) of the Charities (exception from registration) Regulations 1996 as amended by Statutory Instrument 2014 No 242. The Circuit, however, is a separate Registered Charity, number 1134265, in England and Wales.

The Trustees who have served during the year and since the year-end are set out on the legal and administration pages. The treasurers (Circuit Stewards) are appointed annually by the Circuit Meeting annually and the Managing Trustees are appointed either by: (a) the Societies of which they are members; (b) the Preachers' Meeting; or (c) by being ex-officio (Ministers in good standing or holding a District or Connexional Office or duly appointed Lay Workers). In practice, up to seven Circuit Stewards are appointed who serve, generally, for a minimum of 3 years and a maximum of 6.

The principal address of the Circuit's auditors, bankers, solicitors and other advisors are given as part of the reference and administrative details.

The Treasurers are responsible for the detailed examination of the Financial Statements and for recommending their adoption by the Circuit Meeting, they do this in consultation with the Circuit Treasurers Meeting, in practice they have appointed a Circuit Services Manager to handle the day to day financial and property matters, he must refer for guidance and instruction to the Circuit Stewards and Superintendent Minister. The Circuit Services Manager gave notice, in April 2019, of his intention to retire at the end of October 2020 and the Circuit Stewards have prepared a succession plan having identified one person who will become the Treasurer.

The Circuit is one of 12 of the Newcastle District and has 12 Local Churches [14 premises], of which 5 are Local Ecumenical Partnerships, the Circuit also has one other preaching place and one other set of premises that are used for 'fresh expressions of Church' - Shieldfield Art Works @ The Holy Biscuit, and has a 'presence' in Walker at The Pottery Bank Community Centre. They are contactable via the principal address of the Circuit. Funds are transferred to the Circuit on a quarterly basis to meet the commitments to the District and the upkeep of the Circuit.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

P Cleever-Thorpe

Rev P Cleever-Thorpe (chair) - Trustee
Dated: 9.3.23

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The Newcastle Central and East Circuit (the charity) for the year ended 31 August 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of FCA, which is one of the listed bodies.

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

I understand that this has been done in order for financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

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

1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3 the financial statements 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 financial statements to be reached.

NCC

Nicholas Cunningham FCCA
Robson Laidler Accountants Limited
Fernwood House
Fernwood Road
Jesmond
Newcastle Upon Tyne
Tyne and Wear
NE2 1TJ

Dated: 14-3-2023

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

Current financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Endowment funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	2	501,989	39,674	-	541,663	1,746,035
Other trading activities	3	7,400	-	-	7,400	19,539
Investments	4	26,684	22,743	59	49,486	43,166
Other income	5	-	107,779	-	107,779	-
Total income and endowments		536,073	170,196	59	706,328	1,808,740
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities	6	601,040	210,204	-	811,244	641,635
Other		16	12	90	118	4
Total resources expended		601,056	210,216	90	811,362	641,639
Net gains/(losses) on investments		(342)	1,828	(170)	1,316	1,236
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		(65,325)	(38,192)	(201)	(103,718)	1,168,337
Gross transfers between funds		56,809	(56,809)	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		(8,516)	(95,001)	(201)	(103,718)	1,168,337
Fund balances at 1 September 2021		461,888	1,466,674	2,475	1,931,037	762,700
Fund balances at 31 August 2022		453,372	1,371,673	2,274	1,827,319	1,931,037

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

Prior financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Endowment funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	**2**	521,838	1,224,197	-	1,746,035
Other trading activities	**3**	14,539	5,000	-	19,539
Investments	**4**	23,461	19,664	41	43,166
Total income and endowments		559,838	1,248,861	41	1,808,740
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	**6**	618,386	23,249	-	641,635
Other		-	-	4	4
Total resources expended		618,386	23,249	4	641,639
Net gains/(losses) on investments		845	-	391	1,236
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		(57,703)	1,225,612	428	1,168,337
Gross transfers between funds		47,984	(47,984)	-	-
Net movement in funds		(9,719)	1,177,628	428	1,168,337
Fund balances at 1 September 2020		471,607	289,046	2,047	762,700
Fund balances at 31 August 2021		461,888	1,466,674	2,475	1,931,037

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 AUGUST 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £	2021 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	11		313,250		321,497
Current assets					
Debtors	12	25,638		33,470	
Investments	13	759,444		12,122	
Cash at bank and in hand		737,422		1,584,599	
		1,522,504		1,630,191	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(6,875)		(17,354)	
Net current assets			1,515,629		1,612,837
Total assets less current liabilities			1,828,879		1,934,334
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	15		(1,560)		(3,297)
Net assets			1,827,319		1,931,037
Capital funds					
Endowment funds - general	16		2,274		2,475
Income funds					
Restricted funds	17		1,371,673		1,466,674
Unrestricted funds			453,372		461,888
			1,827,319		1,931,037

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 9/3/23

P. Cleever-Thorpe

Rev P Cleever-Thorpe (chair) - Trustee

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £	2021 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	22		(259,273)		1,129,167
Investing activities					
Proceeds from disposal of tangible fixed assets		110,029		-	
Proceeds from disposal of investments		(746,006)		8,702	
Investment income received		49,486		43,166	
Net cash (used in)/generated from investing activities			(586,491)		51,868
Financing activities					
Payment of obligations under finance leases		(1,413)		(1,150)	
Net cash used in financing activities			(1,413)		(1,150)
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents			(847,177)		1,179,885
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			1,584,599		404,714
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			737,422		1,584,599

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Newcastle Central and East Circuit is a unincorporated charity (charity number (1134265).

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

1.5 Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Freehold land and buildings	straight line over 100 years
Computers	straight line over 3 years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.9 Leases

Leases are classified as finance leases whenever the terms of the lease transfer substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to the lessees. All other leases are classified as operating leases.

Assets held under finance leases are recognised as assets at the lower of the assets fair value at the date of inception and the present value of the minimum lease payments. The related liability is included in the balance sheet as a finance lease obligation. Lease payments are treated as consisting of capital and interest elements. The interest is charged to net income/(expenditure) for the year so as to produce a constant periodic rate of interest on the remaining balance of the liability.

2 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2022	**2022**	**2022**	2021	2021	2021
	£	**£**	**£**	£	£	£
Donations and gifts	1,668	-	1,668	1,840	1,224,197	1,226,037
Assessments	393,086	-	393,086	428,397	-	428,397
Grants receivable	18,730	-	18,730	32,959	-	32,959
Administration	56,672	17,577	74,249	53,302	-	53,302
Other	31,833	22,097	53,930	5,340	-	5,340
	501,989	39,674	541,663	521,838	1,224,197	1,746,035

3 Other trading activities

	Other trading activities 2022	**Other trading activities 2021**
	£	**£**
Books & telephone income	5,413	5,756
Sundry income	1,987	13,783
	7,400	19,539
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	7,400	14,539
Restricted funds	-	5,000

4 Investments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds general	Total	Total
	2022	**2022**	**2022**	**2022**	2021
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**	£
Rental income	22,328	21,525	-	43,853	42,078
Interest receivable	4,356	1,218	59	5,633	1,088
	26,684	22,743	59	49,486	43,166

5 Other income

	Restricted funds	Total
	2022	2021
	£	£
Net gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	107,779	-

6 Charitable activities

	Charitable activities 2022	Charitable activities 2021
	£	**£**
Staff costs	484,218	366,235
Depreciation and impairment	5,997	6,705
Gifts and donations	1,268	14,683
Assessments	103,524	98,159
Travel	10,548	4,863
Repairs and property costs	55,164	43,262
Pulpit supply	1,134	111
The Holy Biscuit costs	109,015	65,509
Hand in Hand costs	7,411	1,878
	778,279	601,405
Grant funding of activities (see note 7)	6,300	-
Share of support costs (see note 8)	15,323	28,160
Share of governance costs (see note 8)	11,342	12,070
	811,244	641,635
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	601,040	618,386
Restricted funds	210,204	23,249
	811,244	641,635

7 Grants payable

	Charitable activities 2022	2021
	£	£
Grants to institutions:		
SAW THB	2,500	-
Trinity Christian Community Centre	3,000	-
MINE	300	-
Newcastle City Cetre Chaplaincy	500	-
	6,300	-

8 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2022	Support costs	Governance costs	2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Telephone	10,357	-	10,357	14,039	-	14,039
Postage & stationery	3,378	-	3,378	3,951	-	3,951
Sundries	1,588	-	1,588	10,170	-	10,170
Audit fees	-	-	-	-	6,300	6,300
Independent examiner's fees	-	4,200	4,200	-	-	-
Professional fees	-	7,142	7,142	-	5,770	5,770
	15,323	11,342	26,665	28,160	12,070	40,230
Analysed between Charitable activities	15,323	11,342	26,665	28,160	12,070	40,230

9 Trustees

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 August 2022 nor for the year ended 31 August 2021.

Trustees expenses
The aggregate amount of travelling and subsistence expenses reimbursed to the trustees during the year was £12,238 (2021: £5,168). The number of persons reimbursed was 9 (2021: 12). During the year trustees' indemnity insurance was provided of £245 (2021: £245).

10 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2022 Number	2021 Number
Direct charitable expenditure	12	12
Management and admin of the charity	2	2
Total	14	14

Employment costs	2022 £	2021 £
Wages and salaries	233,319	287,966
Social security costs	17,402	21,091
Other pension costs	233,497	57,178
	484,218	366,235

The key management personnel of the charity include the circuit stewards, the superintendent, other ministers and the circuit services manager who are all managing trustees. Total employee benefits of the key management personnel for the year were £38,475 (2021: £34,798).

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

11 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings	Computers	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1 September 2021	368,717	17,827	386,544
Disposals	(2,250)	-	(2,250)
At 31 August 2022	366,467	17,827	384,294
Depreciation and impairment			
At 1 September 2021	49,552	15,495	65,047
Depreciation charged in the year	3,665	2,332	5,997
At 31 August 2022	53,217	17,827	71,044
Carrying amount			
At 31 August 2022	313,250	-	313,250
At 31 August 2021	319,165	2,332	321,497

12 Debtors

	2022	2021
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Other debtors	2,529	4,307
Prepayments and accrued income	23,109	29,163
	25,638	33,470

13 Current asset investments

	2022	2021
	£	£
Unlisted investments	759,444	12,122

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2022	2021
		£	£
Obligations under finance leases		1,737	1,413
Accruals and deferred income		5,138	15,941
		6,875	17,354

15 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	Notes	2022	2021
		£	£
Obligations under finance leases		1,560	3,297

16 Endowment funds

Endowment funds represent assets which must be held permanently by the charity. Income arising on the endowment funds can be used in accordance with the objects of the charity and is included as unrestricted income. Any capital gains or losses arising on the assets form part of the fund.

		Movement in funds				
	Balance at 1 September 2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Revaluations gains and losses	Balance at 31 August 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Permanent endowments						
The Susannah Gibson memorial fund	624	16	(85)	-	(59)	496
WR Dixon gift	1,851	43	(5)	-	(111)	1,778
	2,475	59	(90)	-	(170)	2,274

17 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 September 2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Revaluations, gains and losses	Balance at 31 August 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Dorris Nuttal bequest	4,084	23	(4,102)	-	-	5
Property Fund	1,462,590	130,499	(182,010)	(52,439)	1,828	1,360,468
2C100 - CFB Managed Fixed Fund	-	39,674	(24,104)	(4,370)	-	11,200
	1,466,674	170,196	(210,216)	(56,809)	1,828	1,371,673

18 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Endowment funds 2022	Total 2022	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 August 2022 are represented by:					
Tangible assets	313,250	-	-	313,250	321,497
Current assets/(liabilities)	141,682	1,371,673	2,274	1,515,629	1,612,837
Long term liabilities	(1,560)	-	-	(1,560)	(3,297)
	453,372	1,371,673	2,274	1,827,319	1,931,037

19 Unrestricted funds

General Funds
These are funds that are available to be spent for any purpose by the charity.

Methodist Women in Britain
The Methodist Women in Britain, previously known as The Network Group and sometimes referred to as the Circuit Network, is a fellowship aimed at women of all ages within the church, who support each other and raise funds each year for 'the Easter offering', a Connexionally designated charity of the year. There are pastoral groups, fellowships and social activities. A small amount of the group's income is used for administrative costs, but most money is handed on to support the wider church.

Hand in Hand
A project was founded more than ten years ago by the former Heaton and Wallsend Circuit, based at Trinity Church Wallsend, serving the elderly and isolated in Wallsend. As time passed, the project expanded and provided lunch clubs, reminiscence and activity clubs as well as a befriending and visiting in homes service in Wallsend, Heaton, Longbenton and other places in North Tyneside. About seven years ago the project grew rapidly because of Lottery grant funding. Sadly when the grant finished in 2017, the management committee was unable to find a follow on funder and the project shrank significantly and now only operates from Trinity and Heaton Methodist Churches. Consequently, Hand in Hand has returned to be completely controlled by the Circuit with a small management group chaired by Rev'd Gavin Hume and legacy funds are being used to ensure that there are high quality lunch and activity clubs.

Shieldfield Art Works At The Holy Biscuit
Shieldfield Methodist Church closed as Local Church or Society, and in about 2006 the premises were rented to various organisations including a local radio station. By 2009 there was a proposal to sell the site but Rev'd Rob Hawkins in consultation with local businessman Ramy Zac, proposed a radical suggestion to develop and arts expression of Church, a form of Fresh Expressions of Church, using the premises. Mr Zac said that he would carry out, at his expense, a major refurbishment and Rob would set up the organisation of what quickly became known as The Holy Biscuit - it being opposite the Biscuit Factory art gallery. Until recently it has operated as a separate fund, but it is now felt that it should be an internal organisation of the Circuit, which 'owns' it.

The project has grown and now receives significant grants from the Methodist Connexional grants committee and is seen as an integral part of the arts scene in Newcastle. There are links to both universities in Newcastle and the one in Sunderland as well as the Ouseburn arts community. The Holy Biscuit is now reaching out to the local community, schools and other churches in Shieldfield. As well as providing gallery space, the premises are well used, for example, painting for fun (working with those who have health problems), schools work and church with a difference mid-week services.

The Walker Benevolent Fund
This fund represents funds that have been set aside for use at the discretion of the Deacon and had been exhausted during the year.

The Deacon Fund
This fund represents Model Trust funds transferred from the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church, the capital and income from which can be used at the discretion of the Deacon.

The Dixon bequests
This fund represents Model Trust funds transferred from the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church, the income from which can be used at the discretion of the Deacon and capital may be used with certain restrictions.

20 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2021 - none).

21 Restricted and endowment funds

Restricted Funds

The Doris Nuttal bequest

This fund represents funds donated to the Circuit, in practice used to provide for the repair and refurbishment of the Trinity Christian Community Centre. The fund is held in cash.

The Property Fund

This fund represents funds relating to the sale, letting or other disposition of land which is Circuit property. The authority to sanction schemes for the application of capital money in the fund rests with the Circuit meeting, subject to approval by the Synod. The fund is represented by investments and or cash.

Shieldfield Art Works At The Holy Biscuit

Shieldfield Methodist Church closed as Local Church or Society, and in about 2006 the premises were rented to various organisations including a local radio station. By 2009 there was a proposal to sell the site but Rev'd Rob Hawkins in consultation with local businessman Ramy Zac, proposed a radical suggestion to develop and arts expression of Church, a form of Fresh Expressions of Church, using the premises. Mr Zac said that he would carry out, at his expense, a major refurbishment and Rob would set up the organisation of what quickly became known as The Holy Biscuit - it being opposite the Biscuit Factory art gallery. Until recently it has operated as a separate fund, but it is now felt that it should be an internal organisation of the Circuit, which 'owns' it.

The project has grown and now receives significant grants, some of which are restricted, from the Methodist Connexional grants committee and is seen as an integral part of the arts scene in Newcastle. There are links to both universities in Newcastle and the one in Sunderland as well as the Ouseburn arts community. The Holy Biscuit is now reaching out to the local community, schools and other churches in Shieldfield. As well as providing gallery space, the premises are well used, for example, painting for fun (working with those who have health problems), schools work and church with a difference mid-week services.

Endowment Funds

The Susannah Gibson Memorial Fund

This fund represents monies left to the church in 1880 by the late Susannah Gibson, the income from which can be used 'for the sustenance of Wesleyan Ministers'.

The WR Dixon Gift

This fund represents Model Trust funds transferred from the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church and is used at the discretion of the deacon.

22	**Cash generated from operations**	**2022**	**2021**
		£	**£**
	(Deficit)/surpus for the year	(103,718)	1,168,337
	Adjustments for:		
	Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(49,486)	(43,166)
	Gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	(107,779)	-
	Fair value gains and losses on investments	(1,316)	(1,236)
	Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	5,997	6,705
	Movements in working capital:		
	Decrease/(increase) in debtors	7,832	(6,421)
	(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(10,803)	4,948
	Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	(259,273)	1,129,167

23 Analysis of changes in net funds

	At 1 September 2021	**Cash flows**	**At 31 August 2022**
	£	**£**	**£**
Cash at bank and in hand	1,584,599	(847,177)	737,422
Obligations under finance leases	(4,710)	1,413	(3,297)
	1,579,889	(845,764)	734,125

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1134265

Accounts

Charity Registration No. 1134265

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Charity number	1134265
Principal address	Brunswick Methodist Church Brunswick Place Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear NE1 7BJ
Auditor	Robson Laidler Accountants Limited Fernwood House Fernwood Road Jesmond Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 2TJ
Bankers	Lloyds Bank plc 102 Grey Street Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7BJ Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church 9 Bonhill Street London EC2A 4PE
Solicitors	Sintons LLP The Cube Barrack Road Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 6DB
Surveyors and Valuers	Lambert Smith Hampton 41-51 Grey Street Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 6DB
Custodian Trustees	The Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes Central Buildings Oldham Street Manchester M1 5JQ

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

Deacon A Carter
Rev P Holwell – retired 31st August, 2021
Rev P Cleever-Thorpe (Chair)
Rev J Jackson – retired 31st August, 2021
Rev Alex D Mabbs – appointed 30th September, 2022
Rev J Mooney
Rev A Moorhouse
Deacon G Morgan
Revd K Reader
Revd Prof D Wilkinson
Revd A Wilkinson
Revd Dr G F Wilson
Revd L Law – retired 31st August, 2021
Revd G Hume
Deacon T Hume
Mrs C Carroll – retired 31st July, 2021
A Mason
Revd M Newman
Revd J M Thornton
Mrs J Anderson
Mrs J Atherton
L Lawson
I Moore
Ms R Taglione (appointed 1.9.20)
Miss T Hopwood – resigned 31st July, 2021
Ms K Laws – resigned 30th June, 2021
A Nicholson
R Wylie
Mrs R Wilkinson
Mrs A Weightman
Mrs J Short – Deceased
Mrs N Pigeon
D Pigeon
M Ball
A Barker
Mrs J Bell
Ms Rachel Bourne-Spence – appointed 1st February, 2022
Miss C Brindley
Mrs K Brindley
Mrs A Brown – resigned 31st December, 2021
Mrs L Bryan –resigned 31st July, 2021
H Chapman
Ms V Choi (appointed 1.9.20)
D Cowans
Mrs C L Eke J. P.
Mrs B Fellows
W Filmer
Miss S Fuller
K Gilfillan J.P.
Miss M Goldfinch
Dr L Graham
Mrs M E Graham
Mrs C Hall
B Hamil
J E Hawdon – resigned 31st December, 2021

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees (continued):

Miss W Ho
Miss A Ilderton
Miss J C Kelsall
Mrs J Keltie
Miss A Lambert
S Lau – resigned 31st August, 2021
E Leung
Ms I Leung
D Lowry
P H Martin
K McKenzie – resigned 31st October, 2021
Mrs L Morley
Mrs P Newman
Miss G Patrick
R Pickard
S J Richardson
T F Rogers
D A Stabler
K Stewart
P Stewart – resigned 31st December, 2021
Ms J Shuen
D W Thornton
T C Yip
Mrs S H Walker
M Ward
A Wilkinson
Mrs G Wilkinson
Mr R Ward

Circuit Stewards

The Circuit Stewards, who are the treasurers of the Circuit fund, who served during the year and until the date of this report, were as follows:-

Mrs Margaret Graham (Finance)
Mr Ken McKenzie – resigned 31st October, 2021
Mr David Lowry – resigned 31st December, 2021
Mr Keith Gilfillan J.P.
Miss Audrey Ilderton (Senior Circuit Steward)
Mrs Carolyn Hall – appointed 22nd February, 2022

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

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THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH
TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

The trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2021.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 3 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Preamble
The Methodist Church is said to have been created after John Wesley's conversion on 24th May, 1738, it is a Free Church. The Newcastle Central and East Circuit came into being on 1st September, 2009 at the merger of the former Newcastle Heaton & Wallsend and Newcastle Brunswick Central Circuits, the latter was, in itself formed from a merger in the early 1970's from the Brunswick and Central & Sandyford Circuits. The calling of The Methodist Church is:

Worship, to Increase awareness of God's Presence and celebrate God's love.
Learning and caring, to help people to grow and learn as Christians.
Service, to be a good neighbour to people in need and challenge injustice.
Evangelism we make more followers of Jesus Christ.

Objectives and activities
The Circuit is constituted to advance the effective deployment of the resources of ministry, which include people, property and finance, as they relate to the Methodist Churches in the Circuit, the District and Connexion, to Churches of other denominations and to participation in the communities served by the Circuit and in ecumenical work in the area. The Constitution and Enumeration of Circuits is set out year by year in the Stations appointed by the Conference.

Grantmaking policy
The Circuit meeting is minded to make occasional grants from one of the funds. These grants are discretionary and full details are given in the accounts. The funds are:

- The general fund, for example grants to the District Benevolence fund.
- The Model Trust [formerly the Circuit Advance Fund] is exhausted.
- The City Centre Fund, this is used in the same way as a Model Trust - it is controlled by the Managing Trustees of the District.
- The Susannah Gibson Memorial Fund, grants may be made for "the sustenance of Wesleyan Methodist Ministers" - no grants have been awarded in the year under consideration.
- The Doris Nutall bequest - funds may be used at the discretion of the Circuit Meeting, but in practice money is used at and on the former South Gosforth Methodist Church, which Doris Nutall attended.
- The Elizabeth Ann Burton bequest - money was left to the former Willington Quay Methodist Church, the Circuit subsequently obtained a Charity Commission Order which allows it to control all the assets of the bequest, it should be noted that although Mrs Burton passed away in 1972 it was only in February 2011 that the Circuit became aware that there was a substantial sum of money and two Tyneside flats to be transferred to the Circuit. The flats have been refurbished and have been let to people in need, via the charity Oasis Aquila, but are now being marketed for sale.
- Bequest funds - funds may be used at the discretion of the Circuit meeting, for mission of the church.
- The Deacons' Fund - this fund was created by a vote at the Spring Circuit Meeting 2019, by agreeing to use the three remaining small Model Trusts and the balance of the general fund of the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church. In order to achieve this, a Charity Commission Order has been obtained and in the case of trust 1486 the Methodist Council voted to approve the transfer of the W R Dixon gift to the Deacons' Fund. Trust 1486 is a permanent endowment, Trust 5377 capital and income can be used and Trust 5377B income can be used and capital with restrictions. In practice, it is the intention that a Deacon can use the income only for work in the Wallsend area at their discretion.

Public benefit
The public benefit can be clearly demonstrated by the Trustees as they have fulfilled the calling of the Methodist Church in maintaining the witness of the church throughout the area which the Circuit serves in parts of Newcastle and North Tyneside. The grants made have enabled the work to continue and young people to develop themselves and grow in faith.

Achievements and performance
Activities during the year and our achievements

The Circuit has continued to fulfil its basic role of providing ministers to be in pastoral charge of the Societies (Local Churches) which make up the Circuit and support the churches in various ways including providing financial help for their work. We provide ministers with manses (two manses are owned by The United Reformed Church, Northern Synod) and see that, through the Methodist Church and United Reformed Church Central Services, they are paid their stipends and allowances. Those manses not immediately required have been let on assured short hold leases as have the two flats in Willington Quay.

During the year under review, we have appointed a new URC Minister to serve in our Circuit with effect from September 2021. There was also a change to our team of Circuit Stewards with the number reducing, resulting in increased workload on the remaining members of this lay leadership group. The Superintendent and Stewards meet regularly, as does the Circuit Leadership Team.

The Circuit Stewards are the Lay Leaders of The Circuit, they are Managing Trustees as are all members of The Circuit Meeting and as Stewards they are responsible for managing the day to day operation of all Circuit affairs in consultation with the Superintendent Minister. The Circuit Meeting (Managing Trustees) met three times in the year.

The life, work, and ministry of the Circuit is underpinned by prayer, public worship and personal commitment to follow Christ. We continue to base our Circuit's mission and our churches growth plans upon the four aspects of 'Our Calling' of The Methodist Church: 'Worship', 'Service', 'Learning & Caring' & 'Evangelism'.

Over the year we have continued to work more flexibly in order to adapt to new stringencies necessary on all churches following the outbreak of Coronavirus. We have continued to explore new ways of worship, learning and caring, often in an on-line context as face-to-face gatherings have been far more limited. Whilst this has been difficult for those who are less able to access on-line worship and other activities, those who have been able to expand their on-line presence have seen significant numbers of new people engaging with their church's life. This has been very encouraging to witness.

Sadly, one of our Societies, Heaton Methodist Church, requested to 'cease to meet' in October 2020. This request was granted and so the closure of the church took place at the end of 2020. Our hope is that Christian worship and witness will continue on the site now that it has been sold and that the Kingdom of God will continue to grow there.

There were a few changes to Circuit office holders, as noted in the minutes of our Circuit Meetings. The Circuit is also served by Ministers of other traditions and the Circuit continues to have full responsibility for paying those employed by The United Reformed Church.

CIRCUIT RISK POLICY
During the year under review the Circuit Stewards and Superintendent once again reviewed the 'Risk policy statement' which covers the following areas:

Financial
The Circuit Meeting is faced with the following financial risks:

- dependency on limited income sources (Assessments, investment income and donations);
- managing the capital resources;
- fluctuations in investment income and rental income;
- inability to attract additional donations from the general public and members;
- an unforeseen rise in demand for expenditure (for example on Manses and Chapels);
- an unforeseen increase in the actuarial shortfall on the pension funds for which the Circuit Meeting could be deemed responsible (the Circuit is already contributing to a shortfall);
- an unforeseen increase in the requirement for an additional manse or other property;
- a sustained fall in the value of investments and property held by the Circuit and appearing in the balance sheet.

Operation, Reputation and Strategy
In 2020/2021, we identified the other most significant risks as follows:

- inability to create new Methodist disciples resulting in further decline, ultimately resulting in the Methodist Church ceasing to exist;
- failure to provide adequate resources that enable the Circuit Meeting to discharge its responsibilities;
- the experience of Our Calling fails to be integrated into the mission and ministry pathways of the Circuit;
- sudden change in policy or strategic direction enforced by The Circuit Meeting;
- dependency on limited income sources (Assessments, investment income and donations);
- the impact of economic fluctuations on our assets, liabilities and our ability to raise funds to enable us to continue our work.
- an unforeseen increase in the actuarial shortfall on the pension funds for which the Circuit Meeting could be deemed responsible;
- loss of key personnel;
- the effects of 'Brexit'.

These risks are likely to remain equally relevant throughout 2021 and beyond.

Risk management
The Methodist Church in Great Britain has a risk management policy, which has been set by the Methodist Council for use both by the Trustees and by Circuits. The risk management policy is designed to identify and analyse key strategic and operational risks facing the Methodist Church and, where at unacceptable levels, to take steps to mitigate the risks.

We define key strategic and operational risks as those that, without effective or appropriate mitigation, are highly likely to occur and would have a positive or negative impact on the Church's ability to fulfil its purpose of advancing the Christian faith in accordance with its doctrinal standards. These risks are reported to the Managing Trustees through a risk management process, which allows them both to challenge any assumptions the Circuit Leadership team has made about risks and also to understand the context in which decisions are taken. This helps to ensure that the most serious risks are being managed effectively.

The trustees recognise that it is neither possible nor appropriate to seek to eliminate risk entirely. We recognise that risk-taking is inherent within the task of communicating the Gospel; John Wesley himself took risks in establishing the Methodist communities.

Our task, therefore, is to embrace risks that aim to advance the Church's purposes while ensuring that we avoid or minimise those risks that might have a negative impact. Effective risk management processes will help to increase the likelihood of the Church fulfilling its mission. The risk management report is reviewed and revised annually. The Circuit continues to be blessed with the continuing ministry of our Supernumeraries; thanks go to Rev'd Ian T White, Rev'd Joan M. Thornton and Revd Malcolm A. Newman. We are also grateful to Rev. Derek A. Aldridge, a supernumerary in the Newcastle West Circuit, who came to reside in our circuit in early 2021and kindly takes appointments in our circuit too.

Risk management - continued
The Local Preachers and Worship Leaders continue to serve the Circuit in their calling. There were five preachers' in training, at various stages, during the year.

During the year – because of the coronavirus restrictions - it became impossible for the Superintendent and Circuit Leadership Team to continue the programme of review of all Churches and projects as required by the Annual Conference of The Methodist Church. Whilst growth or end of life plans were not feasible, our churches have still achieved much. It is hoped that over the next year or so, it will be possible to continue the programme of review commenced in 2018/2019. The Local Preachers and Worship Leaders continue to serve the Circuit in their calling.

Brunswick Methodist Church
Brunswick Methodist Church has been very fortunate to have been able to mitigate the financial impacts of Covid. At the start of this financial year we began to see a steady uptake in room bookings which continued through the whole year. This was in addition to our main tenant, a Christian charity called 'Junction 42', having not only continued to use our premises throughout all of the lockdowns but also expanding their use of rooms. So, this has had a huge impact upon our continuing financial viability.

It is important to note that our church has actively functioned even when face-to-face gatherings may not have been possible in our building. This has been possible due to our online 'real time' worship services and our online prayers run 'live' three times per week. We have also kept in regular contact with those not able to access church online during lockdowns by circulating worship material for every Sunday.

Overall, whilst this has been an incredibly challenging and uncertain year, we ended it in a strong place in terms of the use of our building, the continuing employment of our paid staff, and the growth in numbers to our church community, connecting with new people not only in our city of Newcastle but right across the world!

Newcastle Chinese Methodist Church
Since March 2020, due to the Covid 19 lockdown, all of our church service and activities could only be held online. The number of members and the offering to the church were also reduced in 2020. In May 2021, we resumed our live Sunday Service on a bi-weekly basis and, since December 2021, our Sunday service has resumed as normal.

Since the beginning of 2021, a large number of Hong Kong BNO migrants have moved to Newcastle. Many of them have come to our Chinese church on their own initiative and most of them are young families. They have children studying in primary or secondary schools. Therefore, the number of children in our church has increased in a short period of time. We have to provide them with a Sunday school service and Youth fellowship and we have to provide pastoral care to these families. Our church has limited manpower - only one full-time and one part-time Pastoral worker whose workload has greatly increased suddenly. In addition, Rev. Lawrence Law retired in August 2021 and this will mean that the Pastoral workers will have to take on a lot of administrative work and participate in various meetings in the coming year.

New families are coming to our church every week. We need more manpower to run our Sunday school and other activities. Although we are facing a lot of challenges, we are sure that God will lead us and He gives us strength to serve Him. We hope that we can fulfil the mission that God has given us.

The Church of the Good Shepherd, Battle Hill
Church of the Good Shepherd, Battle Hill (COGS) live streamed morning worship services and occasional evening services from the beginning of the pandemic. The services were led by the clergy of the Willington Team, mainly from their Vicarages and, through continued relationship building, a number of people who were new to our church began worshipping regularly. We realised the valuable outreach of streaming, especially to people who were vulnerable or unable to come to the church building.

The Church of the Good Shepherd, Battle Hill (continued)
As a result we installed I.T. equipment and broadband access in the church building and have live streamed worship services since. We were very thankful for the grant we received to enable us to purchase the equipment. There has been a good attendance online and gradually the number of people worshipping in church has increased. The safety measures in place and the impact of Covid makes worship feel different. There is still a sense of loss and frustration for what has gone before and there is the challenge to work through this. Increased pastoral care by the Minister has been much appreciated, as has the work to engage with the wider community.

We obtained Holiday Action Fund money and ran a Summer Activity Day for families in the local area. This included indoor and outdoor sports and games as well as lunch – all free to participants. The feedback from families was extremely positive.
Hot Chocolate youth group continued on a detached basis for young people aged 13-18 years.

Online songs and Christian stories were produced for our Little Shepherds baby and Toddler Group until the group were able to meet in person from September 2021. This has been an effective way to engage with those families. As a result, two of the grandparents have now become volunteers at this group.

The Lunch Club twice made and delivered afternoon teas to the members which was much appreciated. The intentional increased use of Facebook and social media has helped reach the community and brought comfort and hope. During this whole period the financial generosity of the church members has been exceptional with commitments to all three denominations met.

Coxlodge Methodist Church
Coxlodge has a small, mainly elderly congregation and serves the communities of Coxlodge, Fawdon, Kenton and the west of Gosforth. Undoubtedly the months between September 2020 and August 2021 were a difficult time for everyone. The experience since the beginning of the pandemic had made those of us at Coxlodge look closely at what we do, and why and how we could deliver the things that mattered most in new ways.

We realised early on that, though we had always known the church was not about the building, we were now focused on the church i.e. the people. It was particularly important to care for those who have given so many years of faithful witness and service and who were now isolated. We ensured everyone had regular weekly phone calls and offers of help, and occasional chatty letters and inspirational articles were posted out. Everyone benefitted from the online services provided by our minister, Gavin, whether by watching them on YouTube or receiving them as DVDs so that weekly worship could still continue. Whilst we began to have in person worship in the summer, the videos continue to be accessed by those unable to attend and are a real blessing.

We were keen to continue to communicate with the families who attended Messy Church. Parents were very grateful for, not only monthly packs of activities delivered to their doors, but the brief opportunity this afforded to share their news and worries, knowing that we would pray for them. Each month the message of the themed crafts could be watched online linking them together with a story, song and prayer.

We kept in touch with groups that hired our hall, assuring them that we were thinking of them. This was particularly important for the 'Caddyshacks' who usually met one day per week and whose members, adults with learning disabilities, struggled to understand why they could not come to their 'favourite club' or indeed go anywhere!

We are very grateful for the donations from individuals within the Connexion and for a Covid Recovery grant from Newcastle City Council which enabled us to survive when there was no income from rentals. This also helped us to swiftly put in place 'Covid safe' measures so groups (especially Caddyshacks) could recommence. We have since welcomed two new community groups ('Bloom Baby' classes and the Three C's social group) and have been able to offer a space to meet to a local Brownie Pack. Church members and friends were able to get together to plan the collection of food for the People's Kitchen (to be completed by October).

Jesmond Methodist Church
For most of the year, due to Covid restrictions, JMC has functioned online, with our Sunday services being streamed on Facebook. We have had people join us, and say they are watching, and we have joined in small groups, again mainly online, and as restrictions have eased we have also had church picnics, meetings of small groups outside, and the monthly women's brunch has met in person when able, and online the rest of the time. JMC has taken a financial hit, as many churches have, but mostly because we made the decision to support the café in our building with a combination of rent holidays and reduced rent, to enable them to function with reduced capacity when able to open or solely as a takeaway service.

We tried to be inventive and creative at building connection and community in different ways. We have shared communion, by delivering reserved sacrament, blessed by our minister, to take whilst watching the recording of the blessing of the sacrament they had delivered. A number who ran the great North Run this year, met at the end and shared communion together. We have held a wedding with only 15 people, but captured the joy and delight even with limited numbers.

We have tried to be inventive in the use of our closed building – during advent we have a scene that has changed daily depicting the Christmas story - this was floodlit and a spectacular endeavour. We had weekly advent give aways, with chocolate, tree ornaments and small gifts to communicate the love of Christmas. Over all 200+ gifts were taken, 50 children's nativity story books, 15 gospels, and 100 tracts.

Like many churches we have seen new opportunities open up, but also grieve the loss of many events and opportunities to worship God, celebrate His goodness and be a physical community. We will continue to stream services and, thanks to a legacy gift, we will be fitting equipment to do this in the autumn, and we will continue to seek to be a community of faith that orientates itself on the worship of God and the working out of sharing that love within the place we find ourselves to be.

St. Andrew's Church, Benton
(Methodist and United Reformed LEP)
The church continues serving the communities of Benton and Forest Hall with regular public worship of a variety of styles to meet the needs of different people. Learning and Caring is expressed through Discipleship Groups and the Pastoral Team, as well as through groups and activities that serve the community. The church offers service to the community through raising money for many causes through and contributions from the CARE fund (a percentage of our church giving), providing practical help to those in need, and hosting many community groups and activities. The church has been seeking to reach out to the community through things such as community activities at particular times of year - especially Easter and Christmas – through gifts, acts of kindness, prayers, and building relationships with those who use our building.

While many activities have been put on hold, or moved online, during Covid, the members have done all they can to continue worshipping, caring and serving their community in these difficult times. The church also continues to be a visible expression of Christian unity, with Methodist and URC traditions working in harmony.

St. Cuthbert's Church, Heaton
(Methodist and United Reformed LEP)
This has been a very strange year for everyone at St Cuthbert's as we remained closed until the beginning of October, only having a couple of meetings of the Church Leaders.

During that time we had a poster on the notice board thanking the NHS and key workers, which was remarked on by several people who passed or worked in the local shops. At Christmas last year we put decorations up – we weren't there physically but the place was not deserted. Two of our members kept the garden tidy and looked after and this was definitely appreciated by the local community. One lady in particular stopped one of our members to say how lovely it looked and how much the local community appreciated it. At Easter we put up our cross in the garden but it was not decorated with daffodils as usual. The young couple who have recently taken over the café opposite the church came over and put daffodils in hoping we wouldn't mind.

St. Cuthbert's Church, Heaton (continued)
We have had several requests about hiring of the premises and regular hirers are starting to come back. The Girl's Brigade have returned with vigour and as we had the church professionally cleaned before we came back the girls have been even more tidy and caring of the premises than usual.

During the time we have been closed we have tried to keep in touch with everyone via e-mail, telephone and carefully arranged visits. One of our members has produced a regular newsletter to everyone with contributions from the minister and secretary also. This has been distributed in various ways including by post and hand delivery. This regular contact has been remarked upon by more than just the congregation. It's lovely to be back and see everyone in person and start to get back to "normal".

Church of St. John the Evangelist, Kingston Park (LEP)
We are thankful for the dedication of so many people who continue to work to make sure St John's continues not only to survive, but to thrive during these challenging times. Rather than sitting back and hibernating during recent months, people have continued to care for one another, to pray, to do practical tasks and to support the church financially. Whilst we are once again able to meet in the church building we are looking to find ways to continue our online presence as that is reaching so many people, and currently exploring the most helpful ways of dovetailing this with worship and learning that takes place in the building.

Exciting things have been happening in recent months - these include the following:
- Attendance at Sunday and Wednesday services in the building has been slowly rising and we are encouraged to see new faces amongst us.
- A second online Alpha course has just finished and a number of those involved have expressed interest in continuing to meet via zoom to explore the Bible. These sessions will begin in January for anyone who would like to join.
- Tinytots baby and toddler group has re-opened with a new leader and many local families attending.
- Weekly coffee morning 'The Beacon' has re-started with good attendance so far, and the opportunity to offer a place of welcome and friendship to those in the community around us, including asylum seekers staying in the nearby Novotel.
- Community events: In the summer St John's hosted an 'Out of lockdown party' for the community. This was held outdoors and included live music, fairground rides, food trucks, art and crafts, face painting, games,'holiday club' style activities for children, and a prayer tent. At the beginning of December a Community Carol sing was held with the help of Newcastle Choral society and Kingston Park primary school and this took place in the car park of our local Tesco store. It is hoped that such community events will continue to be part of the life of St John's with perhaps three or four events each year.
- In September an Eco Team was set up with the aim of establishing and pursuing an Environmental Plan for St John's. This includes efforts to reduce our energy use and carbon footprint, to reduce water use and waste and to care for wildlife an ecology in the church grounds. It also involves promoting local, organic, animal-friendly and fairtrade produce and reaching out to our community in order to raise awareness more widely and to encourage recycling and re-use.

We are so thankful for the many people who contribute countless hours, often behind the scenes, to ensuring that St John's continues to be alive, active and effective in sharing the gospel.

Trinity Church, Gosforth (LEP)
Orprie: The Organisation Prix d'Encouragement (ORPRIE) is a not-for-profit organisation working in quality Education in Haiti. ORPRIE was launched in 2015 in Vialet, Haiti to assist the best, and most needy elementary and secondary students and children to realise their full potential. As a result of coming to know one of Orprie's fundraisers Trinity agreed to sponsor 9 Haitian students per year for three years @ £200 pa each.

Foodbank: Due to the difficulties of collecting goods in the Trinity Centre, Church Council agreed instead to appeal for money which could be spent by the Foodbank according to the needs of the community. Members have generously given £8,000 this year.

Trinity Church, Gosforth (LEP) continued
Social Justice Lasses: This local group supports women and refugees who are leaving hostels with toiletries, cleaning materials and necessities. This is not yet registered as a charity but members fully support the aims and have given £3500 as a result of newsletter appeals. Several members are also closely involved with the organisation.

Men's Shed: Registered with the Men's Shed Association, it is based at South Gosforth Christian Community Centre (TCCC) and meets Monday evenings for dads and sons and Thursday morning for men only. The Circuit allocated £3.8k

Achievements: The Church opened in May for Sunday worship and has remained open alongside streaming the service on YouTube. We are looking into developing hybrid worship by upgrading our digital equipment.

Pastoral Work – this has increased substantially since the beginning of the pandemic.
Appeals – Trinity has donated to the following: Haiti (following the earthquake), Afghanistan and Sierra Leone - £2.5k
A gift service was held on Sunday 28th November so we could support families struggling financially - the gifts donated for teenage children are to be distributed via Social Services through one of our members.
Trinity Centre
To help the owners of Café 1901, we reduced the monthly rent to a nominal £1 per month while the Centre was closed and gradually increased it back to the full amount – the relationship with the café is very important to the Centre and church.
Since the Centre reopened, 38 hirers have returned.
Grants
£30k Heritage Lottery Grant
£9k Local Authority grant , two identical , one for Centre & one for TCCC.

Trinity Methodist Church, Wallsend
For a small congregation, during this very difficult year, Trinity have had some wonderful achievements where relationships have deepened.

The pastoral visitors have telephoned their class members very regularly and visited when able. Also there have been regular conversations on an informal basis. The church family were deeply saddened when one of our younger members died suddenly last December and especially when Covid restrictions allowed so few to be at the crematorium. They have rallied round the widower giving constant support.

With the church building being closed we were blessed to have one our stewards with the IT expertise to record services. We began recording a short service each week which went out on YouTube. The response was enormous, so much so that when we returned to worship in the building, we made the decision to continue recording, enabling those who still feel that they cannot return, to continue worshipping. We also sent paper copies out to those without access to watch the service.

We have always had a newsletter but, during this year, we made it much fuller to enable folk to stay connected. We decided that paying the postage cost was worth it.

Like everyone, our finances have been affected so we were pleased to slowly be able to welcome community groups back into the church hall and the blessing of a new regular group for mums with babies, and a new Scout group.

West Moor Methodist Church
With a congregation mostly in the 'vulnerable' category, and many not online, the past couple of years have been a challenge, and the frailty of the elderly congregation became even more apparent in restarting worship and other activities after Covid shutdowns. Due to a variety of reasons, chiefly the lack of people to take on roles required to fulfil responsibilities as managing trustees, the sad decision was made to close in the summer of 2020, with the final act of worship taking place on 7th November 2021.

The Wesley Orphan House Trust
The WOHT derives most of its income from rent of the site of the former 'Orphan House' on Northumberland Street, plus a limited sum from investments. Annually, the trust budgets to have approximately £25,000 available for grants and favours work with children, the vulnerable, education and occasionally for property improvements where the outcome is mission based.

Despite this being a difficult year for applicants and trustee meetings, a total of sixteen grants were made. This was a welcome increase on the previous year's total of seven.

Three were rolling grants over a five year period: a. "Together Mission NE", b. The South Shields Bede Circuit mission outreach shop, c. The Wesley Study Centre.

The other grants were: d. Marie Curie, e. Action for children, f. High Southwick Methodist Church, g. Calvert Trust, Northumberland, h. Strathmore Road Methodist Church, i. Balliol Youth Project, j. Trinity Gosforth, Men's Shed, k. MCF Fund for Human Need, l. Daniel Gibson, for Yorkshire Camp training and leading, m. Walker Foodbank, n. Cornerstone, o. Dlsha Mercy Mithra, short-term student accommodation costs.

These grants totalled £17,000.
An application form and written guidance are available from the Secretary.

"Presence" In Walker
This has been another year when we have felt the impact of Covid 19. There have been fewer face to face meetings and support sessions. However, we have maintained our work and our contact with the most vulnerable. Food parcels have been provided to families and to vulnerable individuals on a weekly basis.

We were able to plan and deliver family activity days during the school summer holidays. These included free craft activities, face painting and a variety of entertainment.

Debt advice work has continued to be undertaken remotely – with some face to face meetings as lockdown restrictions ended.

We have stayed connected with members of various groups through phone calls, emails, texts and cards.

Importantly, people know that we're still here and not planning to go anywhere.

Hand In Hand project
Hand in Hand has two clubs, one in Heaton and one in Wallsend.

Wallsend
The club closed in March 2020 and reopened in August 2021 for a short time offering refreshments and cake. The members were so thankful to be able to meet people and have a chat. During this time the 2 staff and 3 volunteers have rung every member each Tuesday - the usual day for the club - to have a conversation. This was a lifeline for everyone and was gratefully received. Sadly, some members have died during the year but the letters of thanks that have been received has been truly wonderful and such a blessing for the team.

Heaton
Like Wallsend the club closed in March 2020. Hand in Hand in Heaton had its home in Heaton Methodist Church which ceased to meet in October 2020, effectively making them 'homeless.' However, the volunteer club co-ordinators faithfully rang every member each Tuesday to have a conversation which, as at Wallsend, was gratefully received. Sadly, two members have died and others are no longer able to attend. The club coordinators are retired Salvation Army officers and were privileged to lead both the funeral services. They also continue to pastorally care for those who cannot attend. In the summer they were able to meet together in their garden which was wonderful for everyone. The club have found a new home and it continues to be a blessing for everyone.

Shieldfield Art Works @ The Holy Biscuit
Between September 2020-August 2021 we have achieved much at SAW. As part of Shieldfield Wheatfield we were able to harvest, thresh and mill our own grain which we used to bake 10 community loaves to share at our Grounded Harvest Festival. This urban-food growing project explored food sustainability and how this can bring people together to address social isolation and self-interest. During Christmas we gave out over 150 arts packs to our communities. They encompassed two themes: light & dark and the characters in the Christmas story and we are currently receiving messages to say people are using them again this year. We held Take Over on our online gallery and in a letterbox-friendly exhibition zine - supporting two emerging artists. We ran a programme called Un/Seen exploring how our inability to see art properly, in the flesh, affects our understanding and experience of it and how this idea of physical experience relates to our faith. We used a playful take on a childhood game, forming a chain of whispers which moved between audio and visual description. Ten artists collectively produced an exhibition by creating pieces in sequence. We developed and ran Shieldfield Grows, a programme of activity that seeks to promote sustainable food production, fair land usage and community flourishing. Local residents learnt together with us how to grow their own vegetables in the SAW garden, which we shared within the community. We also wrote regular blog posts for our Mixing Bowl communities and we held online Zoom lessons each week for our Painting for Fun class until we could meet safely inside again, which is currently the case. Finally, we have also been able to appoint a new Director from within the team to aid the continual development of SAW. We think that the variety, extent and ambition of the work we have completed is an astounding success and has continued to flourish Shieldfield, deepen relationships, provide a space of hospitality, challenge injustices and allow for the presence of a Christian voice within the arts and our local communities.

We have been successful in receiving funding from SHED, Sir James Knott Trust, All Churches Trust and SpaceHive, as well as receiving some anonymous one-off donations and achieving a good increase in our personal givers. We have also been able to have our long term bookings (like Potters Church) return to our building after lockdown and we have had many individual bookings from externals. This all aids our financial security and sustainability. God has provided in incredibly generous ways, through individuals, small grants and bigger funders.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position
Income for the year ended 31 August 2021 totalled £1,808,740 (2020: £849,477) resulting in a surplus for the year of £1,168,337 (2020: £19,319). Funds totalled £1,931,037 at the year end, of which £1,466,674 are restricted funds and £2,475 are endowment funds. Unrestricted reserves total £461,888 which includes those held for special purpose of £52,198 The Holy Biscuit, £7,020 Hand in hand and £531 Methodist Women in Britain.

Reserves policy - general funds
The definition of reserves is: "income which becomes available to the charity and is to be expended at the trustees' discretion in furtherance of the charity's objects, but which is not yet spent, committed or designated." The free reserves of the charity therefore exclude endowments, restricted funds, designated funds and funds already invested in fixed assets. Free reserves of the charity at the year end amounted to £80,641.

The reserves policy for the general and manse funds of the Circuit agreed by the trustees is to hold the equivalent of the relevant annual expenditure, plus an estimate of any known fluctuations. These reserves are held in the Central Finance Board deposit account. The unrestricted funds are currently below the policy, the Circuit Managing Trustees are concerned about this and mindful to address the situation as soon as possible. There are plans to balance the budget over the following two or three years and then start to re-build reserves. Should there be a funding crisis then the Managing Trustees would make an appeal to the Local Churches.

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Structure, governance and management

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust and constitutes an unincorporated charity. The charity's treasurers of the Circuit Fund are the lay Circuit Stewards, of the Managing Trustees listed previously all are lay people excepting the seventeen ministerial staff, four of whom are retired (Rev'd A Glynn Lister passed away on 7th April 2020, Rev'd John F Cook on 17th January 2020 and Rev'd Brian Dann, on 3rd June 2020 and they were promoted to glory) and one is Principal of St John's College Durham, one is chaplain at Pilgrims Court Methodist Homes Jesmond, and fourteen Lay workers all of whom are, or were, employed either by The Methodist Church, The United Reformed Church or The Church of England. Circuit meetings are generally held three times a year and include representatives of all the Societies (local churches) and projects in the Circuit. The Superintendent Minister (who supervises the work of the other Ministers in the Circuit) reports to this meeting as do the Circuit Stewards.

The governing body of the Circuit is the annual conference of The Methodist Church. The Methodist Church Act 1976 gives the authority under which The Methodist Church acts. The constitution practice and discipline of The Methodist Church (2019 edition) together with The Deed of Union (Act of 1929 adopted 1932) govern the activities of the Circuit.

In general, The Methodist Church is excepted from the need to register as a charity by the combined effects of Section 46(4) (A) of the Charities Act 1993 and Paragraph 4(2) (C) of the Charities (exception from registration) Regulations 1996 as amended by Statutory Instrument 2014 No 242. The Circuit, however, is a separate Registered Charity, number 1134265, in England and Wales.

The Trustees who have served during the year and since the year-end are set out on the legal and administration pages. The treasurers (Circuit Stewards) are appointed annually by the Circuit Meeting annually and the Managing Trustees are appointed either by: (a) the Societies of which they are members; (b) the Preachers' Meeting; or (c) by being ex-officio (Ministers in good standing or holding a District or Connexional Office or duly appointed Lay Workers). In practice, up to seven Circuit Stewards are appointed who serve, generally, for a minimum of 3 years and a maximum of 6.

The principal address of the Circuit's auditors, bankers, solicitors and other advisors are given as part of the reference and administrative details.

The Treasurers are responsible for the detailed examination of the Financial Statements and for recommending their adoption by the Circuit Meeting, they do this in consultation with the Circuit Treasurers Meeting, in practice they have appointed a Circuit Services Manager to handle the day to day financial and property matters, he must refer for guidance and instruction to the Circuit Stewards and Superintendent Minister. The Circuit Services Manager gave notice, in April 2019, of his intention to retire at the end of October 2020 and the Circuit Stewards have prepared a succession plan having identified one person who will become the Treasurer.

The Circuit is one of 12 of the Newcastle District and has 12 Local Churches [14 premises], of which 5 are Local Ecumenical Partnerships, the Circuit also has one other preaching place and one other set of premises that are used for 'fresh expressions of Church' - Shieldfield Art Works @ The Holy Biscuit, and has a 'presence' in Walker at The Pottery Bank Community Centre. They are contactable via the principal address of the Circuit. Funds are transferred to the Circuit on a quarterly basis to meet the commitments to the District and the upkeep of the Circuit.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

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

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;

- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

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

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

P. Cleever-Thorpe

Rev P Cleever-Thorpe (Chair) – Trustee

Dated: 25.5.22

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

Opinion
We have audited the financial statements of The Newcastle Central and East Circuit (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 August 2021 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and the notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:
- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 August 2021 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion
We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern
In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information
The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the trustees' report; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

The risk of material misstatement due to error or fraud is deemed to be low within the entity as the charity operates strong internal controls to mitigate any such risk. These controls are reviewed as part of the audit by performing systems walkthroughs to ensure they are operating effectively. Other substantive testing is also performed on all material balances and therefore any instances of non-compliance should be identified or considered as insignificant. Manual journal entries are scrutinised by data analytics software used as part of the audit.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Other matters

The comparative year figures were not subject to an audit.

TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

This has been done in order for the financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with current Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

M Moran.

Michael T Moran BA FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of

10 June 2022

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

is eligible for appointment as auditor of the charity by virtue of its eligibility for appointment as auditor of a company under of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

Current financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Endowment funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Income from:						
Donations and legacies	**4**	521,838	1,224,197	-	1,746,035	792,019
Other trading activities	**5**	14,539	5,000	-	19,539	13,374
Investments	**6**	23,461	19,664	41	43,166	44,084
Total income and endowments		559,838	1,248,861	41	1,808,740	849,477
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities	**7**	618,386	23,249	-	641,635	829,997
Other		-	-	4	4	4
Total resources expended		618,386	23,249	4	641,639	830,001
Net gains/(losses) on investments		845	-	391	1,236	(157)
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		(57,703)	1,225,612	428	1,168,337	19,319
Gross transfers between funds		47,984	(47,984)	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		(9,719)	1,177,628	428	1,168,337	19,319
Fund balances at 1 September 2020		471,607	289,046	2,047	762,700	743,381
Fund balances at 31 August 2021		461,888	1,466,674	2,475	1,931,037	762,700

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

Prior financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2020 £	Restricted funds 2020 £	Endowment funds 2020 £	Total 2020 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	4	792,019	-	-	792,019
Other trading activities	5	10,874	2,500	-	13,374
Investments	6	26,893	17,148	43	44,084
Total income and endowments		829,786	19,648	43	849,477
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	7	819,402	10,595	-	829,997
Other		-	-	4	4
Total resources expended		819,402	10,595	4	830,001
Net gains/(losses) on investments		(83)	-	(74)	(157)
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		10,301	9,053	(35)	19,319
Gross transfers between funds		20,020	(20,020)	-	-
Net movement in funds		30,321	(10,967)	(35)	19,319
Fund balances at 1 September 2019		441,286	300,013	2,082	743,381
Fund balances at 31 August 2020		471,607	289,046	2,047	762,700

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH
BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 AUGUST 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	11		321,497		328,202
Current assets					
Debtors	12	33,470		27,049	
Investments	13	12,122		19,588	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,584,599		404,714	
		1,630,191		451,351	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(17,354)		(12,143)	
Net current assets			1,612,837		439,208
Total assets less current liabilities			1,934,334		767,410
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	15		(3,297)		(4,710)
Net assets			1,931,037		762,700
Capital funds					
Endowment funds - general	17		2,475		2,047
Income funds					
Restricted funds	18		1,466,674		289,046
Unrestricted funds			461,888		471,607
			1,931,037		762,700

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 25/05/2022

P. Cleever-Thorpe.

Rev P Cleever-Thorpe (Chair) – Trustee

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	1		1,129,167		(58,277)
Investing activities					
Proceeds on disposal of investments		8,702		(209)	
Investment income received		43,166		44,084	
Net cash generated from investing activities			51,868		43,875
Financing activities					
Payment of obligations under finance leases		(1,150)		(1,140)	
Net cash used in financing activities			(1,150)		(1,140)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents			1,179,885		(15,542)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			404,714		420,256
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			1,584,599		404,714

THE NEWCASTLE CENTRAL AND EAST CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021

1	**Cash generated from operations**	**2021**	**2020**
		£	**£**
	Surplus for the year	1,168,337	19,319
	Adjustments for:		
	Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(43,166)	(44,084)
	Fair value gains and losses on investments	(1,236)	157
	Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	6,705	6,362
	Movements in working capital:		
	(Increase) in debtors	(6,421)	(5,546)
	Increase/(decrease) in creditors	4,948	(34,485)
	Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	1,129,167	(58,277)

2 **Analysis of changes in net funds**

	At 1 September 2020	**Cash flows**	**At 31 August 2021**
	£	**£**	**£**
Cash at bank and in hand	404,714	1,179,885	1,584,599
Obligations under finance leases	(5,860)	1,150	(4,710)
	398,854	1,181,035	1,579,889

3 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Newcastle Central and East Circuit is a unincorporated charity (charity number (1134265).

3.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

3.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

3.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

3.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

3.5 Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

3 Accounting policies

3.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Freehold land and buildings	straight line over 100 years
Computers	straight line over 3 years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

3.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

3.8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

3.9 Leases

Leases are classified as finance leases whenever the terms of the lease transfer substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to the lessees. All other leases are classified as operating leases.

Assets held under finance leases are recognised as assets at the lower of the assets fair value at the date of inception and the present value of the minimum lease payments. The related liability is included in the balance sheet as a finance lease obligation. Lease payments are treated as consisting of capital and interest elements. The interest is charged to net income/(expenditure) for the year so as to produce a constant periodic rate of interest on the remaining balance of the liability.

4 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds
	2021	2021	2021	2020
	£	£	£	£
Donations and gifts	1,840	1,224,197	1,226,037	103
Assessments	428,397	-	428,397	506,625
Grants receivable	32,959	-	32,959	14,828
Administration	53,302	-	53,302	250,914
Other	5,340	-	5,340	19,549
	521,838	1,224,197	1,746,035	792,019
Grants receivable for core activities				
MINE	3,900	-	3,900	-
United Reformed Church	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
Job Retension Scheme grant	19,059	-	19,059	4,828
	32,959	-	32,959	14,828

5 Other trading activities

	Other trading activities 2021	Other trading activities 2020
	£	£
Books & telephone income	5,756	6,053
Sundry income	13,783	7,321
	19,539	13,374
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	14,539	10,874
Restricted funds	5,000	2,500
	19,539	13,374

6 Investments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds general	Total	Total
	2021	2021	2021	2021	2020
	£	£	£	£	£
Rental income	23,368	18,710	-	42,078	40,771
Interest receivable	93	954	41	1,088	3,313
	23,461	19,664	41	43,166	44,084

7 Charitable activities

	Charitable activities 2021	Charitable activities 2020
	£	£
Staff costs	366,235	529,519
Depreciation and impairment	6,705	6,362
Gifts and donations	14,683	10,680
Assessments	98,159	97,675
Travel	4,863	9,688
Repairs and property costs	43,262	58,150
Connexional funds	-	13,483
Pulpit supply	111	1,331
The Holy Biscuit costs	65,509	68,000
Hand in Hand costs	1,878	7,250
Methodist Women in Britain costs	-	512
	601,405	802,650
Share of support costs (see note 8)	28,160	23,447
Share of governance costs (see note 8)	12,070	3,900
	641,635	829,997
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	618,386	819,402
Restricted funds	23,249	10,595
	641,635	829,997

8 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2021	Support costs	Governance costs	2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Telephone	14,039	-	14,039	13,355	-	13,355
Postage & stationery	3,951	-	3,951	4,924	-	4,924
Sundries	10,170	-	10,170	5,168	-	5,168
Audit fees	-	6,300	6,300	-	-	-
Independent examiner's fees	-	-	-	-	3,900	3,900
Professional fees	-	5,770	5,770	-	-	-
	28,160	12,070	40,230	23,447	3,900	27,347
Analysed between						
Charitable activities	28,160	12,070	40,230	23,447	3,900	27,347

9 Trustees

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 August 2021 nor for the year ended 31 August 2020.

Trustees expenses
The aggregate amount of travelling and subsistence expenses reimbursed to the trustees during the year was £5,168 (2020: £13,760). The number of persons reimbursed was 12 (2020: 12). During the year trustees' indemnity insurance was provided of £245 (2020: £245).

10 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2021 Number	2020 Number
Direct charitable expenditure	12	14
Management and admin of the charity	2	2
Total	14	16

Employment costs	2021 £	2020 £
Wages and salaries	287,966	454,311
Social security costs	21,091	21,743
Other pension costs	57,178	53,465
	366,235	529,519

10 Employees

The key management personnel of the charity include the circuit stewards, the superintendent, other ministers and the circuit services manager who are all managing trustees. Total employee benefits of the key management personnel for the year were £34,798 (2020: £62,957).

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

11 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings	Computers	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1 September 2020	368,717	17,827	386,544
At 31 August 2021	368,717	17,827	386,544
Depreciation and Impairment			
At 1 September 2020	45,865	12,477	58,342
Depreciation charged in the year	3,687	3,018	6,705
At 31 August 2021	49,552	15,495	65,047
Carrying amount			
At 31 August 2021	319,165	2,332	321,497
At 31 August 2020	322,852	5,350	328,202

12 Debtors

	2021	2020
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Other debtors	4,307	5,200
Prepayments and accrued income	29,163	21,849
	33,470	27,049

13 Current asset investments

	2021	2020
	£	£
Unlisted investments	12,122	19,588

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Obligations under finance leases		1,413	1,150
Accruals and deferred income		15,941	10,993
		17,354	12,143

15 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Obligations under finance leases		3,297	4,710

16 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2020 - none).

17 Endowment funds

Endowment funds represent assets which must be held permanently by the charity. Income arising on the endowment funds can be used in accordance with the objects of the charity and is included as unrestricted income. Any capital gains or losses arising on the assets form part of the fund.

		Movement in funds				
	Balance at 1 September 2020 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Revaluations gains and losses £	Balance at 31 August 2021 £
Permanent endowments						
The Susannah Gibson memorial fund	495	13	(1)	-	117	624
WR Dixon gift	1,552	28	(3)	-	274	1,851
	2,047	41	(4)	-	391	2,475

18 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 September 2020	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 August 2021
	£	£	£	£	£
Dorris Nuttal bequest	4,072	37	(25)	-	4,084
Property Fund	274,000	1,248,824	(23,224)	(37,010)	1,462,590
Elizabeth Burton bequest	2,315	-	-	(2,315)	-
Dorothy Burns bequest	8,659	-	-	(8,659)	-
	289,046	1,248,861	(23,249)	(47,984)	1,466,674

19 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Endowment funds 2021	Total 2021	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 August 2021 are represented by:					
Tangible assets	321,497	-	-	321,497	328,202
Current assets/(liabilities)	143,688	1,466,674	2,475	1,612,837	439,208
Long term liabilities	(3,297)	-	-	(3,297)	(4,710)
	461,888	1,466,674	2,475	1,931,037	762,700

20 Unrestricted funds

General Funds
These are funds that are available to be spent for any purpose by the charity.

Methodist Women in Britain
The Methodist Women in Britain, previously known as The Network Group and sometimes referred to as the Circuit Network, is a fellowship aimed at women of all ages within the church, who support each other and raise funds each year for 'the Easter offering', a Connexionally designated charity of the year. There are pastoral groups, fellowships and social activities. A small amount of the group's income is used for administrative costs, but most money is handed on to support the wider church.

Hand in Hand
A project was founded more than ten years ago by the former Heaton and Wallsend Circuit, based at Trinity Church Wallsend, serving the elderly and isolated in Wallsend. As time passed, the project expanded and provided lunch clubs, reminiscence and activity clubs as well as a befriending and visiting in homes service in Wallsend, Heaton, Longbenton and other places in North Tyneside. About seven years ago the project grew rapidly because of Lottery grant funding. Sadly when the grant finished in 2017, the management committee was unable to find a follow on funder and the project shrank significantly and now only operates from Trinity and Heaton Methodist Churches. Consequently, Hand in Hand has returned to be completely controlled by the Circuit with a small management group chaired by Rev'd Gavin Hume and legacy funds are being used to ensure that there are high quality lunch and activity clubs.

Shieldfield Art Works At The Holy Biscuit
Shieldfield Methodist Church closed as Local Church or Society, and in about 2006 the premises were rented to various organisations including a local radio station. By 2009 there was a proposal to sell the site but Rev'd Rob Hawkins in consultation with local businessman Ramy Zac, proposed a radical suggestion to develop and arts expression of Church, a form of Fresh Expressions of Church, using the premises. Mr Zac said that he would carry out, at his expense, a major refurbishment and Rob would set up the organisation of what quickly became known as The Holy Biscuit - it being opposite the Biscuit Factory art gallery. Until recently it has operated as a separate fund, but it is now felt that it should be an internal organisation of the Circuit, which 'owns' it.

The project has grown and now receives significant grants from the Methodist Connexional grants committee and is seen as an integral part of the arts scene in Newcastle. There are links to both universities in Newcastle and the one in Sunderland as well as the Ouseburn arts community. The Holy Biscuit is now reaching out to the local community, schools and other churches in Shieldfield. As well as providing gallery space, the premises are well used, for example, painting for fun (working with those who have health problems), schools work and church with a difference mid-week services.

The Walker Benevolent Fund
This fund represents funds that have been set aside for use at the discretion of the Deacon and had been exhausted during the year.

The Deacon Fund
This fund represents Model Trust funds transferred from the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church, the capital and income from which can be used at the discretion of the Deacon.

The Dixon bequests
This fund represents Model Trust funds transferred from the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church, the income from which can be used at the discretion of the Deacon and capital may be used with certain restrictions.

21 Restricted and endowment funds

Restricted Funds
The Doris Nuttal bequest
This fund represents funds donated to the Circuit, in practice used to provide for the repair and refurbishment of the Trinity Christian Community Centre. The fund is held in cash.

The Property Fund
This fund represents funds relating to the sale, letting or other disposition of land which is Circuit property. The authority to sanction schemes for the application of capital money in the fund rests with the Circuit meeting, subject to approval by the Synod. The fund is represented by investments and or cash.

The Elizabeth Burton bequest
This fund represents part of the fund bequeathed to Willington Quay (Wesleyan) Central Methodist Church, the funds to be used for general use and support of the cause. Funds are held in cash and property. The cash has been exhausted during the year and the property was being marketed for sale.

The Dorothy Burns bequest
This fund represents funds donated to the Belmont Methodist Church, upon the sale of which, were allocated to the Newcastle (Central & East) Circuit. The funds are to be used for general use and support of the cause. Funds are held in cash, which exhausted during the year.

Endowment Funds
The Susannah Gibson Memorial Fund
This fund represents monies left to the church in 1880 by the late Susannah Gibson, the income from which can be used 'for the sustenance of Wesleyan Ministers'.

The WR Dixon Gift
This fund represents Model Trust funds transferred from the former Allen Memorial Methodist Church and is used at the discretion of the Deacon.