

Tilehouse Street Baptist Church Annual Report 2025
Charity Registration Number 1135132

The charity is governed by an Approved Governing Document which states that the Church engages in a range of activities for the purpose of the advancement of the Christian faith according to the principles of the Baptist denomination. The Church may also advance education and carry out other charitable purposes in the United Kingdom and / or other parts of the world.

Trustees

Rev. Jane Robson	(Minister)
Mrs Joyce Bleasby	
Mr Paul Chamberlain	(Designated Person for Safeguarding and Safeguarding Trustee from February)
Mrs Margaret Granger	(Joint Treasurer)
Mrs Sheila Hallas	(Secretary)
Mr John Maguire	
Miss Anne Moody	Safeguarding Trustee during January)
Mr Martin Stears Handscomb	
Mrs Nickie Woodbridge	(Joint Treasurer)

Motto Text Joshua 3 verse 5

Joshua told the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you."

The year was a time for the congregation to consecrate themselves, individually and corporately, and to be receptive to God's word in preparation for the changes to come in 2026.

Aims

The Church's primary aim is to worship God, make known his love, share the good news of the gospel and to care for all people and His creation.

Governance

The diaconate has met regularly to consider spiritual, practical and financial matters relating to church life. Church business meetings took place bi-monthly. All members of the congregation are encouraged to attend these meetings and many do but only those whose names appear on the church membership roll have authority to make decisions, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Membership

On January 1st there were 44 persons in membership at Tilehouse Street and 8 at Stondon Baptist Church. During the course of the year four members died and three others left the area. In February, a lady was received into membership and on Easter Sunday, it was a joy to witness the baptism of another lady and to welcome her into membership. Stondon's membership is unchanged, thus leaving a total of 47 at the year's end.

Safeguarding

Following her appointment by the church meeting Anne Moody became the safeguarding trustee on January 1st. Unfortunately, she was unable to continue in the role and Paul Chamberlain temporarily assumed the position alongside his duties as Designated Person for Safeguarding. The November church meeting appointed John Maguire to become the safeguarding trustee from January 1st 2026.

A Level 1 training video was shown to the congregation and in October Paul conducted a very helpful training session after a morning service. (The chocolates he provided were greatly enjoyed too.)

The safeguarding team has carried out an audit of its policies and procedures.

Worship and Bible Study

Rev. Jane has continued to lead the weekly services with enthusiasm, energy and imagination. During the early part of the year she took the word, 'consecrate' as her theme for a series of sermons. In the summer and early autumn, we watched and discussed Radical Roots, a series of videos looking at the lives of six influential Baptists of the past.

The two Bible Study groups have continued to meet, periodically, sometimes linking their chosen subjects to the theme of the previous Sunday's sermon.

At the times when the Minister was elsewhere on a Sunday, it was a pleasure to have others leading the services, usually by old friends but also three new ones who had not previously preached at Tilehouse Street.

It was good to see the size of the congregation rising a little and to see the church full on occasions such as Easter Sunday and Remembrance Sunday. This was an opportunity for the Beavers, Cubs and Air Scouts who meet on the premises to parade their colours and share in the service.

Pastoral Care

Sadly, our very hard working and much loved pastoral care co-ordinator died in April. Since then a 'buddy scheme' has been set up, whereby every member of the fellowship has a buddy to keep an eye on him or her. Many members are also buddies to do the caring. Naturally, pastoral care is not confined to this system and much care, help and support is given by many to those in need.

Outreach

Open Church continues to flourish. Its loyal supporters are not deterred by the heaviest of downpours and numbers are growing. It's been a joy to regularly welcome a number of ladies who live in the nearby apartments.

Coffee mornings at the start of Lent, harvest time and Advent are well attended and raise money for good causes.

A new venture this year was to sign up for 'Streets of Light'. The aim was to use Halloween to send a message of hope. Decorations showing Jesus as the light of the world were attached to the windows in the front doors and illuminated after dark.

This innovation was so well received that the idea was repeated and decorations on the nativity theme were displayed throughout Advent and Christmas.

Charitable Donations

The church supports a number of charities, both Christian and secular. This year all the offerings given during the extra Christmas activities and services were donated to the Garden House Hospice in Letchworth. Other charities which the church supports prayerfully and financially include Phase, Home Mission, BMS World Mission and Operation Agri.

Use of the Premises

Both the church building and the Memorial Halls are well used throughout the week. Three other churches meet for worship on Sundays.

The Pre-school and Nursery is open five days a week during term time. We were sorry to lose Hitchin School of Dance who had hired rooms in the Hall for very many years. A wide variety of other activities such as Pilates, drama classes, Tai Chi and more take place on the site.

The Buildings

Work to repair the roof and resolve the problem of damp is still awaited. It is hoped that this work will be done in the spring of 2026.

A generous, anonymous donor paid for a new cooker to be installed.

The floor in the main hall was sanded, sealed and varnished.

On the advice of the Fire Service, improvements have been made to the fire safety precautions in the Halls and a video doorbell has been fitted for increased security. At the onset of colder weather it was discovered that urgent repairs to the church boiler were needed. These were done and comfort regained.

The Future

Much of this year has been devoted to planning and preparation for the pastoral vacancy which will arise when Rev. Jane retires in April 2026. I have alluded to Jane's encouraging of us to consecrate ourselves, so that we would be alert to God's leading. A Ministry Working Group was set up to look into the varying styles of ministry available, investigate what is sustainable and right for Tilehouse Street. The group was grateful for help and advice from Rev. Mary Moody, one of the Central Baptist Association Regional Ministers.

On April 5th, we held a Church Day, facilitated by Kieran Murphy. This was an opportunity to listen, pray and discern God's guidance. The outcome of the day can be summarised in three points:

Courage – to move forward in faith

Capacity – it may be limited, but use what we have well

Cultivating – building on what we have.

We face an unknown future, but we travel on together trusting in our Lord to lead us.

I would like to thank everyone who has played a part in the church's life during the year. Thank you for your prayers and practical help, in whatever form that may have been. I especially want to thank Rev. Jane for her ten years of ministry, guidance, spiritual support and practical help. I wish her a long, happy and blessed retirement.

Sheila Hallas
January 2026

Minister's Reflection

As I look back over 2025 I am convinced that the church has been consecrating itself and is ready for the amazing things that God will do among them in 2026 and beyond. I have already seen signs of apprehension over the future and a grieving for what will be lost but in so many ways I see a church that has also been preparing itself for the new season.

The church secretary has, once more, clearly and succinctly given a snap shot of the church's ministry and mission in 2025. What has not been mentioned is the number of extra meetings the diaconate have held in the latter part of the year. These meetings have sought to put structures in place for the immediate future and given thought to new ministry in order to draw together a profile for when the search for a new minister begins.

Signs, in my opinion, of a healthy church that is able to celebrate the successes of the past year while also looking ahead with hope and purpose to all that God has in store. It has been a privilege and a joy to lead this part of the body of Christ for the last ten years. In particular I want to recognise the team work, commitment and integrity of all those who have served as deacons in that time. To God be the glory.

Tilehouse Street Baptist Church

Registered Charity no. 1135132

Income and Expenditure Account
for the year

1st January to 31st December 2025

Tilehouse Street Baptist Church

Trustees

Rev J Robson
Mrs S Hallas
Mrs M Granger
Mrs N Woodbridge
Mrs J Bleasby
Mr J Maguire
Mr P Chamberlain
Miss A Moody
Mr M Stears-Handscomb

Minister
Secretary
Joint Treasurer
Joint Treasurer
Deacon
Deacon
Deacon
Deacon
Deacon

Address

Tilehouse Street Baptist Church
Upper Tilehouse Street
Hitchin, Herts
SG5 2EE

Property Trustees

Baptist Union Corporation Limited
Baptist House
129 Broadway
Didcot
Oxfordshire OX11 8RT

Main Bankers

CAF Bank Ltd
PO Box 289
West Malling, Kent
ME19 4TA

Baptist Union Corporation Limited
Baptist House
129 Broadway
Didcot
Oxfordshire OX11 8RT

Santander Uk Plc
2 Triton Square
Regents Place
London NW1 3AN

Tilehouse Street Baptist Church

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ending 31st December 2025

	2025	2024
	Unrestricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds
INCOME	£	£
Voluntary income	131,322.72	75,869.32
Fundraising activities	-	-
Interest	2,864.47	4,258.92
Charitable activities	33,319.88	43,532.39
Total Receipts	<u>167,507.07</u>	<u>123,660.63</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable expenses	13,489.95	13,784.22
Governance costs	123,639.84	108,374.39
Total Payments	<u>137,129.79</u>	<u>122,158.61</u>
Deficit/Surplus of income over expenditure	<u>30,377.28</u>	<u>1,502.02</u>
Total funds brought forward	211,874.12	210,372.10
Total funds carried forward	<u>242,251.40</u>	<u>211,874.12</u>

Tilehouse Street Baptist Church

FUND ACTIVITIES for year ending 31st December 2025

GENERAL FUND		2025	2024
Income		£	£
Offerings		41,446.71	42,003.12
Donations and fees		2,499.71	2,221.72
Donations from church groups (appeals)		75.00	1,965.33
Parking Income		309.00	315.40
Gift Aid - Income tax recovered		10,211.31	10,390.18
Lettings		32,411.88	41,720.26
Outlook contributions		140.00	240.00
Interest received		2,340.16	718.48
		<u>89,433.77</u>	<u>99,574.49</u>
Expenditure			
Ministerial (including stipend, expenses pension & pulpit supply)		42,664.04	38,582.81
BU pension deficit payment		-	10.00
Manse expenses		3,310.00	3,467.32
Standing charges -			
Electricity	6,816.16		3,126.55
Gas	7,199.07		5,938.89
Water	811.74		708.61
Insurance	6,054.01		5,974.87
		20,880.98	15,748.92
Domestic -			
Cleaning	11,865.40		11,321.60
Grounds	8,209.01		6,840.00
Refreshments	385.07		208.19
		20,459.48	18,369.79
Organist, licences & piano tuning		1,231.86	1,432.72
Outreach & Publicity			
General	40.50		54.28
Events			135.01
		40.50	189.29
Office -			
Administrator	9,048.00		8,591.60
Bookkeeping	850.00		562.50
Stationery & stamps	72.10		102.89
Computer supplies	557.84		697.60
Telephone & broadband	600.24		590.51
Photocopier	1,522.98		641.44
		12,651.16	11,186.54
Equipment		-	368.87
Fees, Subscriptions & gifts		476.80	577.79
Bank Charges		60.00	60.00
Conferences & Training		335.00	104.00
Donations		3,000.00	2,500.00
Sundries		-	1,640.00
		<u>105,109.82</u>	<u>94,238.05</u>
Less transfer to Pastoral Care fund		50.00	100.00
Less transfer to Building maintenance fund		10,000.00	10,000.00
		-	-
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR YEAR		<u>(25,726.05)</u>	<u>(4,763.56)</u>
BALANCE 1st JANUARY		31,180.05	35,943.61
Reserve policy transfer (from Legacies fund)		25,000.00	-
BALANCE 31st DECEMBER		<u>30,454.00</u>	<u>31,180.05</u>

Tilehouse Street Baptist Church

FUND ACTIVITIES for year ending 31st December 2025

	2025 £	2024 £
PASTORAL CARE FUND		
Balance 1st January	1,000.00	1,000.00
Income	-	-
Transfer from General fund	50.00	100.00
Interest	-	-
	<u>1,050.00</u>	<u>1,100.00</u>
Gifts & Loans	50.00	100.00
Balance 31st December	<u>1,000.00</u>	<u>1,000.00</u>
BUILDING MAINTENANCE FUND		
Balance 1st January	11,976.14	8,671.78
Transfer from General fund	10,000.00	10,000.00
Transfer from Legacies fund	-	-
Interest	-	-
	<u>21,976.14</u>	<u>18,671.78</u>
Expenditure - General	1,744.53	758.80
Church & Halls boiler maintenanc	4,133.00	450.00
Fire extinguisher service	522.33	516.84
Hall floor resurfacing	3,240.00	-
Hall lights & smoke detectors	2,698.81	-
Church roof drone photos	1,080.00	-
Church roof damp proofing	1,250.00	4,970.00
Balance 31st December	<u>7,307.47</u>	<u>11,976.14</u>
ORGAN FUND		
Balance 1st January	11,977.12	11,923.67
Interest	-	282.41
	<u>11,977.12</u>	<u>12,206.08</u>
Expenditure - tuning	-	-
blower maintenance	266.40	228.96
Balance 31st December	<u>11,710.72</u>	<u>11,977.12</u>
LEGACIES FUND		
Balance 1st January	75,600.34	73,834.62
Estate of Gill Mayes	58,130.86	-
Interest	-	1,765.72
	<u>133,731.20</u>	<u>75,600.34</u>
Expenditure (transfer to Building Maintenance)	-	-
Reserves (transfer to General fund)	25,000.00	-
Balance 31st December	<u>108,731.20</u>	<u>75,600.34</u>

Tilehouse Street Baptist Church

FUND ACTIVITIES for the year ending 31st December 2025

	2025 £	2024 £
BADMINTON CLUB		
Balance 1st January	660.48	605.76
Income - Subscriptions	525.50	599.00
	<u>1,185.98</u>	<u>1,204.76</u>
Expenditure - shuttles & sundries	29.90	44.28
Donation to General fund	500.00	500.00
Balance 31st December	<u>656.08</u>	<u>660.48</u>
DONATIONS FUND (see notes on page 8)		
Balance 1st January	-	-
Donations received	6,039.00	6,416.40
Gift Aid claimed	1,194.25	983.25
General fund donations	3,000.00	2,500.00
spare	-	-
	<u>10,233.25</u>	<u>9,899.65</u>
Donations Paid	6,404.87	7,399.65
General fund donations	3,000.00	2,500.00
Donations outstanding (GHH)	828.38	-
Balance 31st December	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
OUTREACH & MINISTRY FUND		
Balance 1st January	15,134.20	14,780.73
Interest	-	353.47
	<u>15,134.20</u>	<u>15,134.20</u>
Transfer to General fund	-	-
Balance 31st December	<u>15,134.20</u>	<u>15,134.20</u>
FLOWER FUND		
Balance 1st January	94.04	349.93
Contributions	951.48	695.00
Other bequests	13.40	-
	<u>1,058.92</u>	<u>1,044.93</u>
Expenditure	560.11	950.89
Balance 31st December	<u>498.81</u>	<u>94.04</u>

Tilehouse Street Baptist Church

FUND ACTIVITIES for the year ending 31st December 2025

STONDON CHAPEL FUND		2025	2024
		£	£
Income			
Offerings		9,182.00	8,919.04
Income tax recovered		1,060.00	1,217.50
Donations		-	389.88
Grants		-	-
Coffee mornings & fund raising		-	-
Lettings		382.50	1,213.13
Other income (bank error)		70.00	112.50
Interest		524.31	1,138.84
		<u>11,218.81</u>	<u>12,990.89</u>
Expenditure			
Preaching fees		2,393.50	2,135.00
Standing charges - Electricity	295.66		346.62
Gas	853.97		824.88
Water	283.72		195.79
		<u>1,433.35</u>	<u>1,367.29</u>
Building - Maintenance	96.00		2,682.00
Cleaning	942.60		896.04
Projects	-		-
Insurance, fire extinguishers	1,185.25		1,232.79
		<u>2,223.85</u>	<u>4,810.83</u>
Music licence		253.91	240.24
Outreach & publicity		-	-
Training		-	32.40
Equipment		207.03	752.88
Donations -			
Home Mission	600.00		600.00
BMS	600.00		600.00
Baptist Twinning israel	1,000.00		1,350.00
MAF	-		-
Appeals	-		112.50
		<u>2,200.00</u>	<u>2,662.50</u>
Sundries		-	-
		<u>8,711.64</u>	<u>12,001.14</u>
DEFICIT/SURPLUS FOR YEAR		<u>2,507.17</u>	<u>989.75</u>
BALANCE 1st JANUARY		64,251.75	63,262.00
BALANCE 31st DECEMBER		<u>66,758.92</u>	<u>64,251.75</u>

Tilehouse Street Baptist Church

FUND ACTIVITIES for the year ending 31st December 2025

DONATIONS FUND	2025	2024	Notes (for 2025)
	£	£	
Home Mission	2,045.62	1,814.60	see note 1
BMS	1,745.63	1,514.60	see note 2
Birthday Scheme	146.50	298.25	
Operation Agri	1,847.40	1,396.70	Harvest offerings
CTH PHASE	1,800.00	1,800.00	donation from General Fund
Regents Park Baptist College	400.00	400.00	donation from General Fund
Baptist union	500.00	-	donation for Spurgeons College
Christian Aid	82.22	-	
DEC appeals	95.00	45.00	
	-	-	
Garden House Hospice	742.50	-	Anniversary appeal
Garden House Hospice	828.38	-	Christmas charity
	-	-	
Daisy Chains	-	-	
Mercy Ships	-	765.00	
	-	428.00	
Herts Young Homeless	-	1,437.50	Christmas charity
Total:	10,233.25	9,899.65	Note 4

Notes (for 2025):

1. includes £300.00 Church Donation; £1,462.50 Gift Day; £283.13 gift aid
2. includes £1,462.51 Gift Day; £283.12 gift aid
3. gift aid is claimed wherever possible; total claimed on donations £1194.25
4. the total donations are equivalent to approximately 11.4% of the church income

Other notes:

- i) 2025 Mission Gift Day total was £3,628.74 (including £566.25 gift aid)
- i) 2024 Mission Gift Day total was £3,029.20 (including £585 gift aid)
- ii) 2023 Mission Gift Day total was £4,262.50 (including £822.50 gift aid)
- iii) 2022 Mission Gift Day total was £4,408.75 (including £858.75 gift aid)

Tilehouse Street Baptist Church

Statement of Assets & Liabilities as at 31st December 2025

	2025 £	2024 £
Current assets		
CAF bank - Cash account	4,560.17	9,891.39
CAF bank - Gold account	44,690.44	25,670.20
Baptist Union - Deposit account	43,881.49	103,143.21
Baptist Union - High Interest account	90,684.04	-
Nat West bank - Badminton Club	656.08	660.48
Santander UK Plc - Stondon Chapel	15,119.06	13,136.20
Baptist Union - Deposit account	51,639.86	51,115.55
Total at bank and in hand	251,231.14	203,617.03
Sundry debtors		
Prepaid insurance	4,660.90	4,964.28
Lettings	2,258.00	3,069.50
Stondon (Gift Aid)	550.00	-
HMRC (Gift Aid)	1,853.63	2,481.03
Total assets	260,553.67	214,131.84
Current liabilities		
Payroll Liabilities (overpayment)	(1,059.01)	787.72
Sundry Creditors (donations fund)	681.38	1,470.00
Stondon 2025 gift aid balance	117.40	-
Sundry Creditors (offertory)	14,849.56	-
Sundry Creditors (gift aid received)	3,712.94	1,470.00
	18,302.27	2,257.72
Net assets over liabilities	242,251.40	211,874.12
Unrestricted Funds		
General fund	30,454.00	31,180.05
Pastoral care fund	1,000.00	1,000.00
Flower fund	498.81	94.04
Building maintenance fund	7,307.47	11,976.14
Organ maintenance fund	11,710.72	11,977.12
Badminton Club	656.08	660.48
Donations fund	-	-
Legacies fund	108,731.20	75,600.34
Outreach & Ministry fund	15,134.20	15,134.20
Stondon chapel fund	66758.92	64,251.75
Total funds	242,251.40	211,874.12

Tilehouse Street Baptist Church

Notes to the Accounts

Reserves Policy

Tilehouse Street Baptist Church has a reserves policy which is to retain a minimum of three months expenditure in the General Fund.

Basis of Accounting

These accounts have been prepared on a 'receipts and payments' basis and accord with Section 133 Charities Act 2011

Insured Value of Assets held for Church's own use


Property - The Church is the beneficial owner (subject to the relevant trusts) of the following, the legal title to which is held by the Baptist Union Corporation:

	Church premises	5,806,438
	Manse	421,864
	Stondon premises	607,952
		<u>6,836,254</u>
Other -	Organ, Pianos, Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment	169,686
	Manse fixtures & fittings	31,167
	Stondon, Pianos, etc.	101,327
		<u>7,138,434</u>

The Accounts and Statement of Assets and Liabilities set out on Pages 1 to 10 relating to the year ending 31 December 2024 are as approved by the Trustees

Treasurer

Date


10.03.2026

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Tilehouse Street Baptist Church

I report on the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31st December 2025, which are set out on pages 1 to 10.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

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

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

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

have not been met; or

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

Name: James Weist

Address: 17 Bearton Avenue, Hitchin Herts SG5 1NZ

Date: 24th March 2026

Signed:

