

**Annual Report of the Trustees of the Peterborough Methodist Circuit
for the church year 1st Sept 2019 to 31st August 2020**
(Registered Charity No 1135613)



Produced by the Peterborough Circuit of the Methodist Church
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Our Mission Statement

“The Peterborough Methodist Circuit aims to be the people of God within our communities, sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ and showing God’s love through worship, witness and service.”

We seek to discover the needs of contemporary society and respond to it; working with our ecumenical partners towards creating relationships within the communities and sharing the word of God with those around us.

We are seeking to utilise and ensure the abilities and skills of lay people fully in the Circuit and encourage others to explore and offer themselves for service at all levels as equal partners in our work.

Our vision statement for our children’s and young people’s ministry

‘Providing loving and caring ministries that children and young people may come to know Jesus Christ’

Trustees during the year	
Revd Langley Mackrell-Hey (Chair)	Sue Keeney
Giles Armstrong	Christine Kell
Philip Assensoh	Sarah Kelly
George Barber	Nigel Lightfoot
Sue Baron	Laura Martin
Sarah Bereznyckyj	Valerie Octon
Heather Black	Revd David Parkes
Ewan Cappitt	Janet Rich
Sue Gage	Cathy Ruffles
Owen Gardiner	Margaret Smith
Elizabeth Gee	Revd Douglas Stevens
Michael Goodman	Simon Stewart
Anita (Neat) Gordon	Monica Sturgess
Revd Sarah Gower	Ann Tooth
Susan Halford	Revd Graham Tooth
John Hewitson	Denise Watson
Sue Holmes	Elizabeth White
Trevor Howlett	Nicky Ward
Paul Hutchings	Peter Williams

Our Circuit

There are 13 churches in the Peterborough Circuit, and the Circuit crosses 3 counties – Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire. One of these churches (Yarwell), is an Anglican Church and Methodist ministers or local preachers lead the service there once a month. The Yarwell congregation is a class of Elton and receives support from the congregation there. Three of the churches: Whittlesey, Westgate New Church and Christ Church are Local Ecumenical Partnership's (LEPs)

Trustees of the Circuit Meeting met three times during the year: In September 2019 and in January and June 2020. Our Circuit Meeting Devotions this year were led by: a Local preacher on 'New Beginnings'; an outside speaker on 'Supporting Syrian Refugees in Peterborough'; and our Superintendent Minister on 'Building on our Reimagine sessions' including 'The Dragonfly' model. Unfortunately, our March 2020 meeting was cancelled because of the national lockdown related to the Covid-19 pandemic.

It has been an unprecedented year due to the Coronavirus, which has forced us to work very differently as a Circuit. We have responded well to the many challenges we have encountered and our report shows how we have adapted our ways of working, and put on new and different services and activities in a variety of creative ways. Everyone has stepped up, learned new skills and embraced all kinds of technology, often surprising themselves, and gaining confidence along the way. It has been a steep learning curve for us all!

1 Circuit Strategy

1.1.1 The Ministry Plan for 2019-2020 continued as for the previous year. Revd Gareth Baron's successor, Revd Shameela Jameelee-Samuel, started her ministry from 1st September. Unfortunately, she suffered a period of ill-health from April through to the end of August 2020. Our supernumerary ministers, Revd Dale Sherriff, and Revd David Parkes were on hand to provide support to the Circuit, so none of Revd Shameela's churches lost momentum as they looked forward to the future and discerned the best way ahead. Revd Dale was available for conversations around personal vocation, and helping churches to set up new groups or reflect on how they can develop this work. Revd David continued to work in an advisory capacity, frequently attending planning meetings and ensuring churches felt supported.

1.1.2 *Westgate New Church (WNC)*

Revd Langley continued with his churches plus continued Methodist oversight of the Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs) at Westgate New Church and Whittlesey Queen Street Church. With his work as Superintendent, oversight of seven churches, plus taking on the ATC Chaplaincy, it has been a very busy and active year for him.

Whilst the role of a minister has not changed, the focus of what ministers do is changing and has done so for some time. Revd Langley's role seems now to be one of enabling churches and helping them plan, and also one of mentoring key leaders. With this in mind, thanks go to Nigel Lightfoot for helping at WNC and Monica Sturgess at Oundle. Their support was part of the Circuit making the best use of our preachers on the Preaching Plan, and also to give more consistency given that Revd Langley's focus is spread. It has enabled a deeper link with the Circuit and helped the Circuit know how it can support the churches better in terms of meeting their worshipping needs, particularly during the uncertainties and difficulties brought by the pandemic.

We have had a lot more discussions generally this year on what the needs of the churches are and how the Circuit can help. And, regarding Westgate New Church, much progress has been made in terms of building relationships with other local agencies and with the United Reformed Church. Plans in moving forward have been affected by the North Westgate Development, which has also been delayed in its progress by major changes which have impacted on the developers' plans for the City Centre, of which Westgate New Church is a part.

We are in discussion and negotiation with the developers regarding a site for a new church building as part of this new development. This is not just about WNC; it is about how the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church have a platform for mission in the city of Peterborough. Revd Langley has worked with WNC to develop a 'Mission Statement and Action Plan' that demonstrates how the church sees itself, and its vision for the city centre. He sees the potential for WNC as a base for pioneer work, community work and mission.

The URC, like Methodism, are facing challenges in resourcing ministers to churches. To plan for the future they are looking at Resourced Churches where one church is the main centre of a group where a minister is based but also supporting other churches. Discussions have been held with Whittlesey and Westgate New Church to understand their opinions of the proposals and to feed that back to the URC.

During the pandemic, WNC requested volunteers to help co-ordinate the Foodbank, and to assist with the BOB project - 'Back of Beyond' – which has received funding from both denominations. BOB spurred people on and we now have this bigger vision in the church, involving pioneer work. These will be the leads we follow. We have made contact with a Connexional resource who advises on how to build a worship centre that matches the mission of the church for the future and are looking to build on this opportunity.

1.1.3 Last year, we continued our work on developing a new Circuit Strategy, and held two 'Reimagine' meetings as part of our circuit consultation, where we discussed in depth how best we use our resources. After further discussion at Circuit meetings, an updated Circuit Strategy was approved at our September Circuit Meeting. This new Strategy has been prepared to recognise the changes that have occurred since the previous strategy was agreed in 2001.

Thanks go to Simon Stewart for all his work on this, and to the CLT, and to those who attended the Reimagine gatherings and those who helped in the local churches.

2 Mission and Outreach

This section includes: The work of our Pioneer Team Leader, Neat Gordon, who ministered in Welland:

different mission activities happening in the Circuit; and some examples of specific mission in individual churches.

2.1 Welland

Neat resigned from her role in March 2020, after being with us for two years and two months.

Throughout her time with us, she got lots of things moving, and galvanised volunteers to help with activities in the local community. She brought different aspects to things and her role became more community-based. She made a wide range of contacts across the area.

These are the things she achieved and enabled in her last year:

This section builds on work started last year when, following the news that many families would have to find extra resources for them to feed their children throughout the summer holidays, Neat arranged for the existing groups, facilitated by Pioneer Welland, to extend to offer meals around Dogsthorpe. Therefore, every meal was attended by families, carers, grandparents and the sense of community between the different venues increased. After five weeks of running the Summer Food Programme, they had fed 211 children and 148 parents and carers (350 hot meals).

A grant from Near Neighbours enabled them to continue the Friday Feast until half-term and do meals during half-term as well. They ran this at 100a Central Avenue, from 12 noon until 2.30pm and it was open to anybody.

During September to December, Neat engaged with 165 people (72 children and 93 parents/carers) who attended drop-in sessions, activities and events within the community.

In January, Neat undertook a SWOT analysis, looking at the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities available for the ongoing Pioneer Welland project:

Strengths - Since September, they continued working closely with the Olive Branch Community Garden and Barnardo's, hosting Parent's United three times a week. Every Friday lunchtime, serving a hot meal brought a good atmosphere of friendship and support among the five regular families that attended.

At half-term and Christmas they offered free meals to parents and children at each venue, and it was encouraging to see the donations of food and the number of occasional volunteers grow, with other people able to cook a meal or provide food for a lunch. Also, all families and children were able to receive a gift at Christmas as a result of a kind donation from a family in Dogsthorpe Methodist Church.

Weaknesses – The amount of time and energy expended during the summer months meant cutting back on other activities within Welland to keep within Neat's twenty hours, but she maintained contact through emails and occasional meetings.

Neat offered pastoral and practical support to the families she connected with. She was honoured to serve them, but it did bring challenges.

Opportunities – Plans were made to operate a Community Fridge in Dogsthorpe. Another plan was to develop running an Art and Craft Café style group at the Charteris Centre during the week. Many ladies in Dogsthorpe and Welland are interested in crafts and there is an opportunity for them to demonstrate their particular skill to others. Running this event one evening per week would allow working people to join in. Also, in order to get to know residents better and to find out more about the cultural make up of Welland, plans were made to visit houses on the estate door to door.

Threats – the two main threats to Pioneer Welland are the time available and volunteers. As the project is a Circuit-led resource, having more volunteers from outside the immediate area would be an asset to the group. The volunteers come from villages outside of Peterborough, therefore, she appealed to anyone who was interested in helping with meals, serving teas and snacks or sitting chatting to other parents for an hour or two each week.

Over the two years in post, Neat noticed how the nature and scope of the Welland estate has changed; there are more working families and local authorities are strongly encouraging parents to return to work so, reaching them has become more difficult. However, the problems of loneliness, isolation and other related issues do not go away, and so running groups at other times to suit parents may be of benefit.

Along with her team, Neat reflected on Pioneer Welland and how effective it has been, what was

happening and what was the best way forward to continue building the whole Dogsthorpe community, and offering support to the Christ the Carpenter Parish, and the charities and community groups working on Welland. She shared her thoughts at the Pioneer Welland Prayer Meeting in February at the Charteris Centre. She also held a Celebration and Vision Evening in March at Dogsthorpe Methodist Church and invited all stakeholders, team members, circuit church members and community groups that she was working alongside.

Neat saw fruit appearing where the foundations of prayer and faithful commitment to the Dogsthorpe and the Welland estate have been planted over the years. She thanked everyone for their faithfulness in prayer, provision and activity across the years. Her prayer was a quote from Bill Johnson in the book "Power that Changes the World":

"I have discovered that when we enjoy life with the citizens of our communities and show people that we are real and practical, we have influence. We need to have more faith and confidence in the impact the Holy Spirit's presence in us will have. He will affect our surroundings....we are to become immersed in the affairs of our cities."

Neat believed this is what we were seeing in Welland, and she acknowledged the need for disciples, not volunteers, to help 'pioneer' into Dogsthorpe and Welland. Thanks go to Laura Martin who worked alongside Neat and joined up to help at the Tuesday event at The Acorn Centre, where we saw a change in just a few weeks.

The CLT is in discussion about a replacement for Neat. With her resignation and the desire to provide additional support for Westgate New Church and Whittlesey, one proposal the CLT is considering is looking at whether it is feasible to create one full-time role encompassing the two roles. Unfortunately, with the recruitment freeze during lockdown, nothing could progress this year.

2.2 Mission in our Circuit

This has obviously been affected greatly by the pandemic but here are some examples of what we have been able to do, despite the restrictions:

2.2.1 Despite the lockdowns, we continued to run and support Foodbanks at Dogsthorpe, Westgate New Church and Oundle, and with numbers of users dramatically increasing, we were pleased to be able to help meet real needs in our city. Dogsthorpe Methodist Church became the city-wide hub for foodbank in Peterborough.

2.2.2 The local Winter Night Shelter was impacted; unfortunately, the Government regulations concerning Covid-19 did not allow Night Shelters for the homeless to run so, none of the local churches, including Southside, Brookside and Dogsthorpe, were able to be host churches for the project this year, as they were in previous years. However, several members of our churches are members of the Light Project Peterborough Steering group, which is responsible for the project and attended regular meetings. And some Circuit members have volunteered for the "The Garden House", which is a drop-in day centre for the project; this continued to open throughout the lockdowns with strict safety measures in place. The Government awarded funds for rough sleepers to be put into hotel accommodation and the staff and volunteers facilitated this and gave support.

2.2.3 Our Missions and Ministries Team normally has an annual Mission focus. Unfortunately they were unable to meet this year. However, people in the Circuit were generous in supporting a member who did a fundraising challenge in aid of the Methodist Homes Association, which was severely affected by the pandemic. £1,436 was raised with £500 of that going to our local Methodist Home, MHA The Maples.

2.2.4 Again, the churches responded generously to Connexional Funds. £7846.27 was sent to the charities involved. Elizabeth Gee stepped down as Connexional Funds Officer and our thanks go to her.

2.3 Mission in our Churches

It has been a year of two halves with September to mid-March following our usual pattern and then mid-march onwards, there were many adaptations:

2.3.1 Normally, a wide range of regular groups meet in our churches, and up until Mid-March 2020 these groups included: At Orton Waterville, Knit and Natter; At Brookside: Tuesday Fellowship; Messy Church Christmas; PE4 ecumenical events; Brookside pre-school; Toddlers group; Word Alive; Keys; Youth

club, Boys' Brigade. *At Oundle*, Bible Study group; Clergy Prayers. *At Crowland*: Explorers; Toddlers group, Saturday morning coffee sessions with book stalls 10 to 11-30am. Small fellowship / study groups: Wesley's Wayfarers on the 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of each month at 11 am and Stepping Stones fortnightly on Tuesday afternoons at 2pm, *At Westgate New Church*, Circuit Intercessions. *At Whittlesey*, Network Group, Little Fishes; at Elton, the 'Cheeky Monkeys' toddlers' group, including forging links with the mums and encouraging them in the Christian faith.

2.3.2 At Dogsthorpe, they had a Youth Weekend, sleeping in the church, and they followed a Bible stories series that they were introduced to at Soul Survivor called 'Storylines'. Ten young people stayed over on Friday and Saturday and contributed to the AAW service on the Sunday morning. They chose the songs and contributed to different things within the service. The children and young people have been getting involved with the services there, facilitated by Revd David Parkes. They are finding different ways of engaging with the congregation and vice versa. It has been nice to see the way different relationships are developing and, seeing the way the young people relate to the rest of the church is very positive.

2.3.3 At Brookside, the toddler group on a Wednesday afternoon has been running for a number of years. A few years ago, the numbers were so low that they thought they might have to disband but, numbers have now hugely increased and it is booming. The children have a great time, as do the parents and grandparents.

2.3.4 Once we realised that we were going to be in lockdown for quite some time, some groups changed from meeting in person to meeting via Zoom or facebook, including Zoom study groups and WhatsApp groups. These included: 'New Direction' (the Brookside Bible study group) which changed to meeting via Zoom at 10.30am on Thursdays. A warm welcome was given to anyone. At Dogsthorpe, the Thursday House group met weekly via Zoom from 7.30 to 9pm. At Whittlesey, they started a weekly Zoom meet-up, 4pm on alternate Sundays for sharing, fellowship and prayer and a WhatsApp group for sharing and encouragement.

2.3.5 Dogsthorpe carried on serving the community in a number of ways: They held a Foodbank distribution point on a Friday and Saturday. They had Blood Donor Sessions, The Pre-School continued to meet during second lockdown rulings. They had Worship Services via Zoom, a Saturday Morning Zoom Lent course, and a Wednesday Morning Zoom Prayer Group. Occasional Church meetings were held via Zoom, there was a twice monthly Saturday Morning Bible Study via Zoom when not in Lent. Regular contact has been made via link leaders with members of the church family, making sure nobody was left feeling isolated.

There was regular use of the Prayer Chain supporting one another in joyful and sorrowful situations. On Covenant Sunday, Revs David Parkes led a "Love feast" Covenant Service via Zoom. The church family has held together well - births, special birthdays, deaths, special occasions have all been remembered and noted. During a brief period between lockdowns they did meet under strict Covid rules.

2.3.6 Crowland ran 'Stepping Stones' (A study group for young people) fortnightly via Zoom. All members joined in and studied the Book of Romans. The 'Wesley Wayfarers' group restarted, meeting, socially distanced, within the chapel.

2.4 Worship, Services and Prayer

2.4.1 Until the lockdown happened: We continued to hold Circuit Healing services every month at Southside. A Confirmation service was held at Christchurch on 17th November. We held a Circuit Service at Brookside on Sunday, 26 January.

As part of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: Brookside held a service and prayer time, along with four other churches in the PE4 area; Christ Church joined together with the Churches Together in the Ortons for a service at Orton Waterville Methodist and, during Lent, they meet up each week for lunch together in the different churches. This was a lovely way of joining together and an example of ecumenical gathering.

Our County Ecumenical Officer, Caroline Hutchings, attended a Hope4Peterborough meeting and she distributed prayer bookmarks and other literature and promoted the 'Call to Prayer' meetings arranged

for the year.

Several churches took part in the global 'Thy Kingdom Come' initiative during Ascension Day to Pentecost Sunday. This was more low key this year because of the pandemic, but prayers for Thy Kingdom Come featured in our livestream 'Morning Prayers'.

2.4.2 The Circuit continued its subscription to The Vine's 'Twelvebaskets' (set services for Own Arrangements), and this has been a real Godsend for the churches when they had to close during the lockdowns. Some churches have based their services on these materials and invited preachers to email weekly reflections to be included in these services, so enabling preachers to still contribute and congregations to continue to have contact with preachers and benefit from a variety of preaching. Church stewards faithfully worked to make The Vine material available to people in their churches.

2.4.3 During lockdown, the pandemic saw local church leaders set up processes to look after and maintain contact with those that could not join worship online, i.e. at Orton Waterville, the church stewards were phoning people on their pastoral lists and chatting about the next week's reading, and so the depth of engagement which people were getting was huge.

Once the Covid regulations allowed, the congregation at Orton Waterville were able to meet in the local village hall for their Sunday services as the church was not spacious enough to meet. Their services were led by two dedicated Local Preachers, with additional reflections sent from other Local Preachers and ministers.

2.4.4. Dogsthorpe provided a service for members of the church who do not have access to technology or who were isolating or coming out of isolation; the service was just for those people to have an opportunity to come into the church for worship whilst also doing a Zoom transmission for those who do use technology.

2.4.5 Oundle started to have Monthly "Gatherings" (2m apart): A time of fellowship, teaching and prayer.

2.4.6 At Southside, on every second Friday of the month, they had Zoom 7pm 'Sing to God', every Saturday Morning, they had a Zoom Prayer Meeting at 10am, and every Sunday morning, a Facebook 9.15am 'Think' service.

2.4.7 Our Pioneer Hub Café worship has continued, meeting via Zoom every month. Our thanks to Rev Dale Sherriff for leading and enabling these.

2.4.8 With churches being closed, our superintendent flew into action and quickly instigated a Sunday morning Livestream service, which has run consistently through the lockdowns and is still running. A big online community has built up, and it is helping a lot of people, including new people who have joined us in worship. The service is streamed via Facebook live and YouTube. This worship takes place via livestream every Sunday morning and we also began another new venture – 'Morning Prayers' which also draws in others from beyond the Circuit. Our thanks go to Revd Dale Sherriff, who covered 'Morning Prayers' when Langley was absent and who regularly led Sunday morning livestream, and also to Matt Forsyth who also came on board to help.

2.4.9 We are also always conscious of those who do not have access to the online worship and how we are supporting them as well as those who watch. We aim to make it as accessible as possible, so you do not have to be a member of facebook to view the Circuit page.

We have been getting about 250 views but, most importantly, about 120-130 comments on a Sunday which is people engaging, we get about half that in the weekly Monday to Thursday 'Morning Prayers' at 8.30am. We have started to consider the big question of, once we come out of Lockdown, how do we cover it? When do we support other churches? He has started to involve other people, and it is easier getting people to volunteer to help with the 'Morning Prayers', but the Sunday morning at 10.30am has the significant following and he is aware that we could lose people if we cannot maintain it. This is in tandem with knowing what the local churches need when the Lockdown eases.

Huge thanks go to Revd Dale Sherriff and Matt Forsyth who also lead Livestream worship and 'Morning Prayers'.

2.5 Our Focus as a Circuit

2.5.1 In terms of building on Reimagine, we made some really good progress in terms of drawing closer

links with local churches and congregations, but also there was this recurrent call for us to return to our roots, to tend to our roots and, with Revd Graham Tooth's advice, the focus being on how we encourage people in prayer and in small groups.

As we have reflected in the Pioneer Hub, which is open to everyone, we stumbled across another model and he showed us the image of the dragonfly. The Dragonfly is a devotion. Revd Dale Sherriff has come to us with a significant amount of experience in helping churches and encouraging small groups and one of the things he has brought to us is, if we think about how we gather as a Church, we can think perhaps about the four wings of a dragonfly for us in the Methodist tradition, but also in the wider Church tradition. The four wings could be: The Circuit – a group of churches working together; the local congregations; the small group/fellowship group with a class leader; prayer partners of two or three/small bands.

The dragonfly operates both in each wing independently or together, and it is a helpful model. One of the things we do is to ensure people feel connected in prayer and we are looking at how we group people together, i.e., virtually or via email or via paper when we have worship at home, and it is key that we get this right as we move out of Lockdown.

Revd Langley did a survey in the earlier phase of the Coronavirus with the Local Preachers and Worship Leaders regarding what we sense the Lord is saying to us, and he wrote a report on it, and this was when The Pioneer Hub was starting to get into motion as it thought about the Dragonfly Model, and there were two conclusions which are open to further exploration: Firstly, we need to be very wary of the idea of thinking that we are going to go back to the way things were before, in the sense that this is a golden opportunity for us to think about the needs and mission of the Church, learn the lessons in things like telephone pastoral ministry that is happening at places like Orton Waterville, the WhatsApp groups – we are all learning whether we are creating or receiving – creative things happening with paper as we use 'The Vine' material. So, this is an opportunity as we come out of Lockdown to think what do we need to do? When do we need to do it? Who is it for? How do we do it? Particularly, how do we ensure that we hold those people who have joined us during the Lockdown period?

Bishop Stephen Cottrell advised churches to be careful about just thinking we will go back to the way it was before. Revd Langley said there will be a Plan and we will be doing morning Worship but let us learn the lessons from the good things that are happening.

Secondly, online worship has been a significant success and it would be a mistake not to continue it in some shape or form. Exactly what that is, he does not know.

- 2.5.2 Revd Langley encouraged folks to think about how we encourage people in prayer, how we encourage people into meaningful prayer relationships by, if necessary pairing people up or inviting them into prayer triplets. Also, there are small groups and the Lyfe material produced by the Bible Society. Which has been well received as a really good resource. It ensures your fellowship group is not just about the tea and coffee but that you look at the Bible study stuff. It also means the latter is not as boring as watching paint dry! It keeps life in the whole thing. He has taken the initiative, which has come from the Pioneer Hub's initial suggestion that we would like to pray together at a set time, so he sent out an invite for the hub for 4pm on a Sunday in June. Revd Dale Sherriff produced a prayer sheet to accompany this.

3 Staffing and Appointments, Stewards and Ministries

- 3.1 Simon Stewart, Sue Keeney, Ann Tooth, Christine Kell and all continued as Circuit Stewards for this year and were joined in September 2019 by Sue Holmes. The Re-election of Circuit Stewards did not take place this year as the CLT felt they could not make these appointments over Zoom. So, with all the discussions that are going on regarding coming out of lockdown, it was felt that the team should stay, to provide consistency and, once we are back into meeting together in person, we will then re-elect the Circuit Stewarding Team.

- 3.1.1 Sue Keeney, Nigel Lightfoot, Philip Assensoh, Ann Tooth, Mick Goodman and Nicky Ward continued as our representatives to District Synod. The churches started discussing the Marriage and Relationships report ('God in Love Unites Us') in advance of the vote at Synod.

- 3.1.2 Helen Crofts continued in her role as Chaplain to the local Methodist Home, The Maples. It was, of

course, an extremely difficult time for them during the Covid pandemic, and Helen was able to offer much needed help, encouragement and support to the residents and staff. Helen also remained as a volunteer with the Pioneer Hub and carried on helping at Ailsworth in partnership with Revd Shameela.

3.1.3 The Local Preachers' and Worship Leaders' Meeting looked at Team Preaching, although this shifted to think first about what the churches needed in the pandemic and placing their resource there accordingly.

3.2 From a local preaching training perspective, Matt Forsyth and Neat Gordon moved from on note to on trial. Mick Goodman continued on trial and Laura Martin completed her training and was recognised as a fully accredited local preacher. Her service of accreditation took place at Dogsthorpe Methodist Church on 1st December, 2019.

3.2.1 During lockdown, local preachers supported the churches by providing written reflections for circulation, and by providing recorded reflections to be included in the Circuit livestream worship. This is still continuing and is a great encouragement and support to those churches who have not yet been able to re-open.

3.3 We started to look at the profile of our social media in the Circuit, at what we have got and how we help network people who choose to go online and, mindful of the shortage of the material we have for children and young people, we appealed to folks in the Circuit if anyone could help out. Coincidentally, we were asked by the District if we could make use of a grant for £2,000 to employ a young person for three hours a week under the Young Leaders Scheme. This includes personal development away days run by the District. We gladly took up this opportunity as we need to develop our social media presence. We recruited Grace Sherriff, who is a young person between the ages of 16 and 24, as our Circuit Social Media Enabler. We also placed her the District's Young People's Mentorship Scheme, so she is supervised by the District and in partnership with us. Grace was already volunteering with us and producing content for livestream.

3.4 Not seeing one another has made communication difficult. However, Revd Langley has been keeping everyone abreast of what is happening through his 'Weekly Bulletins'. Via these, he has regularly provided guidance for the churches following the different regulations and Covid-19 guidance that were issued by the Government and the Methodist Church, as well as providing thoughts and reflections.

Our thanks to all who have provided up to date information and assistance to those in their churches, including those who have produced paper copies, church newsletters and written reflections from preachers to those not on email. Our thanks also to the pastoral carers who have supported those isolated by the pandemic.

4 Safeguarding

4.1 Philip Assensoh continued as our Circuit Safeguarding Officer and worked with Revd Langley in the Safeguarding team. Thanks also to Janet Rich who has been a great support with Safeguarding training.

4.1.2 Our normal Safeguarding training was affected by the Covid pandemic. However, training will be undertaken once the lockdown restrictions are over. Safeguarding Foundation training did take place at Crowland Methodist Church in February for all members in new positions and volunteers. And Safeguarding Refresher training took place at Brookside Methodist Church in early March.

The District Safeguarding Team are looking at online Safeguarding Foundation training as an option for Circuit Safeguarding trainers if the lockdown restrictions continue. District has started training Circuit Safeguarding trainers on how to conduct online training courses.

4.1.3 As Safeguarding Foundation training has been combined with Refresher training, we only have Safeguarding Foundation training to complete in the Circuit.

4.1.4 All members in positions who had attended either Foundation training or Refresher training in the last three years in Circuit do not have to attend or do another Foundation training for two years.

4.1.5 Coming out of lockdown was on every Circuit Meeting agenda; we recognised that every church is different and there is no one-fit-all approach to how our churches can reopen. We have seen things can change rapidly and any reduction in social distancing may happen quickly and with little notice. We

need to review what we used to do and whether it was really the best way to serve God. When churches are allowed to open, but with continuing restrictions on social distancing, printed books, singing, socialising after worship, we need to find a way that means no one is excluded, but still deliver meaningful worship.

- 4.1.6 Use of Photography and Video Information Sheet for Parents and Carers - the Methodist Church is committed to the safeguarding of children and young people during their engagement with church activities. We take great care recording, using and storing images of children and young people while they take part in church activities. The intended use of for any images and arrangements for storage will be indicated on the consent form. We have obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation, Data Protection Act 2018 and the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures & Guidance for the Methodist Church to make you aware of this information and to request your consent for the use of images of the child or young person under your care.

Forms for photo permissions to be used with children and young people have been sent to all Safeguarding Co-ordinators and to the Local Preachers' Secretary, and to Sunday school teachers too. The directive from the District Safeguarding Team is that these forms have to be completed before any photo is taken of children and young people during a church event and church service.

- 4.1.7 The Circuit continues to abide by the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) and keeps contacts and posters accurate and up-to-date.

- 4.1.8 Two Circuit Stewards and Revd Shameela attended a seminar in Market Harborough on Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity in the Methodist Church. It was a very interesting day where the challenges facing the church were discussed. The District are keen for this to be discussed in the Circuits.

5 Finance

- 5.1 The accounts for the year ended 31st August 2020 were audited and approved.

- 5.2 Income for the year was £183,661, including a grant of £9,000; the expenditure for the year was £160,989, giving us a surplus of £22,672 adding to our Circuit reserves.

- 5.3 The Circuit policy on reserves, at 6 months, was unchanged.

- 5.4 Three years ago, the Circuit took over from Ailsworth Church Council the trusteeship of the property and finance, with periodic reviews. At our Circuit Meeting in June, the Circuit Meeting agreed to continue with the trusteeship of Ailsworth for two more years. During the three years, new people have come in to help lead the Messy Play activities and Helen Crofts has run 'Coffee and Chat', and it is also used for our Circuit Quiet Mornings. People attending are gradually learning about church and faith and we want to keep the focus on Ailsworth as a Christian presence and explore the opportunities as they arrive, whilst taking the burden of trusteeship away.

We acknowledged that, as a church, we are very good at reaching out to new people, but moving people into discipleship is more of a challenge. With the encouragement and hard work of all involved we have seen how Ailsworth is growing in a totally different way to how we would normally see it in a Methodist church. The following are thanked for their sterling work: Mick Goodman, The CLT, Bridget Spencer, Linda Bass and Helen Crofts for Messy Church and the 'Sewing Bees' group and building up good pastoral relationships.

- 5.5 We continue to look at how to improve the income from Circuit churches and how best to replace the current method of meeting costs of running the Circuit. We have relied too long on Circuit reserves and this needs addressing. A steep rise in costs from the District is impacting our circuit and our churches, and we are putting plans in place as to how we meet these costs in the most effective way, and in a way that is manageable for each of our churches.

Obviously, some of the churches have been hit quite hard through the Covid-19 crisis. We started to get an overview of churches' positions so we can see what next year might look like, and then update our budget accordingly.

- 5.6 The CLT started looking at proposals to move away from the current 'share' method of contributing to Circuit funding to one based on the way that the District assesses how much Circuits pay. We will be looking to implement this in the next Connexional year, commencing September 2020.

6 Property

- 6.1 Paul Hutchings and Mick Goodman continued on the Property Team. Ewan Cappitt left the area and was thanked for his many years of service.
- 6.2 Conscious of the energy performance of our properties, Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) have been obtained for two manses.
- 6.3 Annual Inspections of all circuit property were completed and checklists distributed to the Circuit Meeting.
- 6.3 We continued to let the Dogsthorpe manse and the income from this was all ring-fenced for the Welland project.
- 6.4 The Connexional Property Strategy 2018-20 (adopted by the Methodist Council in October 2018) sets out areas of work as being necessary and urgent during the Connexional year 2018-19 and, working with our mission plans and property development plans, we completed this work.
- 6.5 Quinquennials were carried out at Elton, Orton Waterville and Oundle.
- 6.6 Discussions took place regarding whether or not to let or sell the manse associated with Westgate New Church and Whittlesey.
- 6.6 Our thanks to Paul Hutchings for his thorough work on church property reporting this year. One of our faithful and experienced Local Preachers, Nigel Lightfoot, ended our June Circuit Meeting with the following prayer. It sums up our year and what we have tried to do - 'Thank You God for the gift of modern technology, that we are doing things now that we never thought would be possible; that we would discern God's will in all of life's challenges; as followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, that each of us would shine in our own small corner; that God would give us courage to jump in and take opportunities and remove the hesitation that we once would have had. Amen.'

We believe we have and we have done it through working and learning together, and supporting and encouraging each other. The Circuit Leadership Team is grateful to everyone for all their contributions and support in this difficult year.

Signed: *L Mackrell-Hey*

*(Revd Dr Langley Mackrell-Hey – Chair – and Superintendent of the Methodist Circuit:
Peterborough Circuit of Churches)*

Date: 24th June, 2021

THE METHODIST CHURCH STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS

PETERBOROUGH

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 AUGUST 2020**

District	Circuit no	23/21
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Registered Charity - Charity Registration number

1135613

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

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

Ministers:

REVD DR LANGLEY MACKRELL-HEY
REVD SHAMEELA JAMEELEE-SAMUEL
REVD SARAH GOWER

Circuit Stewards:

MRS SUE KEENEY
MRS CHRISTINE KELL
MRS ANN TOOTH
MR. SIMON STEWART
MRS. S HOLMES

Treasurer:

MR GILES ARMSTRONG

SECTION A			Un - restricted Funds	Circuit Model Trust Fund	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
a1	RECEIPTS	Note	£	£	£	£	£
a2	Assessment/Share		158,131			158,131	123,289
a3	Capital receipts			- 2,642		(2,642)	1,368
a4	Bank and CFB interest and Investment income		1,947	3,007		4,954	8,205
a5	Grants		9,000			9,000	13,000
a6	Other receipts		14,218			14,218	15,682
a7	TOTAL RECEIPTS		183,296	365		183,661 (a8)	161,544

SECTION B							
b1	PAYMENTS						
b2	Stipends, salaries, NIC, Pension and travel costs		96,715			96,715	127,566
b3	Manse Costs		13,309			13,309	17,364
b4	Administration etc		5,289			5,289	6,790
b5	District Assessment		31,507			31,507	23,184
b6	Grants & donations		-				
b7							
b8	Other payments		9,192	4,977		14,169	14,039
b9	TOTAL PAYMENTS		156,012	4,977		160,989 (b9)	188,943

SECTION C							
c1	NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR	(a7-b9)	27,284	- 4,612		22,672	(27,399)
c2	Total funds brought forward from last year		35,540	157,046		192,586 (c6)	219,985
c3	Sub total	(c1+c2)	62,824	152,434		215,258	192,586
c4	Transfers and adjustments		(2,500)	2,500			
c5	TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR	(c3+c4)	60,324	154,934		215,258 (c8)	192,586 (c6)

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

SUMMARY OF CIRCUIT ACCOUNTS AND INTERNAL ORGANISATION REPORTING TO THE CIRCUIT MEETING**SECTION E**

Please follow the Guidance Notes to complete this page

Summary of the Circuit accounts for the year ended 31 August 2019 and Internal Organisations reporting to the Circuit Meeting. Note that the funds of an Internal Organisation would normally be Restricted funds unless it could be clearly shown that they could be used for any Methodist purpose. This section must be completed to arrive at the gross receipts and payments totals of the Circuit. If gross income exceeds the Accruals threshold of £250,000, then the Accruals method of accounting AND A DIFFERENT FORM must be used to report the accounts (see Methodist website). Please refer to the guidance notes regarding transfers between the Circuit and connected Circuit Organisations.

INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS	Receipts	Payments	Net Receipts/ Payments	Adjustments	Opening balances	Closing balances
e1						
e2						
e3						
e4						
e5						
e6						
e7						
e8 Sub total of Internal Organisations funds					(e11)	(e12)
e9 Circuit accounts (totals brought forward from page 2 - totals column)	183,661 (a8)	160,989 (b9)	22,672	(c7)	192,586 (c6)	215,258 (c8)
e10 TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CIRCUIT	183,661	160,989	22,672		192,586 (x)	215,258 (y)
Continue on a separate sheet if necessary and bring the totals forward	TOTAL RECEIPTS	TOTAL PAYMENTS				

SECTION F**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES****CIRCUIT - CASH FUNDS HELD at 31 August 2019**

	OPENING BALANCES	CLOSING BALANCES
f1 Cash in hand		
f2 Bank Current Account	13,573	43,618
f3 Bank Deposit Account		
f4 Central Finance Board	21,967	16,708
f5 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes	157,046	154,932
f6 Other funds		
f7 SUB TOTAL	192,586 (c6)	215,258 (c8)
f8 Total funds held by Internal Organisations (the closing balance totals above) (e12)	(e11)	(e12)
f9 TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CIRCUIT	192,586 (x)	215,258 (y)

SECTION G**OTHER ASSETS and LIABILITIES**

	At 31 August 2019	At 31 August 2020
g1 Investments (include Endowments)		
g2 Land and Buildings (see notes re Insurance value)	872,873	899,939
g3 Other Assets		
g4 Loan(s) - show amount outstanding at year end		
g5 Other Liabilities		

f4 Include only Funds held at the Central Finance Board

f5 Include only CFB Funds held at Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes

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

DECLARATIONS

Treasurer

I confirm that I have prepared the accounts from the records of the Circuit and that they include all funds under the control of the Circuit

Signature of Treasurer



Date

15/4/21

Name

MR. GILES ARMSTRONG

Address

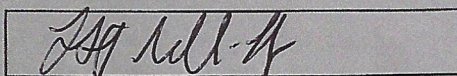
1, EATHWAITE GREEN, PETERBOROUGH PE4 6SZ

Presentation to the *Circuit Meeting for approval.

I confirm that the Accounts have been presented to the Circuit Meeting on
and were approved.

22/10/2020

Signature of the Chair of the meeting



Name of the Chair of the meeting

Rev Dr Langley Macgregor

Date

12/04/2021

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

PETERBOROUGH

Circuit

This Report is on the Circuit Accounts for the year ended 31st August

2020

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 independent 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 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 the 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 (other than that disclosed below*):

(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;
- 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.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply appropriate

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

* Please circle as appropriate

Name

M. J. RUFFLES

Signature

M. J. RUFFLES

Relevant Professional qualification or body

ICAEW - FCA

Address

4 BARON COURT
PETERBOROUGH
PE4 7ZE

Date

05/10/2020

THE METHODIST CHURCH

STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS

PETERBOROUGH

FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 AUGUST 2020

District	Circuit no	23/21
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MRS. S HOLMES

Treasurer:

MR GILES ARMSTRONG

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Continue on a separate sheet if necessary and bring the totals forward						
	TOTAL RECEIPTS		TOTAL PAYMENTS			

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g3		
g4		
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15/4/21

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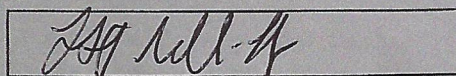
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Date

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* Please circle as appropriate

Name

M. J. RUFFLES

Signature

M. J. RUFFLES

Relevant Professional qualification or body

ICAEW - FCA

Address

4 BARON COURT
PETERBOROUGH
PE4 7ZE

Date

05/10/2020