

Ebenezer Baptist Church, Magor
Registered Charity no. 1136850

Annual Report
Year ending 31st December, 2021

The Diaconate (the Charity Trustees of Ebenezer Baptist Church)

Minister	Rev. Harry Place
Secretary	Keith Arnold
Assistant Secretary	Val Jones
Treasurers	Jonathan Rhodes and Davina Thomas
Deacons	William Adams, Beverley Davies, Christine Foster, Valerie Jenkins, Phyllis Jones, John Loeb,

This year, at the Annual General Meeting held in July, Kathryn Allen and Jean Smith retired as deacons having served an additional year due to the ongoing pandemic. We welcomed two new deacons, Beverley Davies and Valerie Jenkins and re-appointed the Secretary and Assistant Secretary for a further term. Jonathan Rhodes and Davina Thomas retired as Joint Treasurers agreeing to continue until a new Treasurer was appointed. Darwin Noel was appointed as Treasurer in September but resigned in December before taking up the duties.

Dave Matthews, having served as a deacon, resigned in April.

The Diaconate held twelve business meetings during the year – utilising the Zoom technology from January until May and in the Church for the remainder of the year. There were twelve occasions for fellowship and prayer.

In June the Church meeting passed a special resolution to change the Constitution to allow attendance at Church meeting by electronic means. This enabled Church meetings to recommence in Church and on the Zoom. Three subsequent meetings were held to share information, and to make decisions together.

The Coronavirus Pandemic continued to cause serious disruption to the activities in the Church with restrictions imposed by the Welsh government. However, we were able to restart our Sunday service with limited seating in March with a Tuesday morning service introduced later in the year. Other activities – with the exception of Munchies and Knit and Natter - were gradually opened up.

The small team set up to manage the church activities during the pandemic met on seventeen occasions during the year and we are very grateful for their efforts in monitoring and managing the situation during the year.

Church Leadership

Achieving our objective

Our principal activities as a Church are:

Worship and prayer.

The teaching and sharing of the Christian Faith.

The pastoral care of individuals.

Service to the local community and the wider world.

This report gives an indication of the range of activities we normally undertake as a Church and how we fund them.

Our financial accounts show that we have continued to generously support a wide range of charitable projects both at home and overseas.

It has been a difficult period in the life of the Church in seeking to achieve our objectives. Our minister, Harry, supported by his wife, Alice, has worked tirelessly in developing the church, bringing more people to faith in Christ, and building strong links with local churches. Also, our new Community/Church worker is developing our links with the schools and the wider community.

Membership and Adherence

We note the home call of our faithful members - Brian Adams, Mary Packer and Karina Bihet. Also, of Jill Jones, a faithful worshipper and organist in the Church for many years. During the year there were 5 new members and 1 resignation from membership. At the end of the year there were 102 members and some 30 adherents (people who would normally worship with us regularly or occasionally)

Connections

We continued, under the umbrella of the Junction 23A initiative, to work with our fellow Baptist churches at Caldicot, Underwood, and Gaerllwyd. The work in planting a new Christian centre, built on Baptist principles, continues in Sudbrook led by Jeremy Lock and supported by the South Wales Baptist Association. It was good to see that their first services and meetings were held despite the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. We were unable to hold our joint service with Caldicot and Underwood. However, we were able to join with St. Mary's Church in Wales for the Remembrance Day service in The Square and with Sudbrook for their Carol service.

Our Church/Community worker, Thomasina Brown, has continued to forge closer ties with Magor School and Undy Primary school and also with schools in a wider area.

Liz Upton and Davina Thomas continue to serve as Governors at Magor Church in Wales Primary School. Valerie Jenkins retired as a Governor at Undy school during the year.

The Free for All initiative continues to bless individuals, businesses and schools in our community through acts of kindness. Although the work has been restricted because of the pandemic it has been greatly appreciated by those who have served the community during this difficult period.

Further afield we have supported the work of the Baptist Union, Baptist Missionary Society, Home Mission and BMS World Mission. We also continue to support the team in Uganda who are providing education for children in that area. Members have also responded generously to Emergency Appeals in overseas countries and to our monthly charity causes.

Church teams

One of the Trustees main responsibilities is to ensure that teams of volunteers are in place to manage and deliver the wide-ranging programme of events and activities in the Church and community.

Each Trustee has a portfolio indicating specific areas of oversight. The objective is to establish clear lines of communication between the activity leaders of the church and the leadership and to encourage the activities in their work.

Pastoral care is overseen by the Minister assisted by a small dedicated team who continue to provide pastoral care to our members and adherents. This also has been hampered this year due to the protocols laid down through the pandemic. However, doorstep visits were made and with the help of the Trustees, all members and attendees have been contacted regularly by phone, email, text or letter. This is proving to be an essential ministry during the pandemic.

The Minister along with a team of Life Group leaders help to co-ordinate a programme of studies throughout the year and deliver a well-supported and varied programme. The studies undertaken, whether meeting together in the Church or via Zoom, were in Philippians; Jonah; Sermon on the Mount; Vision and Values; The Songs of Advent;

Also, the latter part of the year we started a Stepwise Programme (Faith Filled Life). We have 15-20 delegates together with facilitators meeting fortnightly. This is a programme that helps to develop and deepen faith and learn more about following Jesus where we are - wherever that may be. Faith Filled Life is the first of 5 'streams' in the Stepwise discipleship programme which has been developed by the United Reformed Church and is available for all churches to use. Faith-filled Life encourages you to see how God is at work in your life and in the world and to explore how you can make a difference in your community and church.

The disruption to our normal outreach activities continued during the year with a cautious approach in the decisions taken to recommence and continuing to run the following activities

Sunbeams (previously known as Mothers and Toddlers) - who work in our ministry to young people weekly

Ladies Friendship - who offer ministry to women and meet monthly.

Men's 'Drop-In' - who offer support and friendship to other men that meet monthly.

Friday Coffee morning – a chance to chat and have refreshments.

Magor Munchies and *Knit and Natter* were unable to recommence because of the restrictions.

We appreciate the commitment, dedication and service of the volunteers and helpers that run these activities and would also express our grateful thanks to:

the small and dedicated team of Sunshiners who deliver flowers to deserving or needy people on behalf of the Church.

Those who serve as volunteers in the ecumenical team that makes possible the work of the Caldicot Foodbank overseen by Raven House Trust.

The small cleaning team who maintain our premises especially during the difficult conditions of the pandemic.

the committed Property Trustees who are responsible for the maintenance of Church property.

The Future

Our Scripture verse for 2022 comes from Joshua 1 v9

*“Be strong and courageous.
Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged,
for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”*

God offered Joshua the next chapter of the story. The story moving forward would mean Joshua letting go of the past. God began to explain that after 40 years of wilderness wanderings, Joshua was about to enter the PROMISE! In doing so God offered Joshua and His people His Powerful presence, Personal presence, Permanent presence

We all have a purpose in 2022.

We need to be reminded in fulfilling this purpose it must always be tied to His Sent-ness and His With-ness; Such is our motto text for 2022.

We believe God is writing a new part of the story here in Magor, in which the natural is ignited by the supernatural and to proclaim the glory of His presence into the now of LIFE of 2022!

This being the case we trust that what was laid on the heart of the fellowship in 2018 would continue to come to fruition -

‘We need to listen to God afresh, seeking what He is planning for us in the church and within our community as He builds His kingdom. We recognise that this may require fresh expressions of mission and worship, not necessarily always within the confines of a ‘traditional church’.

This year we will, by God’s help, continue to put this into practice –

Worship – New, fresh and varied expressions of worship through our celebrations online and when we meet together in person. Allowing a greater openness and freedom in our worship times together.

New ways of doing and being church, learning from and strengthening the ministries that’s been developed online through Zoom.

Mission – Reaching out to the community and schools.

Looking at enhancing the work with the schools by holding Holiday Clubs, Messy Church celebrations and After School Clubs.

We hope to venture out with taking children and young people to Spree Wales this July. This camp is organised by Urban Saints

Discipling – New preaching series in 2 Timothy will build on the Sermon on the Mount studies encouraging the Church to become His Kingdom people.

Community – We have a desire to enhance the work and ministry of God’s Kingdom within the community, continuing to be the church without walls and seeing the call of God through the ‘Junction 23A’ initiative, come more into fruition.

Our support and links with other churches is paramount. We have and will continue to plan joint celebrations and activities.

Our minister is mentoring, supporting and coming alongside two pastors – in Sudbrook and in Caldicot.

We have recommenced the work of reaching out to the new homes recently built in and around the surrounding area.

Stepwise Programme – Faith Filled Life will continue through a combination of face-to-face group meetings, mentor or conversation partner, and if required, individual online learning.

Church Development

We felt God was speaking to us to seize the opportunity given by the pandemic to pray and discuss what it would mean for the Church to have a ‘blank canvas’ and by bringing together teams of people to pray and look ahead to what God wants in populating the ‘blank canvas’! Some exciting things have begun to happen and we trust this will continue into 2022.

Finally -

Over the year we believe that we have demonstrated again our commitment as Trustees to “advance the Christian faith according to the principles of the Baptist denomination and to advance education and carry out the other charitable purposes in the United Kingdom and other parts of the world.”

*Keith Arnold (Church Secretary)
For and on behalf of the Diaconate*

Sunday Club

Due to Covid restrictions, Sunday Club continued entirely on Zoom, running the 20 mins before the main service, with the team taking responsibility for each session in turn and Tomi and Bev sharing the technology, until Easter when the Church was able to reopen in person, albeit with restrictions. From then until September, the children attending in person would be dropped off by their parents in the church garden, and then stay with the Sunday Club team for the duration of the service before being collected again from the garden. This meant the sessions would start with games outside, weather permitting, and end with a craft activity. The 20min story time and songs were on video in the Youth Room to allow other children to join on Zoom as they had so enjoyed doing through lockdown, although obviously this was now during the service time so the grandparents tended to remain in the service rather than joining in with Sunday Club.

From September the children were allowed to join in with the main part of the worship for the first half of the service, and come out part way through for Zoom Club followed by a craft activity. Where possible, the craft was also sent out to the Zoom children to allow them to join in.

We covered Jonah in January along with the main church, before picking up the life of Jesus through Easter to his Ascension and Pentecost. We then took stories from the life of Paul from Pentecost through the summer, leading onto Daniel, Moses and Joseph before Christmas.

Numbers were low, especially due to Covid isolation issues, so sometimes there were no physical children, but it was still great to be able to offer them the opportunity to continue to meet on Zoom. Monthly Family Services continued to be held, where the children were able to remain in for the whole service either in person or on Zoom. For the Nativity Service the Sunday Club played their parts on video as they were unable to attend in person, which made the service more relaxed for the team, and much fun was still had!

We were sorry to say goodbye to Nettie, Jean Smith and Pat Coleman over the course of the year. We thank them for their faithful commitment to the Sunday Club children for so many years, and wish them every blessing as they continue to serve the Lord in other ways in the days ahead.

Thomasina Brown

Sunbeams

We were under Covid restrictions for the first half of the year and therefore unable to open. However, following Family Fun sessions in May half-term it became clear that families enjoyed using the church garden and felt safe outside. So we reopened outside, weather permitting, and created a WhatsApp group so we could let carers know when we were meeting. We also changed the name to “Sunbeams” to reflect the fact that the adults accompanying the children included grandparents and childminders, so “mothers and toddlers” was no longer an appropriate name.

When we reopened in September following the summer break, restrictions had eased to allow adults to be closer than 2m although still physically distanced and masked, so it was now possible to be inside. We took the decision to insist all adults attending were double jabbed for our protection, as well as a booking system to ensure we did not exceed our maximum of 20 adults.

We also decided to use the Youth Room to serve tea and coffee to allow adults to remove their masks in this room and remain masked in the larger room. This also allowed for more intimate conversations which have benefitted both adults and leaders.

Each session included an opportunity for the children to engage in a craft related to the story, and concluded with a Bible story told using the flannelgraph followed by a singing time with a mixture of nursery rhymes and Christian songs. We were able to finish the year with a Christmas party in the Sanctuary including a visit from Father Christmas as well as the nativity story.

We were sorry to say goodbye to Nettie Craggs and Gill Arnold this year, although Gill has agreed to stay on as Treasurer. We are very grateful to them for their years of faithful service and pray God’s blessings on them as they move into new areas of service for our Lord.

Thomasina Brown

Pirate Pete/Superheroes

In February half-term Tomi asked to hold an online Holiday Club jointly with her husband as Pirate Pete, as Covid restrictions made it illegal to meet in person. This led to an online after school club on Thursdays 4-4:30, and then in person in the Church garden after May half-term. For the Easter break there was a treasure trail taking a tour of Magor!

After the summer break the after-school club was able to meet in person in the School Room on a Thursday night 3:30-4:30 for ages 4-10. When Pirate Pete had to retire due to ill health, the club continued under the new name of Superheroes, chosen by the children.

Each week the children play games, act out a Bible story, sing Bible songs and do a craft connected to the story, finishing with an opportunity for them to bring their thank-yous and requests to the Lord in prayer. This year's stories began with the life of Peter explored by Pirate Pete, before moving on to look in September at "Old Testament children who changed their world!". The year closed with the children enacting a nativity play for their parents which was videoed to show as part of the church nativity service. Their final session was a Christingle service which they attended with their parents.

Tomi has been ably assisted by Bev, Jeremy Lock and Gaynor Chapple, with occasional visits by Ruth Lock and Tina Liberson.

Thomasina Brown

Family Fun

Given the Covid pandemic, it had been impossible to invite people to attend services inside in person. However, people were encouraged to meet up outside. Families were also used to doing everything together. So rather than Holiday Clubs, Tomi suggested holding Family Fun sessions in the church garden.

Three were held in May half-term in the church garden, Creation Day (focussing on our creativity), Destruction Day (focussing on all that is wrong in the world) and Miracle Day (focussing on Jesus). These were well attended and provided good opportunities for discussions with parents as well as children, so two more were held in the summer, Water Fun and a Teddy Bears' Picnic. There was also a trip to Weston-Super-Mare, but this was less well attended as it was not sensible to organise a coach or give lifts so many struggled for transport.

For October half-term the Covid rules did not allow meeting inside, nor the weather outside, so Tomi organised a Sponsored Walk to the Undy Playing Fields as part of World Vision's "Walk 6K for clean water so they don't have to". This was a lot of fun and £600 was raised in the process.

Thomasina Brown

Munchies Report

Due to the Covid restrictions there were no meetings during the year.

Phyl Jones

Knit and Natter

Due to the Covid restrictions there were no meetings during the year.

Jean Smith

Ladies Friendship

How lovely and thankful it was to be able to recommence our Ladies Friendship meetings once again. It was with a tentative committee meeting in July, that we discussed the pros and cons as to where, when, what and how many we could accommodate in the chapel, providing we abided by the Covid 19 regulations. It was decided to have our first meeting in September, with a meal at the Golden Lion, a lovely relaxing way to meet and enjoy ourselves after so many restrictions.

October, was our first meeting with a wonderful talk about Newport's Transporter Bridge, given by Jeff Grosvenor, who gave a very in-depth insight and had fascinating knowledge, knowing everything there was to know about this fabulous local iconic feature. Our evening was so well supported with eighteen members, who were not only enthralled by the evenings topic, but also being able to sit, chat and enjoy a cuppa and biscuit/Welsh cake too.

November, was an in-house evening of entertainment with a game of Beetle Drive. Although only about a dozen ladies attended, due to illness and dark nights, we still had a fun-filled time, with much laughter and confusion on times. Yet again a delightful evening.

We ended our first three-month programme with a Christmas lunch at the Haywain. A day that was not blessed with the best of weathers, it was certainly blessed with love, laughter and good conversation, and a feeling of sisterhood.

On a positive note, 2022 is full of optimism, and just as a little taster as to what is to come, outings and impressive speakers are on the agenda.

I can honestly report, that after a long eighteen months, Ladies Friendship is friendlier and stronger than ever.

Gods Blessings to you all for a brighter and happier 2022.

Jenny Tilton (Chairperson)

Friday Coffee Morning

In line with government Covid restrictions Friday coffee mornings remained closed for much of the year.

We re-commenced in September, meeting in the Chapel with a waitress service with teas, coffee and scones as normal, but served from the kitchen. This was extremely successful and worked very well by our team of ladies.

In December we carried out a special light lunch which raised £170.00 cash that was passed to Carol Jones for the Children's Cancer Charity.

Jean Smith

CHURCH

FINANCIAL

STATEMENTS

MAGOR BAPTIST CHURCH

Income & Expenditure Accounts for 2021

INCOME	2021	2020
Church Giving	49,086.50	45,015.37
Gift Aid Receipts	14,745.75	12,549.00
Communion Offerings	10,523.00	6,714.49
4th Sunday Offerings	0.00	470.07
Special Offerings	5,037.00	3,959.00
BMS	442.93	260.62
Donations given to Church/Legacies	379.00	310.00
Room Hire	2,055.00	940.00
Legacy Interest	2,431.96	2,731.90
Donations to Uganda	6,645.00	6,095.00
Trustees contribution to ministerial costs	6,000.00	6,000.00
Miscellaneous	867.10	634.01
TOTAL INCOME	98,213.24	85,679.46
EXPENDITURE		
Ministerial	54,308.93	43,179.17
Utilities	3,208.72	3,328.33
Preaching Fees	474.20	120.00
Print/Publications/Stationery	1,115.09	809.83
Subscriptions	2,366.82	2,101.27
Cleaning	1,640.00	1,060.00
Maintenance/Repairs/Renewals	1,394.48	1,254.97
Communion Offerings	13,636.00	8,265.00
4th Sunday Offerings	0.00	1,133.00
Special Offerings	7,631.00	4,693.00
BMS Home Mission	5,400.00	5,400.00
BMS World Mission	5,400.00	5,400.00
BMS	0.00	63.00
Donations given from Church	31.42	188.07
Uganda	8,288.00	7,633.00
Miscellaneous	3,153.53	3,237.78
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	108,048.19	87,866.42
Deficit on Year	-9,834.95	-2,186.96
Reduction in pension liability	10,200.00	5,900.00
TOTAL	365.05	3,713.04

MAGOR BAPTIST CHURCH

Miscellaneous Financial Information

Communion Offerings		£	2021	2020	Change = 9%
Jan	The Leprosy Mission	£1,072.00			
Feb	Raven House Trust	£758.00			
Mar	Uganda	£3,155.00			
Apr	South Wales Baptist College	£380.00			
May	Toybox-India Crisis	£3,600.00			
Jun	MAF	£680.00			
Jul	Street Life Sarnies	£558.00			
Aug	Sailors Society	£630.00			
Sep	BMS Harvest	£960.00			
Oct	TearFund	£650.00			
Nov	Spurgeon's Child Society	£575.00			
Dec	Save the Children	£618.00			
Total		£13,636.00			
			£944.00	£866.00	
			Average Weekly Offerings		
			£40,386.42	£32,775.07	
			38.38%	37.30%	
			Money Given Away		
			As % of Total Expenditure		

Magor Baptist Church
Statement of Financial Position
As at 31st December 2021

	<u>2021</u>		<u>2020</u>
	£	£	£
Current Assets			
Current account	6,238	11,391	
Monmouthshire Building Society	204,905	209,500	
Baptist Together	88,980	88,100	
CAF	85,000	85,000	
	<u>£ 385,123</u>		<u>£ 393,991</u>
Current Assets	<u>£ 385,123</u>		<u>£ 393,991</u>
Current Liabilities			
Liabilities > 1 year	5,965	£ 6,000	
	19,000	£ 28,200	
TOTAL CHURCH FUNDS	<u>£ 360,158</u>		<u>£ 359,791</u>

2021 has been a difficult year in many ways – Church activities were curtailed in order to adhere to legislation in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is therefore good to report that giving, both for the Church and for good causes, has increased substantially from 2020. This is in spite of the fourth Sunday offerings being curtailed during the pandemic. These figures are disclosed fully in the Income and Expenditure account. Other income such as Gift Aid and Room Hire have also increased significantly. The Church is hugely grateful to everyone for their continued giving over this period.

The Church has, at first sight, made a surplus of £365.05 in 2021. However, this has been significantly enhanced by a reduction in the pension deficit of £10,200. The Church's activities ran at a deficit of £9,834.95. This has arisen as a result of a conscious decision by the members to utilise part of the reserves in recruiting a Community & Church Worker. This is paying great dividends as the Church's message is spread further in the Community. All costs are continually monitored by the Deacons to ensure all funds are spent wisely.

As at 31 December 2021, the Church held £965 on behalf of the Ministry at Sudbrook.

Signed (Treasurer) Date 3-3-22

Signed Thomas (Treasurer) Date 3/3/22

Report of the Independent Examiner to the Deacons and members of Magor Baptist Church.

In accordance with the provisions of the Charities Act 2011, I have examined the Income & Expenditure Account and Statement of Financial Position of Magor Baptist Church relating to the year ended 31st December 2021. This examination did not extend to a comprehensive audit of such accounts or statement. I confirm that the accounts and statement accord with the accounting records of the church and that such records satisfy the requirements of the Act. I am not aware of any matter to which attention needs to be drawn in order to obtain a proper understanding of the accounts.

Signed Date 3/3/2022