

**Ebenezer Baptist Church, Magor**  
**Registered Charity No. 1136850**

**Annual Report for the Year ending 31st December, 2024**

**The Diaconate (the Charity Trustees of Ebenezer Baptist Church)**

Minister	Rev. Mark Thomas
Secretary	Kathy Allen
Treasurer	John Loeb
Deacons	Beverley Davies, Helen Ellwood, Christine Foster, Phyllis Jones, Andrew Leighton, Christine Miles, Davina Thomas

**Diaconate meetings**

The Diaconate has met 11 times for business meetings. We also held a deacons' session for reflection.

**New Diaconate appointments**

This year, at the AGM in March 2024, we welcomed one new deacon, Helen Ellwood, on to the Diaconate, and Kathy Allen became Secretary.

The Rev Mark Thomas having been inducted as our minister in September 2023, after supporting us through the preceding year as our Moderator, has continued to lead us with warmth and dedication.

**Church Leadership Report**

**Achieving our objectives**

Our principal activities as a Church continue to be:

- Worship and prayer.
- The teaching and sharing of the Christian Faith.
- The pastoral care of the individuals.
- Service to the local community and the wider world

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

Our accounts show that we are still a generous charitable church, supporting a wide spread range of organisations both at home and overseas. This is, for example, through monthly charitable giving in our monthly charity offerings, to a charity decided by the church meeting for each month for that year; and also through responses to emergency situations in the wider world.

We continue to pursue our aims of creating stronger links between the Church and the communities of Magor and Undy with the aim of bringing more people to faith in Christ. A total of five baptisms took place during the year, led by our minister Rev Mark Thomas, which we trust is an important indication of the work of Holy Spirit, and of the work of Mark Thomas and others.

**Membership and Adherence**

We note the home call of a number of our older people who have been either members or in close contact with our fellowship for many years, and who are already greatly missed.

The cumulative impact of this loss, and of others in recent years, is hard but the positive impact of their lives and their faith has, we hope, helped to build our resilience as a fellowship and our ability to grow in the gospel in the future.

We welcomed three new members into our fellowship, following baptism.

At the end of the year there were 92 members and some 30 adherents (people who worship with us regularly or occasionally).

### **Connections**

We have maintained the relationships with our fellow Baptist churches at Caldicot and Underwood and some members have continued to support the work at the Christian centre in Sudbrook. In addition, we have also met up with St Mary's Church in Wales for Remembrance Day and Christmas carols.

We have continued to maintain relationships with Magor Church in Wales School and Undy Primary school by providing school assemblies. One of our members continues to serve as a school governor for Magor Church in Wales primary school.

We were delighted once again to host nursery children from Magor school for a session about the nativity in November, and children visited our coffee morning on one occasion to share time with local people there. We continue to welcome opportunities for multi-generational time together. Our Christingle service and nativity services again provided opportunity for families who have not necessarily been part of our worship to join in with us. Mark and Anne Thomas once again provided an effective and thought provoking all age nativity service.

Further afield we have supported the work of the Baptist Missionary Society, and the work in Uganda that continues to prosper. The local people in charge have continued to support a number of churches local to their area, which formed under the umbrella of their organization, and their health clinic. Education is provided for children in that area at both primary and secondary levels.

### **Church teams**

Part of the Trustees' main responsibility is that of ensuring that the teams of volunteers are in place to run and deliver the wide-ranging programme of events and activities in the community. We are grateful for our volunteers' work in all areas:-

Pastoral care has continued to be overseen by a small dedicated team of people who link with the more informal support of people for each other within the fellowship, under the oversight of Mark Thomas

Bible Study leaders continue to deliver a well-supported and varied programme, with thanks to Mark Thomas for his directing of this.

Volunteers who provide our music and operate our sound desk

Teams of volunteers who run the Church's Friday coffee morning

Volunteers who run our weekly knit and natter group

The team who work in our ministry to children and young people through Toddlers and Sunday Club.

The team who offer ministry to women in our monthly Ladies friendship group

The team who offer support and friendship to other men in through the monthly Men's Drop-In

The small and dedicated team of Sunshiners who deliver flowers on behalf of the church

Our small cleaning team

Those who provide refreshments after our services

Our catering teams, who provide for Light Lunches and for church events

Door stewards

The unseen hard workers who organize lettings, move furniture (often!), provide and maintain our weekly flowers, garden and flower bed maintenance, and those who cover so many other unseen practical tasks.

Free for All, who continue to seek to bless individuals, businesses and schools in our area with chocolates or other small gifts, including a community Easter Egg giveaway.

The Magor Baptist Church Property Trustees who are responsible for the maintenance of Church Properties, and have continued to carry out or organise crucial work within our church building.

As a fellowship we continue to be able to function well because of the ongoing commitment of a number of individuals whose work in maintaining rotas, and our heating, and the rearrangement of furniture for different events; the smooth running of our letting system; our publicity, for example, is often unseen but is always necessary. Their work is much appreciated.

## **The Future**

Our verse for this year has been *"On him we have set our hope..."* **2 Corinthians 1:10b**

We are thankful for the ministry of Mark Thomas, with the support of his wife Anne, and also grateful for our situation as a church fellowship in these challenging times in the world around us.

We seek to continue to provide a witness to the love of God for his world, shown in Jesus Christ, his life in this world, his death and resurrection, to the community around us. We look to continue to be a generous church, looking outwards to the needs of the world around us.

## **Kathy Allen**

*Church Secretary*

(For and on behalf of the Diaconate)

## **Sunday Club**

The five leaders of the Sunday club team work on a rota so that every Sunday service of the year is covered.

The decision to stop Zoom during the year has meant that numbers are very low but we are glad of the few faithful children who enjoy our sessions of songs and stories - a mixture of Old and New Testament themed stories.

We are delighted when visitors join us to boost the numbers.

We have welcomed children from the local schools to share the nativity story and presented each child with a nativity story book to take home.

Our minister Mark and his wife Anne organised a Sunday Christingle afternoon service which was a great success and the Nativity service (with Anne dressed as mouse) made for a very entertaining version with lots of support from grown up shepherds and angels!

We look forward to continuing this ministry.

**Phyllis Jones**

*Coordinator*

## **Toddlers**

We continue to gain new members each week. We offer tea, biscuits, and toast. A variety of age-appropriate toys, Play-Doh, jigsaws, and mark-making activities are also available. The session ends with singing accompanied by musical instruments. We sing Happy Birthday to anyone celebrating, they also receive a card. Older children leaving to go to Nursery are given a book of bible stories to remember us by. Doors open at 9am with a team member there to welcome everyone. We close the doors at 9:30am but there is a doorbell to ring for anyone who comes after this time to gain entrance and join us.

We said a fond farewell to one of our team members who moved out of the area and welcomed a new member onto the team. We are grateful to the ladies who have joined our support group and who step in when we are short staffed.

We are pleased to welcome, mums, dads, grandparents and child-minders who bring the children each week.

Thank you to The Toddler team who work hard to provide this outreach service.

**Beverley Davies**

*Coordinator*

## Ladies Friendship

In January we joined the Ladies Circle at St. Mary's Church for the 2024 World Day of Prayer which was delivered by Christine Miles. This year it was the Palestine ladies who compiled the programme. Considering this was compiled 3 to 4 years previous, the contents and theme *"I beg you, bear with one another in love"* felt so prophetic in the present climate. A highly sensitive topic, whatever your views, but an astonishing insight of this country.

At our February meeting Paul Thomas gave a very heart-rending account of what "Christians Against Persecution" go through by keeping true to their faith. Not only are the Christians at risk, but also family members, volunteers who help them, and even the judges are in fear of their lives if they release the imprisoned Christians.

March saw our 2024 AGM. All Committee Members agreed to stand another year apart from Pat Edlin, who although doing a fine job as Treasurer, decided not to continue for another term. Jenny Griffiths, who has previously been our treasurer, was offered the position and gratefully accepted. However, on reflection Jenny decided to step down and, thankfully, Cath Evans has taken office as our treasurer. Topics of interest were discussed, re: our June trip and future speakers. Cath Evans and her sister Sarah involved us in a most delightful and enjoyable evening showing us how to decorate cup cakes and then challenging us to do it. Cath and her sister had worked so very hard cooking at least six dozen cakes, and also bringing her utensils and decorations for our mini-master pieces. Bake off, eat your heart out!!

For our April meeting, Mary Watkins delivered a remarkable talk on the work done with youth in Rwanda, and her relentless help over 16+ visits to that country, helping set up nursery education and more. It was also enlightening to see and hear how Rugby and the introduction of nursery education has had a positive effect on the communities.

May provided us with the pleasure of having our Minister at Ebenezer Baptist Church, Mark Thomas, disclose to us a little about himself and how he came to faith. A heart wrenching account of his life from boyhood to manhood, recalling when he became interested in Christianity, and subsequently a minister. We heard how Mark had a keen interest in poetry, reading prose from his favourite poets and what they meant to him. This was portrayed by Mark showing his humorous side, and deep personal feelings.

Sadly we were unable to participate in our annual trip, due to a lack of venues open. Although we were able to book a Magician, unfortunately it did not take place due to car problems, and we will be looking forward to a future evening of this entertainment. Instead we had a wonderful evening of four quizzes, probing our minds and giving small chocolate prizes as an incentive, together with our usual tea, coffee and biscuits.

Julys summer meal was held at the Wheatsheaf. Once again we had a wonderful turn out of ladies, accompanied by fine food, superb company and good humour.

After our summer break we commenced our September meeting with a little treat, a cosmetic demonstration on one of our members, of Organic Skincare, by Patricia O'Shea. I believe the ladies enjoyed themselves and many items were purchased. Sadly, at the end of September, we lost one of our steadfast members. A valued loving lady who will be much missed by us all. Chris Hodson gave us an informative insight to Dementia at our October meeting. A heart breaking illness that affects so many of us, but it was so sympathetically and honestly delivered.

Mandy East from St. Mary's, Magor took us through a spiritual meditation in November. This was an incredible process which touched many of our ladies in so many ways, although some might have been sceptical. However, an evening of peaceful and enjoyable feelings.

We were all full of festive joy when we met at the Wheatsheaf for our Christmas meal. As usual it was a great success and the ladies did themselves proud, looking gorgeous in their seasonal outfits.

**Jenny Tilton**

*Chair*

### **Knit and Natter Report**

We started back to Knit and Natter in January, after the seasonal break, in top form with 18 ladies, ready to begin our next project.

During the year we donated several Christmas stockings to the Neonatal Baby Unit in Cardiff, and supported the Refugee Council in Newport, with blankets and baby clothes.

A further donation of 370 pairs of socks was also made to the Refugee Council, and on this occasion we gratefully included socks donated to us by people outside our group.

For Easter, we knitted chicks for the Frances House Children Hospice, situated in Tamworth.

We have also been fortunate enough to donate £200.00 to local charities, plus our commitment to pay for the heating of our room.

Sadly, during the year two of our stalwart members, passed away, and will be truly missed.

At the beginning of the summer we had a delightful cream tea at Chepstow Garden Centre, and an equally enjoyable meal at the Wheatsheaf for our festive meal.

We continue to Knit and Natter with the addition of new members, and look forward to our forthcoming achievements.

**Jean Smith**

*Chair Person*

## Light Lunches

It's good to report that we are continuing to enjoy fellowship together over lunch once a month. We are maintaining average numbers of around 30. We enjoy welcoming new people and getting to know them.

We enjoyed a lovely Christmas dinner in December, and my thanks to those who prepared and cooked and made it such an enjoyable occasion.

We try to keep costs low, but because of the generosity of our attendees we have more than we need in funds. Last month January we didn't make any charge, and we will be able to make a donation of £50 to the Church towards the Gas and Electricity.

I am also very grateful to those ladies who faithfully come and lay tables and serve, and to those who work in the kitchen producing lovely meals and to the gentlemen who come and wash up.

We know that many of our attendees live on their own, they enjoy coming and sharing a meal with friends old and new.

**Chris Foster**

*Coordinator*

## FRIDAY COFFEE MORNING

We continue to open every Friday from 10.00 to 12.00 and to provide a sociable atmosphere for folk and visitors from the village who can enjoy a chat together. Coffee/tea and fresh scones are normally on offer and sometimes cake and other tasty items. Everything is served with a smile by members of our coffee morning team.

All monies made from this event go to worthwhile charities. The beneficiaries for 2024 are as follows:

Raven House Trust

Kids Cancer Trust

Magor School PTA

Ty Hafon

Sight & Sense

Macmillan Coffee Morning

Brain & Spine Foundation.

Ready Steady Go

Magor Brownies

Kidney Research

MS Society

Ripple Effect

Natalya's Fund

Money also is raised for the Kids Cancer Trust by the sale of greetings cards (sold at very modest prices from the card stall).

It has been another busy and successful year and I would like to thank all the members and helpers who have donated their tireless friendly, cheerful work and support.

Blessings

**Jean Smith**

*Coordinator*

**Financial Report**

**For The Year Ending**

**31 December 2024**



# MAGOR BAPTIST CHURCH

## INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

	2024	2023		2024	2023
INCOME	£	£	EXPENDITURE	£	£
Church Offerings	44,741	45,198	Ministerial Costs	39,267	20,028
Donations	2,255	972	Utilities	5,497	6,408
Communion Offerings	5,192	4,750	Preaching and Moderator Fees	215	1,945
Special Offerings	2,995	4,419	Printing, Publications and Stationery	718	827
Uganda	5,300	5,162	Subscriptions and Licences	2,407	2,234
Gift Aid	14,910	14,603	Cleaning and Waste	3,218	2,709
Gift Boxes	303	344	Equipment and Repairs	675	1,908
Room Hire	3,633	4,189	Professional Services	720	876
Investment Income	14,631	4,397	Communion Offerings	6,324	5,810
Miscellaneous	191	736	Special Offerings and Gifts	5,814	5,677
Home Mission - Sudbrook	1,000	800	Uganda	6,510	6,580
			BU Home Mission	6,000	6,000
			BMS World Mission	6,000	6,000
			Miscellaneous	2,334	1,656
			Sudbrook	446	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>95,151</b>	<b>85,570</b>	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>86,145</b>	<b>68,658</b>
<b>Total Income excl Sudbrook</b>	<b>94,151</b>	<b>84,770</b>	<b>Total Expenditure (excl Sudbrook)</b>	<b>85,699</b>	<b>68,658</b>
<b>Total Surplus</b>	<b>9,006</b>	<b>16,912</b>			
<b>Total Surplus (excl Sudbrook)</b>	<b>8,452</b>	<b>16,112</b>			

**MAGOR BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

COMMUNION OFFERINGS			SPECIAL OFFERINGS AND GIFTS		
		£			£
Jan	LATCH	400	Mayday	Tearfund Ukraine	400
Feb	Ripple Effect (Send a Cow)	490		Raven House	303
Mar	UCCF	510		Ready Steady Go	122
Apr	Cardiff Baptist College	453		Uganda	303
May	Uganda	699	DEC Middle East		1,000
Jun	CAP	586	Coffee Morning Gifts		800
Jul	Kidney Research	400	Tearfund Quiz		361
Aug	Natalya's Fund	415	10% interest -	CAP	470
Sep	Tearfund	530		MAF	470
Oct	BMS Harvest - Bangladesh	940		Ty Hafan	470
Nov	Marys Meals	580	BMS Christmas	Chad	865
Dec	Raven House	321	Other		250
Total		6,324	Total		5,814
		2024			2023
Average weekly offering		£860			£853
					Change +0.8%
Money given away		£30,648			£30,067
As % of total expenditure		35.6%			43.8%

**Magor Baptist Church (Reg Charity No 1136850)**

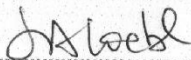
**Statement of Financial Position**  
**As at 31st December 2024**

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
<b><u>Current Assets</u></b>		
Current account	3,333	8,718
Monmouthshire Building Society	206,088	165,755
Baptists Together	200,430	141,372
CAF	0	85,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Current Assets	£409,851	£400,845
 Less:		
Current Liabilities due less than 1 year	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£3,339	£2,785
	 <hr/>	 <hr/>
TOTAL CHURCH FUNDS	£406,512	£398,060
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Although the original budget for 2024 projected a small deficit position, the lack of progress in finding a second worker has meant that the underlying surplus for the year was £8,452. It is encouraging to note that giving to the church (mainly through electronic payments) has been at a level similar to the previous year. Giving for good causes, has continued to be very generous. Other income such as gift aid and room hire have also contributed significantly to church funds, as well as the much higher contribution now from invested funds. The increase in ministerial costs reflects the full year of ministry. These figures are disclosed fully in the Income and Expenditure account. The Church is very grateful to everyone for their continued giving over this period. All costs are carefully monitored by the Deacons to ensure our funds are spent wisely.

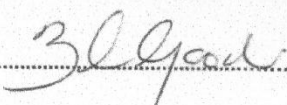
As stated above, the Church has made a surplus of £8,452 in 2024. The surplus has been added to the investment funds and is available for future needs. The financial reserves policy of the church has recently been reviewed and a long term plan to reduce the overall reserves to a more appropriate level has been agreed.

As at 31 December 2024, the Church held £3,339 on behalf of the Mission at Sudbrook.

Signed .....  ..... (Treasurer)      Date ..... 7/2/25 .....

**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 2024. 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 7 February 2025