

United Church Dorchester

Annual Report

January to December 2024

Charity registration number:1137996

Location: 49-51, Charles Street, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1EE

The Charity's Constitution, Organisational Structure and Governance.

Overview

The United Church Dorchester (UCD) was formed in 1978 by the coming together of the former South Street Methodist and South Street United Reformed congregations as a formal Local Ecumenical Partnership under the sponsorship of "Churches Together in Dorset", the county ecumenical forum. It originally received its charity status indirectly because of its membership of both the Methodist and United Reformed Churches, themselves both independent charitable bodies. However, following changes to Charity Law, the United Church Dorchester adopted its own written constitution and registered with the Charity Commission in 2010 as a charitable unincorporated body. (Registered Charity Number: 1137996).

The Purpose of the Charity

The purpose of the Charity is to advance the Christian faith in Dorchester and its surroundings in accordance with the principles and practices of the Methodist and United Reformed Churches. To achieve its purpose, the Charity will engage in a range of activities, either on its own or with others, including (but not restricted to):

- Celebration of public worship.
- Teaching of the Christian faith.
- Mission and evangelism.
- Pastoral care, including visiting the sick and the bereaved.
- Serving the local community with a Christian ethos
- Supporting charities in the UK and overseas.
- Maintenance of the fabric of the United Church

Membership

Our current membership is 159 members, 45 adherents and three retired Methodist ministers. The latter all have full membership rights under a local arrangement at UCD. During the year, 3 new members were welcomed into the Church and 3 former members died.

The Council of Stewards and Organisational Structure

The Council of Stewards is the trustee body of the Church. This group constitutes the legally responsible body of the charity. Trustees, called Stewards, are elected from the membership by Church Members at the Annual General Meeting. A Steward is appointed for an initial period of three years; the period of office can be extended by a further year after which time the Steward must stand down for at least one year before being eligible for re-election. The Minister is an ex-officio member of the Council of Stewards. All Stewards have up to date DBS clearance and have had Advanced Safeguarding training. Copies of our current governance documents, including the constitution, our management structures, and Policies and Procedures and the role of a trustee, are available to all members in a restricted section of the church website.

The Council of Stewards meets approximately monthly and a major focus for 2024 has been the renewal of our Vision for United Church. The chair is normally the Senior Steward, who is elected from within the Council of Stewards. At the 2024 AGM it was agreed that Michael Humphrey would relinquish the role of Senior Steward to become Church Secretary rather than

continue with both responsibilities. The Council of Stewards would then take on the duties of the Senior Steward collectively and the Minister, Rev John Yarrien would chair the Council of Stewards meetings.

2024 Council Of Stewards

Our Minister:

- Revd John Yarrien (inducted September 2020)

Stewards who served all year. (Committee/Subgroup membership/ Responsibility)

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| • Colin Gannaway (2004) | • Treasurer (Finance Committee) |
| • Paul Smith (2021) | • (Property and Finance Committees) |
| • Michael Humphrey (2022) | • Church Secretary (Finance Committee) |
| • Jenny Mair (2021) | • (Worship Committee) |
| • Rev David Cuckson (2022) | • (Health and Safety) |
| • Linda Scott (2023) | • (Youth and Family Committee) |
| • Gill Robinson (2023) | • (Pastoral Committee and World Church) |
| • Frank Wells (2024) | • (Property Committee) |
| • John Parson (2024) | • (Communications and Charities) |

Stewards who stood down at the 2024 AGM

- Brian Savage (2020)

Stewards elected at the 2024 AGM

- Frank Wells
- John Parson

Observers

Chris Smith (representing the Dorset S & W Methodist Circuit; from Aug 2023)

Minute Takers

- Ellie Minns - (UCD Administrator)
- Pauline Humphrey – (as Maternity Leave cover for Ellie from Aug 2024).

The Council of Stewards also includes the Treasurer. Currently the Treasurer's position is confirmed annually by a 75% agreement at the AGM since he has served longer than the standard 4-year term). The Council of Stewards (i.e. the Trustees) is responsible for administering and managing the Church in support of its Vision. It supports and advises the Minister in promoting the whole mission of the United Church and the wider Church in its teaching of the Christian faith and in its pastoral, evangelistic, social, ecumenical, and charitable work. The Council of Stewards is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the United Church buildings at numbers 49 and 51 Charles Street, Dorchester, which are owned by the United Reformed Church.

The Church Meeting meets at least 4 times a year and can advise the Council of Stewards. The management structure, for the day-to-day management of the church has been re-vamped this year. Management is delegated to five committees (Worship; Pastoral; Youth and Family; Finance; Property) and their constituent subgroups. These report regularly to the Council of Stewards, and to Church Meetings. The committees have delegated authority to make routine decisions related to their remit and some have authority to spend a budget allocation. Decisions requiring extra funding for any items outside the delegated authority of the committee are referred to the Stewards who may decide to seek advice from the Church Meeting. Our AGM was held on the church premises in March 2024. The Council of Stewards (Trustees) who served during 2024 comprised (Year of appointment shown in brackets.)

Staff Members

- Minister: Revd John Yarrien
- Pastoral Support Assistant: Ruth Magee
- Children and Families Outreach Worker: Peter Jenner (DSW Circuit employee)
- UCD Administrator: Ellie Minns, 13 hrs per week
- Shop and Coffee Lounge Finance Administrator: Di Lawrence, 2 hours per week

Senior Volunteer Managers

Although we have paid members of staff, UCD is mainly managed by volunteers. Key post holders include:

- Church Secretary – Michael Humphrey
- Treasurer – Colin Gannaway
- Finance Co-chairs – Rev John Yarrien and Michael Humphrey
- Pastoral chair– Wendy Hilton
- Youth and Family chair – Peter Jenner
- Property chair - Paul Smith
- Worship Secretary – Linda Gundry
- Lettings chair– John Hilton
- Coffee Shop Managers – Elizabeth Haynes, Sue Gannaway and Diana Leeming
- Church Shop Managers – Pat Smith, Pat Brown and Peter Jenner
- Wednesday Morning Coffee – Sue Gannaway
- Safeguarding Officers – Linda Scott and Diana Leeming
- World Mission – Gill Robinson

Relationships with Related parties

The United Church Dorchester is a member of the Dorset South and West Methodist Circuit and the Wessex Synod of the United Reformed Church. The United Church Dorchester and Bridport United Church (also a member of DS&W Methodist Circuit) constitute a joint pastorate within the URC. The United Church Dorchester retains its links to both parent bodies through the Wessex Synod of the United Reformed Church and the Southampton District of the Methodist Church. It is also an active member of Dorchester Churches Together and seeks to work closely with other churches in the community.

GDPR

Wendy and John Hilton manage our other data securely to meet our obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations. United Church has its own website at <https://www.unitedchurchdorchester.org.uk> which is maintained internally by Susy and Kevin Rogers. Secure areas allow minutes and other records to be stored and accessed by Members and Stewards.

Public Benefit Statement, Achievements and Performance

In 2024 a major versioning exercise has been led by our Minister that included a 'Vision Day' in June resulting in several sub-groups established to examine the key themes raised. Our new Vision statement was agreed at a Church Meeting in November.

Our Vision

"We are a Christian Community seeking to be a Beacon of God's Light and Love for All"

When planning our activities for the year, the Minister and Council of Stewards have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion and our Vision for the wider Church. Our main objective is to try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our Church community.

The Celebration of Public Worship

As a Christian Community, the United Church welcomes everyone because God loves all people. We value our diversity. Whatever our age, background, culture, gender, or race, we each have something special to share with others and the Council of Stewards is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our church. The Council of Stewards maintains an over-view of our worship and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within Dorchester and its surroundings. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music, and sacrament. The Musical Director at UCD is Heather Reed who ensures that the choir and music groups' contributions to worship is of an appropriate standard.

Currently, UCD provides a variety of worship styles at different times throughout the week:

- The 10.30am Sunday service - our main act of worship. Services are led by our Circuit ministers, retired ministers, or lay preachers from both the Methodist tradition and the United Reformed Churches. Numbers attending the 10.30am service are usually between 95 and 120. The 10.30 am service at UCD is regularly recorded and edited by Peter Robinson and available on the UCD, YouTube channel.
- Sunday Evening services at 6.30pm are held, usually twice a month, with attendance between 9 and 20. Different types of worship, such as Taizé and modern worship songs are intentionally included in some services.

- On the second Sunday afternoon each month, instead of an evening service we now have Afternoon Tea and Favourite Hymns, known simply as Tea-Pot. People arrive from 3.30pm for a formal start at 4pm. We serve sandwiches and cake with cups of tea. At about 4.45pm we give out hymn books and have an informal time of hymn singing, with the hymns chosen by those present. We finish at about 5.30pm. All are welcome. There is no charge or collection, but we welcome donations towards the cost of the tea. The numbers have gradually built up, and we now usually have between 20 and 30 attending.
- A short (20 min) Market Day service on Wednesday morning regularly attracts 20-30 people.
- Printed services for use at home are made available weekly by the Dorset South and West Methodist Circuit, for those unable to attend worship at UCD, but without modern computer technology.

We hold a series of special services throughout the year.

- Around 15 people attended our Quiet Christmas; a gentle Christmas service for those who do not feel able to celebrate Christmas enthusiastically, either through bereavement or because of dementia or autism. Several members of UCD's congregation brought friends because they had enjoyed the service last year.
- On Christmas Eve the Church was busy for our Christingle service. Led by the junior church staff, it was wonderful to see so many families enjoying a relaxed service that enabled them to make their own Christingles, as well as hear the Christmas Story, told very simply.
- On Sunday 22nd December we held our annual carol service, which was well attended. Along with a mix of traditional and newer carols, the choir sang several festive pieces to accompany the story of the nativity as described in the Gospels.
- Special services were held during the year, focusing on our World Mission, particularly the URC and Methodist World Church charities and our Church charity for the year, Wheels for the World.

Teaching of the Christian faith

Our Junior Church has 3 teachers with 1 assistant and a local family who come regularly with 3 or 4 children. Additional children attend as visitors or with grandparents. We meet in the Cerne Abbas room and parents are welcome to stay. Our teaching session is based on the 'Roots' scheme which is a recognised national Christian resource. We follow this with play activities and sometimes a snack and drink.

Mission and Evangelism

United Church undertakes a range of outreach activities. These include 'Story Tots' on a Thursday morning providing a space where children can play while parents and carers can catch up with each other in a safe environment. Many of our families have welcomed a newborns and we have recently had a family baptism in the Church. A monthly clothes exchange allows parents to bring children's clothes to swap for larger sizes for their growing children. We all enjoy celebrating birthdays. We run also 'Story Tots Plus' during school holidays so that older children in the family can come along with their younger siblings. Throughout the year we open our doors to all families with our 'Family Fun Mornings' which offers a range of games, toys and craft activities with tea and toast provided. The Church is very grateful for the wonderful team of volunteers who come each week and make these events happen.

We have continued the 'Forest Praise Café' which is a joint venture with our Anglican friends at St George's Church in Fordington. We meet on the last Saturday of the month and often have 5-10 families attending. Our activities our crafts activities, story and song are themed to reflect the Christian festivals throughout the year. Hot food and drinks available during the morning so the parents and carers can sit and relax, and we use the outdoor space, weather permitting. At the St George's Fair in April, we offer craft activities for children and in December we help our families decorate a Christmas tree as part of the St George's Christmas Tree festival. We have a loyal team who prepare crafts in advance and come on the day which makes the morning enjoyable for those who come.

We join with Churches Together in Dorchester for our biggest outreach event of the year at the Dorset County Show for the first weekend in September. In a large marquee we provide a place of welcome for all the people. Refreshments are provided along with crafts, games, 'Godly Play', toys, 'Prayer Tree' and an eco-activity. The safe and clean baby changing/feeding area is much appreciated by our younger families. We made over 1,000 drinks and over 200 babies were changed or fed. On the Sunday an Ecumenical Harvest Festival service is held in the open air at the showground. People from across the local Churches volunteer their time over the weekend with a core group working throughout the year preparing for the show. Whatever the weather we continue in love to serve all those we meet and look forward to the 2025 Show.

'Journey to the Stable' is our interactive re-telling of the Nativity story for schools and the public. In 2024 over 450 children and teachers from the Dorchester schools attended. Each child went away with items collected at each JTTS station so they could re-live their journey with their family and friends. We also took JTTS to Broadmayne First School in conjunction with the Methodist and Anglican Churches where 150 children attended.

Pastoral Care

Our Minister, Rev John Yarrien, cares for the spiritual and emotional needs at UCD. Mrs Ruth Magee supports the Minister, and the Pastoral Committee as our Pastoral Support Assistant. The United Church maintains a system by which all members and adherents are assigned to a Pastoral Visitor, who tries to keep in touch with them and understand their concerns.

An Annual Welcome Meeting is organised for all new people who have started attending UCD over the last year. This is an opportunity to meet other new members, learn more about the Church and receive a welcome pack.

Every new adherent is asked to complete a GDPR form explaining what information is kept and how it will be used. These details are kept on our Church Member's database. The Pastoral Visitors usually meet twice a year for training and to share experiences. As part of our pastoral support to the local community we provide comfort and support to the bereaved. We also held several child baptisms. The baptised children and their siblings received a Christian book from the junior church.

Another component of our pastoral care is the "Prayer Chain" where those in need, are remembered in prayer by several Church Members, including those who are housebound. The prayer chain keeps a confidential list of people for whom prayer has been requested both daily and weekly.

The Coffee Shop now regularly opens on Tuesday and Friday mornings and there is a Wednesday coffee morning in the hall. A welcome and a listening ear is given to all those who attend. In the weeks before Christmas, UCD members tried to spread the good news of the birth of Christ, the true meaning of Christmas. The Quiet Christmas service with refreshments was attended by 12 people and led by the Pastoral Committee.

Serving the local community.

With its central location in the town, the United Church Dorchester is ideally placed to offer itself as a reasonably priced venue for many events. The groups that have used the building in 2024 include the Regional Blood Transfusion Service, Alcoholics Anonymous groups, the Dorchester Country Market, an orchestra, several choirs and along with the U3A.

The Church Shop remains open for four mornings a week offering a wide range of Christian books, gifts and cards, and 'fairly-traded' goods, including food. As a Fairtrade Church and eco-congregation, we actively promote the use of 'fairly traded' goods within the Church and more widely in our locality. The shop volunteers often engage in conversations about the Christian faith. The team of three of the buyers manage the shop.

A small team of volunteers provide monthly lunches for the homeless. No food is wasted as those coming always take a second dinner away with them. Our regular helpers (Sue Gannaway, Jean Janes, Roni Boyden and Diana Leeming) all find it a very rewarding experience.

Our buildings are well located for the community to use. Under the oversight of our Lettings Officer John Hilton, there were approximately 1800 bookings, 62% from UCD and 38% from external users. The majority of the UCD bookings are relatively easy to predict and manage as $\frac{3}{4}$ are regular, weekly room bookings, such as the shop four times a week and Sunday morning services 52 times a year, etc. The remaining 160 tend to be individual bookings for meetings but, because most of our church members are flexible, they also are relatively easy to manage. As a result, most of Ellie's time is spent managing the 700 bookings from external organisations. (Our Admin officer, Ellie Minns, has taken six months maternity leave from August 2024 and we have been very pleased to welcome her back in March 2025).

In 2024, we hired rooms to 68 separate customers, ranging from single events, such as a birthday celebration, to seven customers who have regular weekly bookings; these regular customers include the Country market and, in 2024, 5 AA group meetings per week (although one has now ceased to meet). Five choirs and two orchestras, meet at UCD, on different days, generally for three ten-week periods per year. The Child Contact Centre operated from UCD on alternate weeks, until, sadly, it had to close towards the end of 2024. We also hosted the biennial Thomas Hardy International Conference over a week, during which our catering team provided for 100 + attendees each day. Since we give a discount to charities, and bookings per client, range from 1 per year to 52, the booking system is quite time consuming; during Ellie's leave I estimated that it takes 8 hours a week just to keep up with requests to hire rooms and fill in the required paperwork, without any other tasks. However, it does bring in approximately £20,000 per year to UCD.

Supporting charities in the UK and overseas.

The United Church Dorchester has a continuing commitment to local, national, and international charities through members working as volunteers and donations of goods and money. Locally the Church supports the Dorchester Food Bank which continues to have a collection point at UCD. Church Members give financial support to the Family Support charity which provides Christmas hampers to families with children receiving free school meals.

During 2024 we supported 'Wheels for the World' for a second year. This is a Christian charity that collects unwanted wheelchairs and other mobility aids in the UK, refurbishes them and then takes them to fit and distribute in developing countries in Africa and the Indian sub-continent. Many events were organised to support this charity including Easter and Christmas Coffee mornings and Sales and various Stalls at Wednesday coffee including a very successful nearly-new Clothes sale. Other events included an enjoyable Quiz Night and a Summer afternoon concert given by our talented pianists Heather and Brenda with guest cellist Tim.

Fundraising events plus individual donations and a retiring collection in October raised the total of £3791.57 this year, which means over the two years of support the magnificent total of ££8294.80 was raised for 'Wheels for the World.' In addition, we collected many wheelchairs and other mobility aids and also knitted hundreds of glove puppets for distribution to children during the charities aid trips.

In October our World Church Sunday service was dedicated to 'Wheels for the World', and we were delighted to welcome back Jill Jenkinson who updated us on the recent distribution trip to Rwanda. The retiring collection at this service raised £479.50.

The other World Church Sunday service this year was held in March, led by Rev David Cuckson with members of the World Church committee. The service focussed on the work of CWM (the United Reformed Church Council for World Missions,) a retiring collection raised £243.73. Additional donations of £114 came from Mission Box holders, shared between CWM and the Methodist World Mission Fund. The church also donated £1000 between these two organisations.

The Church also made £9235 in donations to the following charities in 2024.

Christian Aid £1,200, Dorchester Family Support £600, Dorchester Food Bank £808, Dorchester Poverty Action £935, Dorset Mind £200, Weldmar Hospice £300, Wheels for the World £3,792, Women's Refuge £300, Council for World Mission £500, Methodist Fund for World Mission £500, Churches Together in Dorchester £100.

The Action for Children Fundraising Group raised a total of £3409 from a range of events, including a garden party, carol singing, a quiz night, book sales, charity stalls, several collections at Church services and the "League of Light boxes", which are added throughout the year by regular donors.

At our Wednesday Coffee Mornings, we invite one charity each week to promote their activities and enable them to raise funds. We provide tables and chairs, and there is no charge. John Parson has developed this initiative to help local charities and to encourage more footfall in our building. This has proved very popular and since it started in January a charity stall has been present in all but three weeks during the year. Altogether, twenty charities have used this facility, some more than once.

At the beginning of Christian Aid Week 2024 (May 12-18) an ecumenical service was held at St Mary's Church and was conducted by Revd. Jimmy Holden with an inspirational address by Rob Pearce, a stalwart of Christian Aid which set the tone admirably for the week to come. Christian Aid Week last year focused on the efforts of Aline, a young woman in one of the world's most impoverished nations, Burundi, to set up a successful savings and loans scheme. Christian Aid is about helping people to develop sustainable self-governing projects of their own ("a hand up rather than a hand-out") and about campaigning on issues such as climate change, tax justice and the humanitarian treatment of all people. Never has there been a more urgent time to raise funding to support the range of initiatives. Individual church collections at times of crisis have been very generous and six-monthly street collections have proved fruitful as well as the annual carol singing. House to house collections have proved difficult but the 'Go for Ten' project should make the process less onerous. Other fund-raising events included an evening of poetry in November with Peter Green and Brian Caddy, combined with a fish and chip supper and the annual Bingo evening at St George's in February. The popular Market at United Church is now an Autumn event and combined with ploughman's lunches regularly raises over £1000. The United Church's weekly ploughman's lunches during Lent contributed handsomely as well as providing excellent value for money. Tony Boyden is Chair of Christian Aid in Dorchester and will step down in 2025 after many years of committed service in the role.

Maintaining the fabric of the Church building

A new vision for UCD was discussed in June and the subject of the use and development of the premises was considered specifically at the following Church meeting. An application for the installation of PV Solar Cells was submitted to the LBAC, which was approved in principle. A revised application is in hand. Plans to upgrade the ground floor toilet block at the Charles Street end of the church has developed such that only a refurbishment is now proposed, and this is being progressed 'in house'. It was discovered that the southeast corner of No 51 Charles Street

has sunk by some 40 mm and although the structure is not in danger, repair work is necessary. Quotations are being sought for the necessary investigation of the existing foundations.

Five CCTV cameras have been installed, covering the entrances to the premises and the 1st floor landing of No 49 Charles Street. A quinquennial survey was undertaken in the year, the report was highly commendable of the UCD premises with almost all the recommended repairs already in hand. The Hall windows have required more repair work and redecoration. The cleaning contract is working well and the Charminster room is now in use as a store. Members of the Property committee continue to contribute a huge amount of time to the maintenance and development of the church premises.

Ecumenical Relationships

Local Relationships

We continue to work closely with friends from various churches and denominations across Dorchester and the surrounding area through Churches Together in Dorchester. Forest Praise is now carried out jointly at St George's Anglican Church, as was the midnight mass on Christmas Eve. Highlights of Churches Together in Dorchester include:

- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January
- Walk of Witness on Good Friday
- Sunrise Service at Maumbury Rings at 6am on Easter Sunday
- Christian Aid and Pentecost services in May

Retail Chaplaincy

The Retail Chaplaincy team has continued its effective work during 2024. 13 Chaplains continue to visit around 200 varied outlets in the centre of town, normally on a weekly basis. The good news is that all report how much they enjoy their role as shared during their once-a-year review. One Chaplain has retired from the work and a new one has just been trained and begins sharing. They have completed the training course and is being checked for DBS and safeguarding training. The big issue since December has been the closure of South Street due to the fire. We have been in touch with all interested parties to seek to move forward the reopening of a passage as the businesses at the lower end of South Street have suffered a serious loss of trade. One thing we need to address is finding more potential Chaplains and preferable from all the different churches. Later this year we will have been running for ten years so the Chaplaincy Management Group will decide how to celebrate this important event. Staffing has changed on the Group this year as Chris Warren has stepped down as Chair and Robin Rowles from the Community Church has taken this on. Further the Secretary, Lauretta Kerridge, has stepped down and been replaced by Janet Ranger also an Anglican. The work is supported by Churches Together, BID (the business development organisation) and the Town Council.

Staffing and Other Issues

Employed Staff

The Reverend John Yarrien has continued as UCD's Minister as well as Superintendent of the Dorset South & West Methodist Circuit and is proactive in moving forward with our Vision.

Mr Peter Jenner has continued to take a lead on key areas of Families and Young People's work within UCD, particularly, supporting the teams that deliver Forest Praise, Story Tots and Journey to the Stable. Peter also chairs the Youth and Family committee. As well as his work with the wider circuit, Peter has been working with a small team to develop a Saturday outreach project aimed at families and young children, starting with a Family Fun Day at Pentecost

Ms Ellie Minns is our Church Administrator. She helps the Stewards and Senior Management of the church with clerical work and manages the booking system for letting rooms in the Church.

Ms Di Lawrence is employed for 2 hours a week to manage and support the financial operations of the Church Shop and Coffee Lounge, including paying the bills, and keeping the accounts.

Mrs Ruth McGee is employed as our Pastoral Support Assistant. Ruth has focussed on offering a presence at Market Day services, building relationships with local care homes and offering support and training to pastoral visitors.

Volunteers

Most of the work carried out by and in the United Church is done by volunteers. All aspects of church life require Church Members and friends to freely give of their time; from pastoral visiting, making sure services run smoothly, fundraising for the charities we support and practical help such as the Coffee Shop and the Church Shop. Although we cannot accurately estimate the time given, it must amount to several hundred person hours per week.

We continue to benefit greatly from the ministries of retired Ministers and lay leaders of many denominations, who are part of our Church and Circuit. This support in depth was extremely helpful during the recent illness of our Minister.

Financial Review

The 2024 Annual Church Accounts are available as a separate document.

Reserves policy

The Church has a Reserves Policy, a requirement of the Charity Commission, to secure the future in case of unexpected or exceptional need. Thus, the figure of £80,000 will be used as the target for the Reserves Policy. Our reserves are held as unrestricted (freely available) funds which are ring-fenced from our budgeted annual commitments and planned expenditure.

Restricted and Designated funds

Restricted funds and endowments, i.e. funds designated for a specific use, are not included in the reserves. The Florence Fare Trust is an endowment under which only the interest may only be used for Youth and Family work.

Investment Policy

Our Investment Policy is to hold an accessible balance of £50,000 in Lloyds Bank; a further balance of £80,000 as our Reserve in deposit and low risk funds; our remaining capital of £100,000+ is for longer-term use and invested in managed funds. These amounts are benchmark figures, and the balances held will vary month by month. The Finance Committee will review our Investment

Policy mid-way through the year. It is our practice to hold our longer-term funds as investments held between the Charities Official Investment Fund (COIF), Senator House, 85 Queen Victoria Street, London. EC4V 4ET and the Trustees for the Methodist Church Purposes, Central Buildings, Oldham Street, Manchester. M1 1JQ.

Names and addresses of:

Bankers: Lloyds Bank plc 1-2 High West St. Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1UG.

Independent Examiner – Robin Powell, 11 Kit Lane, Owermoigne, Dorchester DT2 8HP.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding of adults at risk of abuse and children is taken very seriously by the Church Stewards. We now have two Safeguarding Officers at UCD, Linda Scott and Diana Leeming who share the responsibility. The Church has a robust and comprehensive safeguarding policy which is displayed on the noticeboards of the church and on the website alongside the contact details for the two safeguarding officers. It is reviewed annually and updated as necessary. A programme of safeguarding awareness training is delivered regularly to all those in the Church who work or volunteer with children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse.

We ensure staff and volunteers are aware of the Prevent Strategy and able to protect children and young people who are vulnerable or at risk of being radicalised. Training must be repeated every three years. A Safer Recruitment policy and procedures are now in place. These require that new staff and volunteers complete an application form and have two references taken up, and those appointed to roles are subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service check. continue in their role as Church Safeguarding Officers.

Health & Safety

The Health & Safety sub-group has overseen several Risk Assessments throughout the year. 'Site Safety Rules for Contractors' relating to our premises are available. The General Emergency Evacuation Plan has been updated and Fire Safety training given to Stewards and other volunteers. United Church Dorchester, April 2024.

United Church Dorchester, April 2025

United Church Dorchester Annual Accounts 2024

RECEIPTS

	Notes	2024				2023
		£	£	£	£	£
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment	Total	Total
Collections		12,533			12,533	14,990
Standing Orders		57,124			57,124	50,391
Gift Aid on Giving		14,942			14,942	14,740
Donations	1	3,005			3,005	4,750
Lettings		22,474			22,474	17,162
Investments	2	6,128		1,660	7,788	7,124
Interest	3	311			311	517
Fundraising	4		7,625		7,625	8,681
Other	5	1,507			1,507	305
Grants	6	0			0	20,436
Refunds	7	818			818	12,614
Youth and Family			2,040		2,040	3,453
Church Flowers			1,073		1,073	
Lunches for Homeless			30		30	
Music Fund	8		1,557		1,557	
Old Coffee A/C closure					0	7,500
Church Shop & Coffee Shop A/C	12	24,491			24,491	21,825
Totals		143,333	12,325	1,660	157,318	184,488

PAYMENTS

Church Costs

UCD Assessment		69,552			69,552	62,225
Church Administrator		5,513			5,513	8,429
Pastoral Visitor		6,682			6,682	4,277
Church Shop/Coffee A/C Admin		1,336			1,336	1,241
Church Insurance		7,135			7,135	6,369
Church Cleaning		9,104			9,104	7,412
Waste Collection		277			277	263
Gas		3,902			3,902	4,718
Electricity		7,961			7,961	2,489
Telephone & Broadband		957			957	808
Water		129			129	126
Business Rates & Dor BID		512			512	549
Minor Items	9	5,583			5,583	8,038

Property Costs

Property Maintenance		5,374			5,374	4,621
Property Emergencies		1,248			1,248	5,256
Roof Repairs		868			868	8
Lift		765			765	0
No51 Loft Space		0			0	924
Church Spire		0			0	2,491
Hall Windows		1,194			1,194	0
Hall Floor		0			0	4,243
Church Heating		0			0	405
Kitchen		0			0	1,142

Other Costs				
Charitable Giving	10	9,235	9,235	15,720
Music in Worship	11	1,900	1,900	1,800
Outreach		21	21	165
Church Flowers		823	823	95
Youth and Family		1,337	1,337	3,608
Minister's Discretionary Fund		27	27	70
Music Fund		509	509	440
Lunches for Homeless		465	465	
Maurice Dale Legacy		113	113	
Church Shop & Coffee Shop A/C	12	11,700	11,700	10,147
Totals		150,926	3,295	0
			154,221	158,079

ASSETS

	2024				2023
	£	£	£	£	£
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Revaluation	Total	Total
Fixed Assets					
TMCP-Florence Fare Trust		61,608	6,540	68,148	61,608
TMCP-Surplus Funds Trust	31,581		790	32,371	29,312
TMCP-Elma Burge Trust	2,695		20	2,715	2,691
COIF-Investment Fund	38,712			38,712	37,856
URC -Investments	878			878	30
Current Assets					
Current Accounts					
HSBC Bank	235			235	35,467
Lloyds Bank	12,286			12,286	2,293
Nat West Bank	5,731			5,731	8,450
Deposit Accounts					
HSBC Bank	0			0	0
Lloyds Bank	25,229			25,229	0
COIF Deposit Fund	82,748			82,748	81,345
Cash in Hand					
Church		244		244	55
Church Shop & Coffee A/C	86			86	86
Stock					
Shop	6,555			6,555	6,176
Coffee	131			131	50
LIABILITIES					
Debtors (Note 13)	19,076			19,076	15,393
Creditors (Note 14)	-3,771	-1358		-5,129	-2,857
Church Groups (Note 15)		868		-1,538	-2,406
Net Assets/Liabilities	222,172	61,362	7,350	290,884	275,549

FUNDS

Summary of Funds at 31 December 2024

	2024				2023
	£	£	£	£	£
	Net Income	Transfer	Revaluation	Total	Total
Endowment					
Florence Fare Trust			6,540	68,148	61,608
Restricted					
Youth & Family	703			2,581	1,878
Outreach	-21			732	753
Homeless Lunches	-435			126	561
Church Flowers	256			351	95
Maurice Dale Legacy	-113			667	780
Music Fund	1,048			1,183	135
Discretionary Fund	-27			1,115	1,142
Shop & Coffee A/C	12,791	-15,000		12,503	14,712
Unrestricted					
General Funds	6,392	15,000	810	203,477	181,275
Totals	20,594	0	7,350	290,883	262,939

Notes for Financial Statements to 31 December 2024

- 1

Donations

Includes all one-off donations given to the church for general use
- 2

Investments

All investments are mainly with TMCP and CCLA. All are for general use except for Florence Fare Trust. Our small holding with URC will be sold ASAP.
- 3

Interest

Earned on CCLA Deposit Account and Bank Deposit Accounts with HSBC and Lloyds.
- 4

Fundraising

Amounts given for any specific charity, e.g. Wheels for the World.

Gift Aid could be claimed on these amounts if people used a GA envelope. Payments to charities are shown under Charitable Giving.
- 5

Other

Vision advertising, Ride and Stride, Thomas Hardy week, etc

6	Grants	No grants applied for or received this year.
7	Refunds	Insurance claim for ceiling redecoration after storm damage.
8	Music Fund	Monies from Brass Ensemble fund gifted to the church Music Group
9	Minor Items	Covers a multitude of items, e.g. CCLI licence, candles, sound equipment, support to services, etc.
10	Charitable Giving	Amounts given to specific charities plus Churches Together, Lunches for the Homeless, etc
11	Music in Worship	A gift made to the UCD Musical Director from church funds.
12	Church Shop & Coffee	Income is combination of Church Shop and Coffee Lounge takings. Outgoings also include Sunday after-service coffee in the hall.
13	Debtors	Gift Aid estimate £15,000 yet to be claimed. Plus, a salary refund for Church Administrator of £3,257.
14	Creditors	Monies to be paid to MWF and CWM plus unpaid Journey to the Stable invoice. Also, Outstanding bills to a) Pozitive Energy £2,471, b) Journey to the Stable printing £421.
15	Church Groups	Monies held in UCD bank account on behalf of Badminton, and Country Dancing groups. (Used to include the Brass Ensemble)

ASSETS

	2024				2023
	£ Unrestricted	£ Restricted	£ Revaluation	£ Total	£ Total
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United Church Dorchester

Charity Number 1137996

Declarations and Scrutiny

Treasurer's Statement

I report to the Trustees that the Receipt and Payment based accounts, together with the Statement of Assets and Liabilities and Representation of Funds for the year ended 31 December 2023 which have been prepared from the records of the Church have now been completed. I confirm that these accounts are an accurate and complete record of all funds under the control of the Church trustees.

Signature of Treasurer.....

Date 14/10/24

Name and Address of
Treasurer.....

51 Coburg Road, Dorchester, Dorset

Post Code DT1 2HN

Independent Examiner's Statement

I report to the Trustees of the United Church Dorchester that my examination of the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023 has now been completed. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention which give me cause to believe that, in any material respect, the financial records do not accord with the accounts mentioned above.

Signature of independent examiner.....

Date 14/10/24

Name and Address of independent
examiner.....

ROSIE POWELL, 11 KIRK LANE, OWMINGHAM
DORCHESTER.

Post Code DT2 8HP