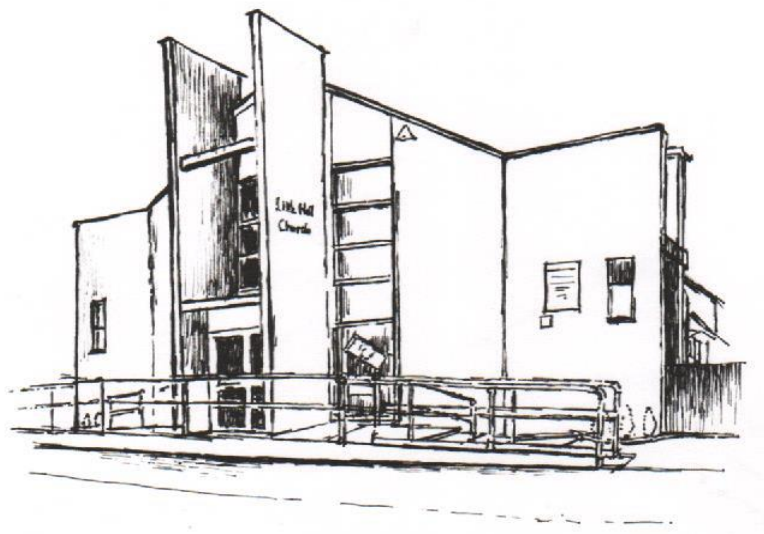




Little Hill Church

Wigston



Trustees' Report for the Year ending 31 March 2024

Little Hill Church

Launceston Road, Wigston, Leics, LE18 2GZ

www.littlehill.org.uk

Registered Charity (England & Wales) No. 1138737

HM Revenue and Customs (Charities) Reference: XN32811

Governing Documents

The objects of Little Hill Church and procedures for its government are laid down in the Trust Deed of 16 May 1975 (amended on 20 January 1993) and the Constitution adopted about 1975

Trustees during the year:

John Eardley (Chair of Trustees)

James Harrison

Joshua Harrison

Peter Holmes

Andrew Irvine

Faqir Kallow

Mike Smith

Elders:

Faqir Kallow (Chair)

John Eardley

Joshua Harrison

Deacons:

James Harrison

Peter Holmes (Chair)

Andrew Irvine

Mike Smith (Treasurer)

Bankers:

HSBC, 2-6 Gallowtree Gate, Leicester, LE1 1DA

Independent Accounts Examiner

Melanie Smith

11 Tremaine Drive, Wigston, Leics., LE18 2GW

Trustees' Annual Report

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting this report of the church's activities for the year ending 31 March 2024, which includes the information below and the attached Receipts and Payments Account.

Purpose and Objectives

Little Hill Church is 'an undenominational and evangelical work for the service of Almighty God and the education of young persons' and for other purposes 'incidental to or connected with the work of a Christian church in accordance with the teaching of the Scriptures' (Trust Deed clause (a)).

Little Hill Church exists for:

- a. the building up of Christians through preaching and teaching,
- b. bringing Christians together to love one another,
- c. the worship of God through prayer, praise and 'breaking of bread' (communion),
- d. baptising believers,
- e. fulfilling the commission to make disciples. (Constitution para.1)

Public Benefit Statement

Little Hill Church aims to provide public benefit through the advancement of the Christian Religion, in accordance with reformed evangelical theology, through the various activities highlighted below. The main area of activity has been Wigston and the immediate surrounding area, but Little Hill Church believes in a global mission in accordance with the command of Jesus Christ in Matthew 28:19 and 20. We have therefore provided support for members, other individuals and organisations, as resources permit, where such individuals and organisations are seen as sympathetic to our theological position and are themselves engaged in the promotion of Christian Religion.

Regular Activities

In pursuit of these objectives, the following regular activities have been undertaken during the year ending 31 March 2024.

- On **Sunday mornings**, Joshua Harrison has continued to preach through the Gospel of Luke. Our **Sunday afternoon** services have continued, and men from the church have preached through a varying range of topics, while Joshua Harrison has completed the short series on the Psalms, and also preached through the letter to the Philippians. There have also, during this time, been visits from guest preachers at both our Sunday morning and afternoon services. These have been very much appreciated.
- During the last year, the church has run a **creche** during the Sunday morning service each week. This is run by volunteers on a rota basis. The age range of children attending the creche is 0-4 years old. Typically, we have 2-3 children attend each week. We provide toys and books along with basic drawing equipment. The purpose of the creche is to provide childcare so parents can join in with the main service.
- **Children's Talks:** Talks continue to be given mainly by James Eardley with Trevor Bowman covering breaks and other men on standby. Numbers of children have grown to around ten on average. Talks aim to be mostly interactive as a means of all ages and abilities having access to the content. Children engage well and learning is consolidated upstairs during Lion's Cubs. Talk subjects over the past year have included Easter, Jacob, Joseph, the King's Coronation, Moses, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Saul, Christmas, David and Elijah. All talks are gospel-centric teaching children key themes of God's character and people's need for forgiveness and salvation through Christ Jesus.

- **Thursday Meetings:** We meet every Thursday for fellowship, prayer and ministry from God's word. Bible studies this year have covered the theme of God's Attributes whilst our monthly home-based Fellowship Groups have studied and discussed chapters from the church's Bible reading scheme (many are following this to read through the Bible in three years). Once a month we meet for the Lord's Supper and we also meet for a monthly time devoted mainly to prayer where we split into small prayer groups. All these meetings are a blessing and help the church to grow in its spiritual life.
- **Ladies' Bible Study:** It has been a great blessing to have Judith Rowe join the leadership team this year and to see a growing number of ladies gathering each Tuesday morning. Over 20 ladies meet regularly to study God's precious Word, pray and share fellowship together. Others use the Bible study notes at home. Studies this year have included series on 'Meeting Jesus', Thessalonians, and 'The Messiah'. There have been meetings for praise and worship at Christmas and Easter, as well as occasional visits from outside speakers. The group is grateful for the service of James Langtry who provided the refreshments so faithfully, and for Victor Rowe who continues to do so.
- **The SHED** fellowship for men has continued with the same format, meeting each fortnight. We start with a time for devotions and then move on to another activity. There are on average ten men attending each session. Activities have included BBQs, quizzes, various indoor games, a talk on amateur radio, visiting the model railway in Abbey Park, painting slate coasters and a wonderful Christmas lunch.
- **Warm Space** continues much as it began though we amended the timing to 10 -12 noon. We open every Thursday morning with breaks for Easter, Summer and Christmas. We are delighted to see local people of all ages coming. There is a core number of folk who come regularly and have developed friendships, some attending other LHC events. Not forgetting of course our own church folk who drop in. Numbers coming range between 25 and 40.

We serve light refreshments, there is a craft table, table tennis, jigsaws and a kiddie corner. A walking group also visit every other week after their exercise. We have been blessed with enough people to run Warm Space week by week and thank God for the opportunities it brings to show the love of Jesus to all who come along.

- Monthly **Saturday Prayer Focus Meetings** are held to praise God and pray for the work of the gospel locally here in Wigston, nationally and internationally.
- **Friday Fellowship** continued through the year meeting monthly, providing hymn singing and a devotional talk for senior citizens from the church and other friends, followed by a lunch.

Evangelism

The church has held meetings for various age groups over the years. All the following meetings are provided at no cost to individuals, and most are term-time activities.

- **Little Ones at Little Hill** is a group for pre-school children that happens on Monday afternoons from 1:30-3:00pm in term time. We have recently transitioned from having one leader to a leadership team of three ladies, which has been a smooth process that allows for organisation and sharing of responsibilities.

In total, there are six ladies from the church who serve at Little Ones in different ways. All are DBS checked and church members. We offer a wide variety of toys, activities, and crafts for the children to enjoy. We then have story time, where the children hear a Bible story and sing some songs afterwards – a mixture of nursery rhymes and children's choruses that contain simple Biblical truths. Approximately 25-30+ parents and carers attend, with a similar number of children and babies.

The aim of Little Ones is for the team members to show friendship to the parents and carers, to share their Christian faith when appropriate, to invite them to Sunday services and evangelistic events, and to sow seeds of Biblical truth in the story time for children (for example, that God made the world).

- **Kids' Club** is our weekly meeting for primary school aged children held on Friday evenings during term time. It has been great to keep this meeting going, and we continue to be encouraged meeting new families from the local area. We continue to teach stories from the Bible and sing choruses with the children. There is a variety of activities, including sports and crafts, as well as fun games and events. There are regularly between 15-25 children attending this meeting each week. It has also been encouraging to have new members join the team of helpers.
- **Lion's Cubs:** The number of children at Lion Cubs on Sunday mornings varies but has certainly grown in this last year. We range between four and 16 attending, averaging at 11. The children are between four and 11 years of age. We currently have one leader and one helper in attendance but with the rise in numbers we call on another helper when necessary. Our Bible stories this year have been based on the lives of Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, the book of Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Saul, Solomon and David, plus Easter and Christmas stories. The children enjoy activities, singing, learning Bible verses and sharing their news. It is a wonderful privilege to teach our children and share the Lord Jesus with them, whatever their background.
- **Open-Air witness in Wigston:** This is scheduled for the last Saturday of each month, under the banner of The Open-Air Mission. A total of ten took place in 2023. Between two and five members of the church regularly take part in this. The aim is to offer free Christian literature and engage people in conversation and share the Christian message with them, using a free-literature table and display board. It is usually located on Bell Street, outside Sainsbury's, and between 10:30 and 12:30 approx. There is generally a good uptake of literature offered and several conversations each time.
- **Youth Club** is becoming more established with young people aged 11-16. Attendance varies from five to 12 teenagers. The evenings consist of practical activities on a three-week

rotational basis; sports and games one evening; team activities around tables; or a club night where there are choices available for the young people. Every effort is made to make each session interesting and fun. Each evening there is a talk addressing various issues of life or simply relating an aspect of the life of Jesus from the Bible. There are opportunities for questions and conversations pertaining to teenage life.

- **ParkLife:** We were able to go out four times this year visiting the four local parks around the church speaking to youngsters about the purpose of life and giving out literature and details about the church. On the whole, conversations have been very meaningful and worthwhile. We have enough men for this outreach work but not women.
- **Women2Women:** We had three events this year, the first at Buttercups Cafe on a Saturday morning (July 2023) when about 30 women gathered for informal fellowship. Everyone enjoyed coffee, cake and chat. There were many guests and it was good to get to know new people who had had other contacts with the church (e.g. through Warm Space). We decided not to have our usual Christmas event since the church calendar was very full already with lots of evangelistic events for people to choose from. Instead, on a Saturday in December we went to Wistow Garden Centre for morning coffee. Fourteen people came and we were also able to celebrate the birthday of one of our senior citizens. Our third event was a very popular 'French Night' at Zeph's Café, Oadby in March 2024 (we even had a reserve list). Karima Shirfield spoke to about 50 women about growing up in a Muslim family in France and her journey to Christ and, later, to England. We had prayers in French and English and everyone took home flowers and a copy of John 3.16 in French. About two thirds of the attendees were guests of church members and Karima's talk sparked a lot of interest and good discussions afterwards.
- **Men's Evangelism:** During the last year we have held two men's guest evenings. These have both consisted of a meal at a restaurant followed by a quiz and an after-dinner gospel talk. Both events have had around 40 men attend.

- **Senior Citizens:** Four Saturday teas were held in this period. The programmes typically included music, poems (both classic and light-hearted), quizzes, gentle sitting-down exercises, and a gospel talk, followed by the tea.
- **Free-literature case** Christian booklets, leaflets and Bibles continue to be occasionally taken from the box, at the rate of a few copies per month. The literature is checked and refreshed approximately monthly. Literature relevant to Easter and Christmas is made available at these times. In June, a poster was placed in one of the door windows with a QR code link to the online YouVersion, which makes the Bible instantly available to smart-phone users in many international languages. This is to make sure that as many as possible are able to read the Bible, and also reflects the increasing multi-cultural demographic of the Little Hill estate.
- **Ministry to International Students:** As always, in partnership with Globe Cafe, six Sunday Church trips were arranged. The Carol Service once again proved to be extremely popular, the church was packed with regular attenders, students and visitors. PRAISE GOD! The overall numbers of students attending Globe Café remains low (on average 15) so we are very encouraged that on average 16 students came for church trips. Students have come from, China, Afghanistan, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kenya, Morocco, Nepal, Nigeria, Romania, Thailand, Vietnam and Zambia. What an amazing privilege we have as a church to make Christ known amongst these needy souls, especially as many of them are not allowed to go to church or speak about Jesus in their own country.
- **Holiday Bible Club:** In the October half-term break, we ran a Holiday Bible Club for primary school aged children. The theme was on the Old Testament story of Moses and the Exodus. As well as Bible stories and songs, there were a variety of activities, games and crafts for the children to enjoy. Different members from the church volunteered to help with the week. Attendance was about ten children each day. It was well received by the children who attended and their families.

Worship and Ministry

- Joshua Harrison is the full-time pastor and he continues to bring a consistent, consecutive ministry. This year he has preached from various parts of the Bible, including Psalms and the book of Luke. He continued his role as a Chaplain for the local Police Service.

Other Activities

- **Church History Lectures:** Since 2018 an annual series of Church History Lectures has been given by one of our members, Dr Lesley Rowe. This year saw the continuation of the series 'Famous or Forgotten?', with lectures on Sir John Hartopp and William Carey. The 2024 series on 'Three Great Johns' opened with a lecture on John Owen, delivered by Rev Dr Lee Gatiss, Director of Church Society. An encouraging number of people, including friends from other churches, has attended, and enjoyed sharing fellowship together. A good number of viewings on YouTube demonstrates a wider interest in the subject.
- Little Hill Church continues to support the **Blythwood shoebox project** with collection and despatch again taking place at a member's house. Blythwood is a Scottish-based charity providing Christian care for body and soul to many in Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia.

A record 2702 boxes containing Christmas gifts and practical necessities for distribution to the needy in Eastern Europe were collected and sent. Many continued to be sent to those suffering in Ukraine and other neighbouring countries who have been giving support to Ukrainian refugees who have fled the conflict.

- As in previous years, Little Hill Church has a collection point in the church foyer for the **South Leicester Food Bank**. On a regular basis these items are taken to the main collection hub in Wigston.

Practicalities

- **Deacons and Elders** have separate monthly meetings to consider their respective responsibilities.
- **Elders and Deacons** continue to meet monthly at the Church Council to conduct the business of the church. Here decisions are made and practicalities discussed including church finances. Members of the church are invited to attend.
- Those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults have been **DBS** checked and continue to be rechecked after five years.
- The **Little Hill Link** is sent out electronically to inform the church of forthcoming activities and is a useful prayer stimulus. Copies are printed and posted to those who are not online.
- **A library of Christian books** is available for members and visitors to borrow.

Risk Management

- The Deacons conduct an **annual inspection** of the premises to identify and evaluate any physical risks to which the church and its attendees may be subject, and they are satisfied that appropriate measures are in place to mitigate or eliminate these. A system of **annual Risk Assessments** for activities is used.
- We continue to review **Safeguarding Policy** each May which now includes protection for vulnerable adults.

Management of Funds

The attached Receipts and Payments Account shows total income of £92,697 (excluding gifts designated for other organisations), compared to £111,371 the previous year. This is entirely made up of voluntary donations, mainly from members of the congregation. There are no fundraising activities.

All designated giving has been used for the purpose stated by the givers.

The income enabled us to commence an upgrade of the foyer, as well as maintaining our regular activities and ministry, without any significant reduction in reserves.

Day to day expenditure is normally met by individuals within the congregation and reimbursed on production of an invoice or till receipt. Approximately 95% of payments are now made by Bank Transfer or Direct Debit. Two Deacons are authorised to conduct Internet Banking. All payments are checked against the records after the end of each month and signed off by two Trustees other than the Treasurer.

The church continues to support gospel work elsewhere. This year £13,703 has been sent as gifts to individuals and organisations involved in evangelism, training leaders, Christian advocacy and general relief work around the world. This is just under 15% of the church's income.

Throughout the year the church held a comprehensive insurance policy with Congregational Insurance which included Public Liability, Employer's Liability and Trustees' Indemnity. The Public Liability cover included activities of the church on or off the premises.

The Trustees consider that the church is in a sound financial position with sufficient reserves for our regular activity and current maintenance projects.

Approval

The Trustees' report was approved by the Trustees at a meeting on 5.08.2024.

Notes to the Accounts

<u>Note</u>	2024 £	2023 £
1 <u>Gifts and Donations</u>		
Giftaided Gifts	55,498.00	51,630.00
GASDS	2,333.01	1,567.60
Gifts and Donations	14,545.00	32,630.00
Other Offerings	6,480.55	6,088.00
	<u>78,856.56</u>	<u>91,915.60</u>
2 <u>Designated Income</u>		
Love Gifts	0.00	810.00
Designated Gifts:		
Other Designated Gifts	980.00	1,955.00
Weekend/day away	0.00	2,397.00
	<u>980.00</u>	<u>5,162.00</u>
3 <u>Ministry</u>		
Pastor's Salary, Nat Ins & Pension	39,836.85	38,267.01
Pastor's expenses and training	427.16	435.00
Other meeting costs	1,451.61	1,030.27
Special Gifts	82.66	33.00
Lectures	412.71	24.00
Warm Space	1,181.34	744.33
Visiting Preachers	1,535.00	2,690.00
	<u>44,927.33</u>	<u>43,223.61</u>
4 <u>Evangelism</u>		
Evangelism - General	225.46	17.40
Publicity	254.45	388.09
HBC	411.07	0.00
Little Ones	380.53	352.91
Kids Club	101.65	325.69
Friday Fellowship	785.16	645.80
Women to Women	926.95	950.40
Mens Events	1,677.60	1,172.28
Parklife	0.00	51.49
Senior Citizens	281.05	59.45
Youth	341.47	111.79
Lions Cubs	100.57	0.00
Printing/Literature	2,353.84	2,359.92
Catering	1,159.90	1,120.40
	<u>8,999.70</u>	<u>7,555.62</u>

Notes to the Accounts

<u>Note</u>	2024 £	2023 £
5 <u>Gifts</u>		
Vinukonda	1,750.00	1,750.00
Zambesi Mission	1,600.00	800.00
Blythswood Care	1,000.00	1,000.00
Friends International Penny Wang	2,000.00	1,500.00
Friends International Ruth Duffin	1,000.00	1,000.00
Answers in Genesis	0.00	500.00
Platform 67	1,000.00	1,000.00
Open Air Mission	1,000.00	1,000.00
Christian Institute	1,000.00	1,000.00
Int'l Mission to Jewish People (formerly Christian Witness to Israel)	1,000.00	1,000.00
Bulkington Congregational Church	1,500.00	0.00
Thurlaston Chapel > printing	120.00	0.00
Thurlaston Chapel Bible Notes	0.00	120.00
Platform 67 - Pakistan relief	0.00	2,000.00
Platform 67 - Earthquake relief	0.00	500.00
Our Daily Bread Ministries	120.00	120.00
UFM - Daveys	0.00	500.00
UFM - Hicham	0.00	500.00
Good News For Everyone	250.00	0.00
Leic South Food Bank	200.00	0.00
SIM International Matt & Lisa Wallis	0.00	1,000.00
UCCF - for Jemima Howell student worker	0.00	500.00
North Church CIO	60.00	300.00
Bethany Harrison - support for short term mission	0.00	1,000.00
	<u>13,600.00</u>	<u>17,090.00</u>
6 <u>Designated Expenditure</u>		
Designated Gifts:		
Other Designated Gifts	1,033.75	1,955.00
Love Gifts	0.00	3,035.00
Weekend/day away	0.00	3,363.48
	<u>1,033.75</u>	<u>8,353.48</u>
7 <u>Accommodation</u>		
Light & Heat	3,311.86	2,483.21
Insurance	966.98	1,906.85
Cleaning and Hygiene	526.42	416.68
Building and Fixtures	1,359.76	15,516.39
Building repairs & services	2,239.85	1,710.04
Water Rates	461.21	384.25
	<u>8,866.08</u>	<u>22,417.42</u>

Notes to the Accounts

<u>Note</u>	2024	2023
	£	£
8 <u>Administration</u>		
Bank Charges	131.11	171.08
Recording	24.54	280.86
Equipment purchases	2,634.87	7,148.13
Equipment repairs	438.00	0.00
Printing/photocopying	227.80	760.50
Postage	300.80	443.30
Telephone	368.43	387.07
Stationery	97.89	84.52
Advertising	121.90	246.10
Audit	230.00	230.00
Website	619.44	570.00
Professional fees	744.96	597.17
Affiliations and CRB checks	225.50	477.00
	<u>6,165.24</u>	<u>11,395.73</u>

Little Hill Church

Receipts and Payments Account y.e. 31st March 2024

		2024		2023	
		£	£	£	£
	Note				
Opening Balances					
Bank Current Account		3,126.36		5,774.77	
Bank Deposit Account		19,874.50		16,268.77	
Bank No2 Account		0.00		622.00	
Receipts					
Gifts and donations	1	78,856.56		91,915.60	
Designated Income	2	980.00		5,162.00	
Income Tax Refund		13,374.70		13,179.98	
Bequests and Legacies		0.00		0.00	
Interest Received		466.35		75.75	
Miscellaneous receipt		0.00		37.85	
Repayment of Loan to Shepshed Church		0.00		0.00	
Payments					
Ministry	3		44,927.33		43,223.61
Evangelism	4		8,999.70		7,555.62
Gifts	5		13,600.00		17,090.00
Designated Expenditure	6		1,033.75		8,353.48
Accommodation	7		8,866.08		22,417.42
Administration	8		6,165.24		11,395.73
Closing Balances					
Bank Current Account			3,870.82		3,126.36
Bank Deposit Account			29,215.55		19,874.50
Bank No2 Account			0.00		0.00
		116,678.47	116,678.47	133,036.72	133,036.72

NOTE


No credit has been included in the accounts for a sum of £7,500 (2023 £6,414) which is due by way of an Income Tax Refund against Giftaid for the period.

AUDITORS REPORT

I have examined the Church's Books of Account and the Receipts and Payments Accounts which, in my opinion accurately state the Church's affairs.

CHANGE TO ACCOUNTING POLICY

The Church decided to change the way the accounts are prepared and presented with effect from 1st April 2019 from an accruals basis to a receipts and payments basis. The effect of this is that there is no longer a balance sheet showing the value of the church building, other fixed assets, current assets and liabilities.


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Melanie Smith

Qualified with CIPFA in 1976, (member between 1976-2013) but no longer a member of the Institute
29th July 2024