

Harrogate Baptist Church

Trustees Annual Report and Accounts

for 2022 - 2023

(1st October 2022 - 30th September 2023)

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Aims and Purposes

The aims and purposes of Harrogate Baptist Church are encompassed in our mission statement:

“Living Faith, Bringing Hope, Sharing the Love of Jesus”

The Charity Trustees of Harrogate Baptist Church (HBC) have the responsibility together with the rest of the church in the advancement of the Christian faith and the promotion of the whole mission of the Church - evangelistic, social, pastoral and ecumenical. The Charity Trustees are also responsible for facilitating the maintenance of the Church building and finances.

Objectives and Activities

The Charity Trustees are committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and become part of the community and fellowship at HBC. Our services and worship put faith into practice through the centrality of Scripture, prayer, worship, sacrament and other activities outside of Sundays, seeking to make church and faith as accessible to as many people that live within our community as possible.

When planning our activities for the year, we as Charity Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance regarding the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable 'ordinary' people of all ages and backgrounds to live out their faith as part of our community through:

- Worship and prayer, small groups, communion, fellowship, preaching and teaching in order to develop knowledge and trust in Jesus;
- Provision of pastoral care for people within the church and those living within the community;
- Mission within the community and throughout the world

To facilitate this work, we recognise that it is important to maintain the fabric of the Church.

Achievements and Performance

Summary

Whilst there have been a few areas of church life where we are still feeling the tail end of the lifting of restrictions following Covid, and we have been challenged by high utility costs, this year has definitely been a year of 'calm' following the last few years of uncertainty and fluctuation but also a year of tangible blessings and growth. At a time when we know so many churches are still struggling, we are truly grateful to God for both the calm and the growth!

We are grateful for all of God's blessing and for all He has done, in us and through us. As we move forward, 'we look to the Lord and His strength, seeking His face always (1 Chronicles 16:11).

Sunday worship and prayer

This year is the first year since Covid where we've had all in-person services and it's been on a Sunday morning when many of the blessings of the year have been seen – we've had 5 baptisms during the year (after having none since 2015), we have seen further increases in numbers on a Sunday morning and ongoing corresponding growth within our Junior Church. It's been great to restart Breakfast Church, the last aspect of church life to return following Covid.

It was also good to have Dan Brown minister amongst us over this last year following our advertising for a one-year part time appointment. He worked diligently and faithfully in different areas of church life, particularly developing and growing our children and young people. We are grateful for his ministry amongst us.

Our Christmas services saw some changes in numbers, most noticeably that the Christmas Eve Carols by Candlelight service wasn't so well attended as previous years and our lunchtime carol service only saw a modest increase. Pre Covid, the lunchtime service attracted office workers so it may be that more workers will be working from home going forward so numbers at this service will take a while to build back up. It was our Christmas Day service this year which was the best attended. Our average attendance over the year was 74, an increase of almost 30% from last year's attendance; with the best attended service being our Easter Day Baptism, with 139 folk coming along. All of our baptism services have seen good attendance. During the year, it has been good to offer an Exploring Faith course and to establish a new housegroup.

In terms of Sunday worship, whilst we have a projector and screen on one side of the church, we were able to purchase a new TV screen to mount on the wall for the other side of the church. Not only does this make it easier for people to see words when singing, it is a sharper picture with better colours so it has definitely enhanced our worship. This is particularly so for visuals, videos and when we projected the baptisms onto the screens. We are also grateful for a sizeable donation from one of our members to enable us to purchase a newer computer, to run the software for Sunday worship.

Our sermon series this year started with '10 questions Jesus asked', and continued with our Advent series around peace, hope, love and joy; 3 images of the Church in the New Testament, Growing in Confidence, and Ephesians, with our summer series reflecting on meaningful bible verses chosen by members of the congregation. We've just started a series looking at faithfulness and the Old Testament character of Samuel.

As at 30th September 2023, HBC had 73 members, together with others who regularly attend the church. We have had the joy of welcoming 3 new members but sadly, one member of our congregation, Judith Ratcliffe died during the year. It was great to welcome so many family and friends of the 2 children we dedicated this year. We continue to see increased cultural diversity, which has enriched the fellowship and once again we have been blessed to welcome guest speakers over the year – Roy Searle, Nike Adebajo, Alex Harris, and Steve Allen. We have come together over shared lunches, (one of which included a beautiful array of African dishes), the Coronation weekend, when we had a special service and community BBQ and the Praise & Prayer evening organised and led by two of our young people. We are again hugely grateful for all that people contribute in different ways to the life of our church.

Involvement in wider Baptist life

We continue to be involved with the Yorkshire Baptist Association (YBA) through the work of our minister, Rev. Ann Chesworth who is employed part time as the Association's Legal and Trust Officer, and through her ongoing involvement with other Association and Baptist Union initiatives.

Our minister, and two of our deacons benefitted from attending the YBA conference in Huddersfield this year.

Working together with churches in Harrogate

Sadly, a decision was taken during the year to discontinue Churches Together in Harrogate, mainly due to a lack of people to undertake key roles. We are grateful for all that has been achieved by CTH over the years. Our minister still continues to be part of the planning team for Harrogate School of Theology and Mission and has also started to attend the Harrogate Leaders Breakfasts. It was good to recommence joint services with the other Avenue churches between Christmas and New Year and for our Good Friday service.

The Church Building

David Abel stepped back as Building Maintenance Manager during the year. We are hugely indebted to David for almost 30 years of faithful service and many hundreds of hours spent keeping our building so well maintained – he leaves very big boots to fill!

During the autumn, we benefited from working with a group of master architecture students as part of the Yorkshire Baptist Association's Baptists Building Community initiative. Not only did they provide us with a high-level understanding of our town and the community around us, but they also provided us with some creative ideas and outlines about how we might develop our building for greater community use in the future.

Albeit with different groups, rental of our hall picked up this year and we now have a range of groups using our building during the week, which is great not only for the income but also

because it's good for our building to be used to support wider community work. But one of the biggest challenges without question this year has been extortionate gas and electricity costs. This led to us worshipping in the hall for January and February, which people adapted to well and many actually enjoyed. It also meant we were able to take our coats off for worship in winter months – unheard of in HBC! This is something we will probably repeat next year, particularly as gas prices remain high.

Children and youth work

As mentioned above, our years of praying for more children and young people has been answered as we have seen an increase in the number coming along on a Sunday and engaging in the week. Whilst our Messy Church services served us well during and emerging from lockdown, a move back to our monthly Breakfast Church meant that we decided to discontinue our Messy Church Sundays.

Renew HG1

We started our Renew HG1 Monday morning wellbeing space in September 2022, supporting our community as we emerged out of lockdown. Zoe Bishop was appointed as our Communications & Partnerships Co-Ordinator in February 2022 as and has done a fantastic job at enabling the sessions to flourish, attracting new people, and making good connections in the wider community. Attendance at the Renew HG1 Open Day in May was particularly encouraging, with a steady stream of visitors throughout the day. Our Renew space has become an important part of our church life and a great means of reaching out to the wider community to bring hope and share the love of Jesus.

Some of our Renew team undertook some free mental health first aid training during the year.

Pastoral Care and fellowship

Being able to physically connect again, whether pastoral visits (particularly those in care homes) and being able to recommence our after Sunday service fellowship over tea and coffee has been one of the highlights of this year – there is nothing like being able to see people face to face and it enables those who are housebound and in care homes to remember that they are still a valuable part of our fellowship.

Our monthly Connection group continues to be a popular place for people to meet over homemade cake and tea. Hopefully it will continue to flourish over the coming year.

The HBC WhatsApp group was introduced as a way to keep people together during lockdown but it has proved to be a great way to encourage and support people that we have kept it in place and adding new people to the group along the way.

House-groups & Prayer

It's also been good for our housegroups to start up again, meeting in homes for bible study, prayer and sharing. They continue to be an important part of our fellowship and those who attend benefit greatly. The youth cell group continues and was developed by Dan; it engaged 5 YP, meeting weekly at the manse for bible study and a meal.

Despite the weather not being great, we managed a prayer walk in July around the town praying for various aspects of our wider community and finishing with refreshments at the manse. We also enjoyed an interactive prayer day in September at the home of a couple in the church who live in one of the villages outside Ripon. It was been good to discover new and creative ways of praying together and we want to expand this in the year ahead.

Leadership

It was great to welcome 3 new deacons to the leadership team as Kathy Lewis and Nigel Lister stood down after faithfully serving with the leaders especially throughout Covid. The new team has gelled together really well, and done a great job at navigating the ups and downs of church life. It was also good that Liz Getgood was elected as Church Secretary from October this year. Once again, a big thank you to our leaders for all their hard work and wisdom in guiding the church, under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit.

Mission and Evangelism

We have been able to undertake various mission support during the year including our Advent appeal together with other Harrogate churches providing hot water bottles and flasks for the homeless and those using foodbanks; we undertook a special collection to support our brothers and sisters in Ukraine at the start of the war and our lent appeal supported those impacted by the earthquake in Turkey via Samaritan's Purse. Once again, we have tithed to both Home Mission and BMS World Mission.

The Future

It's been helpful part way through this year to set some targets to focus on for 2023 and 2024. There are 7 in all, as follows:

- a priority of prayer;
- the appointment of a part-time children and young people's worker. To date, we are struggling to find someone to undertake the role and this remains a significant prayer focus as we move forward;
- paid building maintenance/development co-ordinator;
- definitive discipleship focus;
- explore the possibility of a regular meet up for those attending HBC from different cultural backgrounds;
- significant financial review including the appointment of a new treasurer and increase of the financial team;
- Renew HG1 YP space. Given the impact of our Renew HG1 space, we have received some external funding to pilot a similar space for young people. Working on a referral basis and partnering with schools and other youth mental health organisations, we are grateful for the doors that God has already opened, including provision of a great team and trust that we will begin to see some referrals soon for this potentially exciting new project.

Volunteers

We are always grateful for the way that people support the ministry and mission of the church, using their gifts in all sorts of different ways. It has been a joy to journey together, serving and encouraging each other and seeing God at work. As a leadership team, we are so grateful once again for our church family.

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of deacons is set out in the Church Constitution. At the church, the membership of the Charity Trustees consists of our minister and deacons elected by members of the church at our AGM. The Charity Trustees are responsible for making recommendations to the church but ultimately, it is the decision of the church meeting which makes decisions on all matters.

The Charity Trustees met 11 times during the year. Given the wide responsibilities within the church, others deal with particular aspects of church life but all are ultimately responsible to the Charity Trustees.

Administration information

Harrogate Baptist Church is situated in Harrogate and is part of the Yorkshire Baptist Association and the Baptist Union of Great Britain. The correspondence address is Harrogate Baptist Church, Victoria Avenue, Harrogate HG1 5AL.

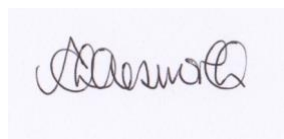
The church is registered as a charity, 1140798.

Charity Trustees who served during the year are:

Minister:	Rev. Ann Chesworth
Church Secretary:	Mrs Liz Getgood
Treasurer:	Mrs Lindsay Lansdall

Deacon:	Mr Chris Bishop
Deacon:	Mrs Akufuna Hicks
Deacon:	Mrs Ann Kayes
Deacon:	Mrs Sherry Humberstone
Deacon:	Mrs Liz Turner

Approved by the Charity Trustees on Wednesday 3rd July 2024 and signed on their behalf by the Rev. Ann Chesworth.



Rev. Ann Chesworth

Harrogate Baptist Church

Financial statements for the year ending 30th September 2023

Basis of preparation

As the annual church income is less than £250,000 the financial statements have been prepared on a cash basis and in accordance with s133 Charities Act 2011.

The majority of the church transactions are recorded in the general bank account, though there is also in use other accounts, in which 'Restricted Funds' and 'Designated funds' are normally held and recorded. Restricted funds refer to those funds which cannot be used for general purposes and relate to transactions which are for a specific purpose; 'Designated funds' refer to those transactions which may be pledged for a specific church activity though the church is at liberty to apply them for its general purposes, if it so determines.

Summary report

A detailed analysis is provided, as attached. In summary, the overall income for the year was £72,726.21 (£69,400.13 for 2022) and total expenditure for the year was £87,234.68 (£67,444.07 for 2022). There was a small increase in giving, we closed our CCLA funds in this financial year which provided further funds, our interest rates are yielding better returns and room hire has increased to almost £7500. But utility and insurance costs remain stubbornly high, and we had the additional planned expenditure of a 2nd worker costing just over £10,000. We also had some capital expenditure of installing a screen in the sanctuary, a new microphone and computer. We were able to maintain mission giving.

For the year ending 30th September 2023, overall expenditure exceeded income by £14,508.47 (£1,956.06 surplus for 2022).

Gift aided tax relief monies from HMRC totalled £8277.25.

The church is the beneficial owner (subject to the relevant trusts) of the following assets, the legal title to which is held by the church's custodian trustee The Yorkshire Baptist Association:

- Church premises at Victoria Avenue, Harrogate valued in the accounts at £9000 based on a cost value
- Church manse valued in the accounts at £5150 based on a cost value.

Pension debt

In June 2022, the Baptist Pension Scheme signed an agreement with the insurance company Just Group ("Just") to secure DB Plan members' pension benefits. Just are now providing financial backing for all pensions provided through the Scheme's DB Plan and the Scheme no longer has a shortfall. Recovery contributions reduced to £1 per month from August 2022.

Approval by the Church Trustees

We approve the accounts held on behalf of Harrogate Baptist Church


..... Treasurer 25/7/24 Date
Lindsay Lansdall


..... Trustee 30/7/24 Date
Nigel Lister

Report of the Independent Examiner to the Trustees of Harrogate Baptist Church
On the accounts for the year ended 30 September 2023

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Basis of Independent Examiner's statement

An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the church and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

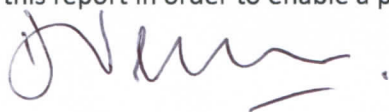
Independent Examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. The accounts do not accord with those records.

In carrying out my examination I noted a lapse in payroll processes, where pension contributions have not been put through correctly. You have reviewed this and will ensure that this is amended going forward and will consider how to deal with the historic consequences of the lapse identified. I am satisfied however that there have been no underpayments to the BU Pension Scheme, and also that HMRC have not been underpaid.

I confirm there are no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Signed:

Date: 31 July 2024

Name: David Nelson

Address: 4 Station View, Church Fenton, Tadcaster, North Yorkshire. LS24 9QY

Income and Expenditure v previous full year

Harrogate Baptist Church

For the year ended 30 September 2023

Cash Basis

	2023	2022
General Fund		
Income		
1. Standing Orders	36,056.22	33,864.00
2. Loose Cash and Cheques	5,166.12	4,098.60
3. Tax Refunds (Gift Aid and VAT)	8,277.25	9,373.42
4. Use Of Rooms	7,458.17	4,816.00
5. Other Donations	3,070.00	4,421.20
6. YBA	11,100.96	12,306.77
7 Grants	-	405.00
8. Interest	1,597.49	115.14
Total Income	72,726.21	69,400.13
Expenditure		
9. Ministry		
Employer's pension deficit costs	12.00	3,354.86
Manse council tax	1,951.37	1,878.61
Manse insurance	395.08	359.84
Manse water rates	192.51	178.54
Minister NIC	2,235.59	1,914.62
Minister PAYE	2,369.20	1,509.94
Minister pension	6,067.44	5,601.12
Minister stipend	21,140.01	19,398.62
Total 9. Ministry	34,363.20	34,196.15
9a. Assistant Minister Costs	10,195.94	435.00
10. Church Allocations/Mission		
BMS donations - by church monthly	3,000.00	3,000.00
HMF donations - by church monthly	3,000.00	2,500.00
Home Mission Fund	-	500.00
Other donations	50.00	500.00
Local mission donations	108.53	-
Total 10. Church Allocations/Mission	6,158.53	6,500.00
Premises maintenance		
11a. Gas	12,635.91	7,937.88
11b. Electricity	2,359.99	610.14
11c. Other Maintenance		
Cleaner's PAYE	106.80	26.20
Cleaner's wages	3,035.92	2,867.56
Cleaning materials	155.66	31.56
Fabric day to day work	1,575.16	4,068.93
Fabric major renewals	-	2,169.99

	2023	2022
Insurance - church	4,723.91	3,921.67
12. Local Church Costs and Admin		
Breakfast church	348.62	274.48
Miscellaneous	1,278.30	-
Music and Audio (General)	5,011.05	842.98
Printing and stationery	70.48	119.60
Renew (adult) expenses	2,616.85	1,795.20
Seasonal Service Expenses	114.47	60.00
Software subscriptions	45.00	35.00
Subscription - church membership	355.93	357.35
Sunday service expenses	181.00	-
Waste & recycling	381.45	251.65
Water rates - church	620.22	291.65
Website	741.29	651.08
Youth group	159.00	-
Total 12. Local Church Costs and Admin	11,923.66	4,678.99
Total Expenditure	87,234.68	67,444.07
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(14,508.47)	1,956.06
Restricted Funds		
BMS Birthday Scheme		
BMS Birthday Scheme donations rcvd	500.00	287.00
BMS Birthday Scheme monies paid away	(500.00)	(287.00)
Total BMS Birthday Scheme	-	-
Renew Youth Project		
Renew Youth Project income - restricted	7,498.00	-
Renew Youth Project expenditure - restricted	(1,947.20)	-
Total Renew Youth Project	5,550.80	-
Income		
Advent appeal	-	(374.05)
Other appeals	-	(496.00)
Total Income	-	(870.05)
Expenditure		
BMS other donations	-	1,000.00
Total Expenditure	-	1,000.00

Balance Sheet

Harrogate Baptist Church

As at 30 September 2023

Cash Basis

	30 SEPT 2023	30 SEPT 2022
Fixed Assets		
Tangible Assets		
Investments	-	19
Manse (historic cost)	5,150	5,150
Church Building (historic cost)	9,000	9,000
Total Tangible Assets	14,150	14,169
Total Fixed Assets	14,150	14,169
Current Assets		
Cash at bank and in hand		
CCLA - General Fund - Closed	-	523
CCLA - Legacies Fund - Closed	-	882
CCLA - Music Fund - Closed	-	3,287
Harrogate Baptist Church Building Fund	5,621	45,575
Yorkshire Bank Harrogate Current Account	30,947	81,607
BUC Deposit Account	41,368	-
Skipton Building Society Deposit Account	45,000	-
Total Cash at bank and in hand	122,936	131,874
Total Current Assets	122,936	131,874
Net Current Assets (Liabilities)	122,936	131,874
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	137,086	146,043
Net Assets	137,086	146,043
Capital and Reserves		
Unrestricted Funds		
General Funds	84,437	96,335
Designated Funds		
Music Fund - Designated	-	1,729
Legacies Fund - Designated	-	882
Total Designated Funds	-	2,611
Total Unrestricted Funds	84,437	98,946
Restricted Funds		
Building Fund - Restricted	47,097	47,097
Renew Youth Project - Restricted	5,551	-
Total Restricted Funds	52,648	47,097
Total Capital and Reserves	137,086	146,043