

South-West Cumbria United Area Trustees' Annual Report (September 2020 – August 2021)

If 2019-20 was 'a year of two halves' (pre-Covid / Covid, normal life / lockdown life), 2020 – 21 has been far more fragmented. Some congregations were very happy to return to church in September 2020, but it wasn't long before we were back at home on a Sunday morning due to the 'circuit breaker' lockdown. Services started again in December, but we were plunged into a longer lockdown by the end of the month and didn't escape until early April. While some had the blessing of celebrating Christmas in church, by Easter most congregations – if not all members – were back. Throughout it all, we have been sustained by the home worship sheets, the United Area letters and the various online worship and prayer opportunities provided by our ministers and lay preachers, along with the newsletters, email and phone contacts within our own church communities. In many ways, it feels as though we have drawn closer.

Staffing has been a major theme throughout the year. In preparation for Jenet's retirement, the Stationing Committee submitted a profile of the United Area for the Methodist Stationing process in September, only for a candidate for the URC's 'opportunity for ministry' finally to present themselves! It was obvious that there could be no stationing visits this year and that all meetings with candidates would have to take place over Zoom, something that was challenging for them and for us. While it became clear that the URC candidate could not fulfil our needs, our meetings with Rev Dr Helen Hooley in November went extremely well, culminating in her acceptance of our invitation to become our Superintendent. Having happily filled one vacancy, another emerged in January with Zena's decision to curtail here and seek an appointment in the south closer to her family. As stationing was not a feasible option, a more creative solution was sought. It took some time to put together what will hopefully be a successful plan in which we draw on the considerable experience of two Methodist colleagues, as well as that of an ecumenical partner. Our old friend Rev David Edmondson has kindly agreed to return to look after Dalton and Askam and to contribute to the preaching plan, while Rev Les Hann will join us on one day a week in Millom, plus preaching commitments. Les is well known across the District and has continued to preach post-retirement and to serve as an agricultural chaplain. Our Anglican colleague, Rev Stephen Tudway, with whom we are already working on the Broughton project, has agreed to provide pastoral care to the folk at Kirkby, and he is looking forward to developing new ecumenical activities.

Sophie, with her contract as Families and Community Worker coming to an end, decided to candidate for presbyteral ministry alongside Hayley Edmondson. Although ultimately Sophie wasn't successful, she has moved on to an interesting lay post in Kent; whereas Hayley begins her ministerial training in Birmingham this September on the basis of 'extremely limited availability for stationing'. In the meantime, the URC still hopes to be able to station a minister in South-West Cumbria in the future. To support our staff, the Trustees appointed an administrative assistant in August, initially on a very part-time basis, though the role may be expanded. Jen Cox, who already has experience of this type of work, will start in September, with one of her first tasks being the creation of the next preaching plan. Tim, our final staff member, has worked tirelessly throughout the year. Despite the charity shop being closed during the lockdowns, he managed to do an impressive amount of trading online, while helping Sophie with the Hartington Street Hub. He also started a very successful fruit and veg delivery service based at Trinity Church Centre, initially to help people who couldn't go out shopping because they were shielding, but which now continues to provide high quality produce to a growing number of people. Tim's role became officially full-time in November, reflecting all he contributes at the shop and elsewhere. *Let us hold all our staff members in our prayers as they start the new church year.*

With regards to property, it was again mainly about manses. Following the successful sale of the property on Park Drive last year, it was agreed to sell the Millom manse. After many viewings, a mini bidding war culminated in a surprisingly high price ... which, following the surveyor's report, dropped unsurprisingly to a figure nearer to, but still above, the asking price. The completion of the sale dragged on rather longer than expected and again our thanks go to Lynne Pearce for her patience and diligence in dealing with the estate agent, surveyor and solicitor. The other manse which received attention this year was Carlton Avenue, to get it ready for the arrival of Helen and her husband David. It's always quite a challenge to complete necessary work between the departure of one minister and the arrival of their

successor, so our thanks go to Charlie Mills for managing it all so punctually. After Zena's departure, the URC plans to sell the Dalton manse, with the idea of purchasing a new property should a URC presbyter come to the United Area, thus avoiding the IT and broadband problems faced by Zena.

As the Covid situation lasted longer than initially thought, most of our churches have felt the pinch as income from collections and lettings has been severely depleted, with some having to break into their reserves to pay the bills. Hopefully, the financial situation will now start to improve. Members seem keen to restart many of the abandoned activities and invite outside users back into our buildings and, now that we know how to keep ourselves safe and are 'double jabbed', September could herald the return of fellowship groups, coffee mornings and other pleasurable activities, albeit in a moderated format. On the positive side financially, the sale of manses has given the United Area funds to use for mission in the future.

The year culminated in three special services: two farewells and a welcome. On 3rd July, over 50 of us met at Trinity to thank Jennet (and Neill!) and to wish them a happy retirement in Yorkshire; then on 25th July, over 60 celebrated Zena's time with us at Beacon Hill. To make them possible and keep everyone safe, both events were regimented to a degree unheard of in previous years: masks on, distancing, sanitising, designated seating, food only prepared in-house. No communal singing was allowed for Jennet, but how we enjoyed the thrill of sitting down for tea and cake with a hall full of other people! At Zena's service, the joy was finally being allowed to sing again, which we did with gusto. The doors were all open on that very hot weekend and the beautiful singing was carried outside and remarked upon later by neighbours who'd been in their garden. Helen's arrival, along with David's return, was celebrated on 29th August by over 70 people, including the Mayor and Mayoress of Barrow, the Chair of District and a range of ecumenical partners, and seemed to herald the start of a new era with the potential for exciting and interesting possibilities.

What might they be? As Trustees we have, for example, had conversations this year about what we might wish to carry forward from the alternative ways to worship introduced over the last year and about how we might develop outreach opportunities at the charity shop. We are very open to finding better ways to meet the needs of our members, as well as becoming more involved in cross-denominational working and developing new missional opportunities. Potentially, some changes may be prompted by external sources, with discussions about possible boundary changes across the 'southern belt' of the Cumbria District. Similarly, individual congregations will want to consider how they envisage the future. Even if that conversation is prompted by worries about falling numbers and finances, we have learned over the past 18 months of Covid that we don't just need to cling to the ways of the past but can step out boldly and embrace new things. With this in mind, let's finish with some verses from one of the series of readings from the Iona Community used at Zena's farewell service. This reflection is called '*A Temple Not Made With Hands*' and the second and fifth verses are as follows:

Lord Jesus, you are before us – directing. We believe it.
That is what gives us courage to go on.
New challenges already beckon and again we sometimes dither.
But it is you that directs.
It is you that beckons.
So we dedicate ourselves – and we bless you ...

We are your temple not made with hands.
We are your body.
If every wall should crumble and every church decay,
We are your habitation.
Nearer are you than breathing, closer than hands and feet.
Ours are the eyes with which you, in mystery,
Look out in compassion on the world.
Amen

THE METHODIST CHURCH STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS

South West Cumbria United Area	Circuit
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**FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 AUGUST 2021**

Cumbria	District	Circuit no	09/16
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Registered Charity - Charity Registration number

1141404

If not a registered charity **Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs Gift Aid number**

(The HMRC number is equivalent to a registered charity number in terms of evidence of charitable status and may be used to give to donors or grant funders wishing to see evidence of the organisation's charitable status. Methodist charities in England and Wales that are not registered charities are excepted from registration under Statutory Instrument 2014 No.242)

Ministers:

Rev Jennet McLeod
Rev Zena Smith

Circuit Stewards:

Lynne Pearce	Kathryn Aldred
Janet Ladds	Karen Edmondson
Charlie Mills	

Treasurer:

Lynne Pearce

SECTION A		Un - restricted Funds	Circuit Model Trust Fund	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
	Note	£	£	£	£	£
a1	RECEIPTS					
a2	Assessment/Share	119,303			119,303	110,938
a3	Capital receipts		223,898		223,898	223,703
a4	Bank and CFB interest and Investment income	128	599		727	726
a5	Grants	11,175		2,778	13,952	18,000
a6	Other receipts	24,732			24,732	23,287
a7	TOTAL RECEIPTS	155,338	224,496	2,778	382,612 (a8)	376,654

SECTION B		Un - restricted Funds	Circuit Model Trust Fund	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
		£	£	£	£	£
b1	PAYMENTS					
b2	Stipends, salaries, NIC, Pension and travel costs	104,020		2,778	106,798	113,178
b3	Manse Costs	15,779			15,779	12,226
b4	Administration etc	4,711	335		5,045	5,012
b5	District Assessment	29,016	9,218		38,234	30,991
b6	Grants & donations					1,570
b7						
b8	Other payments	18,680	69,539		88,219	101,591
b9	TOTAL PAYMENTS	172,205	79,092	2,778	254,075 (b9)	264,568

SECTION C		Un - restricted Funds	Circuit Model Trust Fund	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
		£	£	£	£	£
c1	NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR	(a7-b9)	(16,867)	145,404	(0)	128,537
c2	Total funds brought forward from last year	172,003	165,981		337,984 (c6)	229,224
c3	Sub total	(c1+c2)	155,136	311,385	(0)	341,311
c4	Transfers and adjustments					(3,327)
c5	TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR	(c3+c4)	155,136	311,385	(0)	337,984 (c8)

SECTION D		Un - restricted Funds	Circuit Model Trust Fund	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
		£	£	£	£	£
d	FOR INFORMATION ONLY: MONEY RECEIVED AND PASSED ON TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS					
	(these amounts should not be included in total receipts/payments above)					
d1	Balance brought forward from last year					
d2	Offerings/Gifts - received for external organisations				11,428	9,921
d3	Offerings/Gifts - passed to external organisations				9,383	9,921
d4	BALANCE STILL TO BE PAID (d1 + d2 - d3)				2,046	

SUMMARY OF CIRCUIT ACCOUNTS AND INTERNAL ORGANISATION REPORTING TO THE CIRCUIT MEETING

SECTION E

Please follow the Guidance Notes to complete this page

Summary of the Circuit accounts for the year ended 31 August 2021 and Internal Organisations reporting to the Circuit Meeting. Note that the funds of an Internal Organisation would normally be Restricted funds unless it could be clearly shown that they could be used for any Methodist purpose. This section must be completed to arrive at the gross receipts and payments totals of the Circuit. If gross income exceeds the Accruals threshold of £250,000, then the Accruals method of accounting AND A DIFFERENT FORM must be used to report the accounts (see Methodist website). Please refer to the guidance notes regarding transfers between the Circuit and connected Circuit Organisations.

INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS	Receipts	Payments	Net Receipts/ Payments	Adjustments	Opening balances	Closing balances
e1 Network						
e2						
e3						
e4						
e5						
e6						
e7						
e8 Sub total of Internal Organisations funds					(e11)	(e12)
e9 Circuit accounts (totals brought forward from page 2 - totals column)	382,612 (a8)	254,075 (b9)	128,537	(c7)	337,984 (c6)	466,521 (c8)
e10 TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CIRCUIT	382,612	254,075	128,537		337,984 (x)	466,521 (y)
Continue on a separate sheet if necessary and bring the totals forward	TOTAL RECEIPTS	TOTAL PAYMENTS				

SECTION F

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

CIRCUIT - CASH FUNDS HELD at 31 August 2021

	OPENING BALANCES	CLOSING BALANCES
f1 Cash in hand		
f2 Bank Current Account	60,247	32,247
f3 Bank Deposit Account		
f4 Central Finance Board	96,756	107,889
f5 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes	165,981	311,385
f6 Other funds	15,000	15,000
f7 SUB TOTAL	337,984 (c6)	466,521 (c8)
f8 Total funds held by Internal Organisations (the closing balance totals above) (e12)	(e11)	(e12)
f9 TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CIRCUIT	337,984 (x)	466,521 (y)

SECTION G

OTHER ASSETS and LIABILITIES

	At 1 September 2020	At 31 August 2021
g1 Investments (include Endowments)	1,420	1,681
g2 Land and Buildings (see notes re Insurance value)	677,955	315,348
g3 Other Assets	11,713	11,713
g4 Loan(s) - show amount outstanding at year end		
g5 Other Liabilities		

f4 Include only Funds held at the Central Finance Board

f5 Include only CFB Funds held at Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes

g1 Include any other investments (not the cash element of TMCP trust accounts this is inserted in line f5)

DECLARATIONS

Treasurer

I confirm that I have prepared the accounts from the records of the Circuit and that they include all funds under the control of the Circuit

Signature of Treasurer

Lfe

Date

24/09/2021

Name

Lynne Pearce MAAT

Address

60 Steel Street, Askam-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA16 7BP

Presentation to the *Circuit Meeting for approval.

I confirm that the Accounts have been presented to the Circuit Meeting on

29/09/2021

and were approved.

Signature of the Chair of the meeting

H Hooley

Name of the Chair of the meeting

Rev Dr Helen Hooley

Date

29/09/2021

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

South West Cumbria United Area

Circuit

This Report is on the Circuit Accounts for the year ended 31st August

2021

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider it is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under Section 145 of the Charities Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act), and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity 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


In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act;
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

(3) I have not obtained independent verification of all investments with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes ("TMCP") or held in other Trusts, Bank balances and Funds at the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church ("CFB"), which are individually in excess of £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) at the balance sheet date.

Name	Mr David A Hollis
Signature	
Relevant Professional qualification or body	FMAAT
Address	119 Birchwood Drive, Ulverston, Cumbria, LA12 9NY
Date	8th February 2022