

CHRISTCHURCH (METHODIST/UNITED REFORMED) CHURCH

England & Wales · Charity number 1142830

Details

Other names	CHRISTCHURCH HITCHIN
Status	Registered
Legal form	Other
Registered	2011-07-11
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address Christchurch Methodist United
Reformed Church
Bedford Road
Hitchin
Hertfordshire
SG5 1HF

Phone 01462451720

Email info@christchurchhitchin.org.uk

Website www.christchurchhitchin.org.uk

Activities

Objects: THE PURPOSE OF THE CHARITY IS TO ADVANCE THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IN THE AREA OF BENEFIT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF THE PARTICIPATING CHURCHES.

Activities: The church's main activities include public worship, teaching and discipleship, work with children and young people, mission and outreach, pastoral work, the provision of facilities with a Christian ethos for the local community, and support of other charities. Many activities are undertaken jointly with other churches in the town and area.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** Religious Activities, Other Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, Other Defined Groups, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Hertfordshire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-08-31	£199,616	£224,660	-	-
2024-08-31	£215,458	£222,054	-	-
2023-08-31	£195,109	£197,984	-	-
2022-08-31	£205,028	£194,580	-	-
2021-08-31	£168,917	£165,736	-	-
2020-08-31	£246,948	£262,519	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Rev Jacob Donkoh	Chair	2024-09-01
Angela Griggs		2020-11-15
Marion Joyce Towers		2023-11-26
Michael Rickard		2025-09-18
Philippa Arnold		2023-04-18
Stephen Anthony Cook		2023-11-26

CHRISTCHURCH (METHODIST/UNITED REFORMED) CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1142830

Accounts

CHRISTCHURCH HITCHIN

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

AND

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY

YEAR TO 31 AUGUST 2025

Trustees report for the year ended 31st August 2025

Context

A team of Trustees have the duty and responsibility to report on the activities of the Charity that is Christchurch (Methodist and United Reformed) Church. The team consists of the Minister and 8 elected from and by the church membership, in accordance with the terms of the constitution. Christchurch Hitchin is located at Bedford Road, Hitchin, SG5 1HF. It is a registered charity, no. 1142830, and its constitution was formally updated in January 2019.

Those serving for some, or all of the year were as follows:

Paul Arnold, Angela Griggs, Revd. Jacob Donkoh, Philippa Arnold, Marion Towers, Matthew Rossall, Steve Cook, Nikki Williams

Retired during the year:

None

Elected during the year:

None

The Trustees, normally called the Trustee Oversight Group, meet monthly, and have overall responsibility for all aspects of Church Life.

Objectives and Activities

The Trustees are committed to developing the work of the charity, to strengthening the discipleship of its members and to supporting and encouraging others to develop their faith and make a commitment as a follower of Christ.

The Mission Statement of the Church is: ***Led by the Spirit – Working in the Community – Bringing people to Christ.***

The "Growing Together" vision continues to be used to review our activities, in addition to the statement 'Real Life, Real Love, Real You' which was informally adopted in January 2020 as a way of thinking about all that we do as a charity.

The Purpose of the Charity, as set out in the Christchurch constitution, is to advance the Christian faith in the Area of Benefit in accordance with the principles and practices of the Methodist and United Reformed Churches.

The Trustees have a duty under the constitution to give the necessary direction to achieve its Purpose, and to "engage in a range of activities, either on its own or with others, including (but not restricted to):

- the celebration of public worship.
- the teaching of the Christian faith.
- mission and evangelism.
- pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved.
- the provision of facilities with a Christian ethos for the local community, including (but not restricted to) the elderly, the young and other groups with special needs; and
- the support of other charities in the UK and overseas

An introduction

Christchurch is a large congregation and as of 31 August 2025 there were 187 members. The average attendance at all services on a Sunday was 105, (consisting of 90 adults and 15 under 18's) as measured during the month of October 2024, in accordance with the procedures of the Methodist church.

Christchurch is a place where everyone is welcome. The Everyone Welcome Group is constantly reviewing what we have in place to ensure the church does not overlook the needs of anyone, but everyone would feel loved and experiences the love of God through the shared experiences of the church community. We celebrate our diversity which unites us a people of God and as a church community. The church community has not rested on its oars to ensure Christchurch is a safe space for both children and adults alike. Every aspect of church life is very important to us, as we seek to journey together in our faith journey.

We have lively worship every Sunday both in church and online through YouTube. We also have a lovely traditional service with holy communion on the first Sunday of every month at nine in the morning. We also have monthly worship services in Elmside Nursing Home on Tuesdays and Nightingale Road Day Centre on Thursdays. We do visit our elderly members who are at home and give them holy communion. Also, a variety of activities for children and adults take place in Christchurch building throughout the week. A team of dedicated and committed people work tirelessly behind the scenes, organising and ensuring these activities run successfully and within the church's guidelines. However, more hands are needed in various roles to help run the activities in the Church. Such supporting roles are intrinsic to the church's fruitful ministry

Growing Together towards God, who is Father, Son, and Spirit.

Our AGM in November 2024 brought consistency of trustees and we welcomed a new Methodist Minister to Christchurch.

In June 2025 we launched a Stewardship Campaign to encourage our congregation to reflect on supporting the church with their time and financial resources. This developed into a wider Renewal initiative over the summer, supported by a newly formed Renewal Team. Their focus has been on addressing our financial deficit and encouraging new volunteers to step into key leadership roles, including trustees. We are grateful for everyone who has responded — truly an answer to prayer.

Growing together in faith sharing.

We believe that prayer is vital to the life of the church. There has always been prayer in the church and in the Christchurch groups, but until last autumn there was no Christchurch Area to encourage, co-ordinate and facilitate prayer activities.

The first step was to arrange a monthly prayer gathering to listen to what God has to say to the church and to intercede for it. This is followed by prayer for God's wider mission activities.

In June a Prayer Day was held, giving people a quiet space and guided prayer activities to help them connect with God. Following on from the Prayer Day, there was a request for prayer activity to be left out in the church for anyone who wanted a focus for quiet prayer during the week. This now changes every month.

Growing together as a community centred in Jesus Christ.

The Everyone Welcome Steering Group began this year to help Christchurch get better at helping everyone who connects with us or walks through our doors feel welcome, comfortable and safe.

This year we have been using the lens of Radical Hospitality' from the 'Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations'.

We have a never-ending list of things that could be improved for all who use our rooms and building. For example, some modern wall art, and banners for outside to help those who drive or walk past or use the car park know who we are.

To be more welcoming to anyone with communication or social communication needs, we have continued to extend our Makaton signing abilities.

Growing together in loving and serving others.

Our work in Refresh on a Tuesday and then extending to Friday, providing a warm space for the community.

Over the last year we have, among other things: Responded to queries about our youth and children's work, and safeguarding; Considered our relationship with uniformed organisations.

Looked ahead to the next chapter of our church story – how we can together discern God's vision for us and prayerfully find solutions to shortfalls in volunteering and financial resources.

Worshiping Together

Over the past year, we have continued with our regular pattern of worship with a 9 a.m. communion service on the first Sunday of each month, and our weekly worship for all service at 10:30 a.m. All Age worship is usually held on the third Sunday of the month. There are occasional additional services throughout the year such as Good Friday, the memorial service on Remembrance Sunday and at Christmas time.

As a change to our regular singing of the Christchurch Blessing each week, we now include the signed Makaton Grace on the fourth Sunday, either live or in the form of a video if the Makaton team are not available.

In June, to support our renewal campaign, we had a successful series of themed services based on five practices of fruitful congregations which were led by teams of our worship leaders, minster and lay preachers which also led to a greater involvement of more people from our congregation helping to lead worship.

Passionate worship is one of the five practices – at the recent Church meeting, different ideas and suggestions about passionate worship were reviewed by the group and the top three as agreed by the meeting are listed below: -

1. Worship at Christchurch is team led, leading to a rich worship experience with multiple inputs
2. Christchurch offers an alternative worship experience specifically for families, including food, storytelling and song. Children are part of the leadership team.

3. Christchurch offers regular worship experience for those who prefer a more contemporary worship style, led by an in-house team of preachers and worship leaders.

Our talented musical team are looking at some new ideas at the moment; one is to introduce a number of preferred new songs that we can learn together as a congregation, and secondary, for some weeks, to have an extended time of worship where songs and prayers are linked together.

Teaching and Discipleship - headlines

- Main focus of teaching at Christchurch currently comes within our Sunday morning services and Junior Church sessions.
- Preachers follow the Lectionary.
- 'House Groups' for adults, involving approximately 100 people meeting weekly or fortnightly. These have continued in a variety of formats. Some have continued to meet on Zoom since the lifting of the pandemic restrictions and others are now meeting in person again.
- Lunchtime meditation group
- 'Christchurch men's breakfast', a valuable time of fellowship for men (mostly of the more mature age group) although open to all ages.

Youth and children's and families

Youth, children, and families continued to be a key part of our mission during the year. With an active 'Junior Church' for children aged from birth to 18, this work has been supported with a full-time Youth & Children's worker.

An overview is given below. (Activities provided are age/stage appropriate with any necessary adjustments made to ensure ALL are included).

Early Years: (Age 0-5)

- Christchurch Hitchin Baby and Toddler Group with 40 families on the register (average attendance 20 families)
- Crèche - for Sunday mornings

Primary: (Age 5-11)

- Our 'Jump Start' group for children aged 4-9 meets most Sundays during the main service for bible teaching, games and fun! We have a very lively group with 12 children that regularly attend.
- Holiday Club, which was ran jointly with Walsworth Road Baptist Church in July. There were 40 children attending over the three-days.

Secondary: (Age 11-16/18)

- F3 group for children aged 10-14 meets most Sundays during the main service for bible teaching, discussion and fun!
- Youth Hangout - , aimed at young people aged 11-16 goes from strength to strength. We are now getting around 18 children attending on a Friday night. The size of the group has resulted in a proposed room swap with the Friday night guides to accommodate the growing numbers. We have also continued to look for opportunities to host joint events with other churches

- Uniformed Organisations - Our Scout Group, and our Rainbows, Brownies, and Guides, are all sponsored by Christchurch under formal agreements with their respective Districts.

Outreach

Reach Out initiatives and support fall under two headings: Home and Overseas.

Home

- Refresh – is open two morning a week, providing the opportunity for anyone in the local community to meet in a relaxed environment over a cuppa and a biscuit or piece of cake.
- Meeting Needs monthly deliveries of furniture and other non-perishable goods to people in need.
- Daisychains, a support group for families of pre-school children with additional needs.
- Simpsons Alms houses.
- Wednesday evening Badminton Club
- Helping Herts Homeless for the Homeless and North Herts Sanctuary, for homeless young people, and Hitchin Food Bank.
- North Herts Circuit of the Methodist Church and the North Herts Group of United Reformed Churches – Christchurch plays an active role in these.

Overseas

- Prayer and financial commitment continued to be key features of our commitment to serving people overseas.
- We continued to respond throughout the year to emergency appeals as a result of either man-made or natural disasters.
- We are an Eco Church, and volunteers run several recycling initiatives.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding at Christchurch follows our own policy which builds upon the safeguarding policies and procedures of the Methodist Church. Our safeguarding group is responsible for ensuring that these policies are understood and implemented correctly by all members of the church and users of our premises. The Christchurch safeguarding team receive support from the district and national safeguarding teams of the Methodist Church. Last year we implemented the use of a standard form for risk assessments. These forms are required to be reviewed every year, and if necessary, updated.

Church Safeguarding Policy

Each year we review and update our church safeguarding policy and present it to be ratified at the church meeting.

Training

All our volunteers who work with vulnerable adults, children and young people are required to apply for a criminal record check (DBS). Once this is granted, they will then have training.

on a Foundation course. This introduces the concepts of good practice, how to recognise abusive behaviour and the steps to take when a concern is raised.

Property

Christchurch Finance and Property Committee

The committee has 10 members but has the option to co-opt other people for specific projects. The full Finance and Property committee meets about 4 times a year but has a Finance Wing and also a Property Wing which meet between full F&P meetings to move specific items forward where a smaller gathering is sometimes more efficient.

Annual Property tasks undertaken during the year

- Annual Returns completed, and any necessary work undertaken – Quinquennial, Methodist Property Return and Church Return Report.
- Normal maintenance checks carried out – Boiler servicing, Fire Alarm System/Extinguishers/Blanket Inspections and Testing, PAT testing, Organ and piano tuning, Regular window cleaning, Visual site inspections both interior and exterior, Sewer pit inspection and water meter reading if necessary, Water flush checks, Lighting, etc.
- Garden working parties organised as and when necessary.
- Defibrillator training for volunteers and regular maintenance of first aid boxes.
- Risk Assessment updated.

Other Property tasks undertaken during this year

In total for the year ended 31 August 2025, £48,033 was spent on equipment, maintenance and cleaning.

Accounts

The financial deficit in 2024-25 was **£25,044**. The Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet are set out below. The Trustees have also formulated Accounting Policies and a Reserves Policy and these are set out below:

Reserves policy

It is the Trustees' policy to maintain a balance in reserve which equates to 6 months of the assessments due to the Methodist and United Reformed Churches, and wages for the staff employed directly by Christchurch, plus potential employment termination costs and redundancy liabilities. In addition, provision has been made for capital projects expected to be carried out during the year.

Public benefit

The trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Approved at the Trustees Meeting held on 05 03 2026 and signed on behalf of the Trustees:

Angela Griggs
Church Secretary

Name of Church

Christchurch Hitchin

Church No

340515

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2025

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2024-25
		£	£	£	£	£
Income						
1 Offerings		104,780		5,574		110,354
2 Donations and Grants		5,614		1,263		6,877
3 Gift aid		28,108		1,207		29,315
4 Interest and investment income		10,334		904		11,238
5 Income from lettings		31,129		0		31,129
6 Internal organisations		7,267		0		7,267
7 Other charitable income		3,436		0		3,436
8 Total income		190,668	0	8,948	0	199,616
Expenditure						
9 Circuit and URC assessments		95,532				95,532
10 Grants and donations		2,424				2,424
10A Ministry, Worship and Teaching		1,534				1,534
11 Property maintenance		48,033				48,033
12 Insurance, utilities etc		20,598				20,598
13 Staff costs		10,839		32,452		43,291
14 Office expenses		8,904				8,904
15 Other expenditure		2,108		2,236		4,344
16 Internal organisations		0				0
17 Total charitable expenditure		189,972	0	34,688	0	224,660
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments						0
19 Gains/(losses) on investment properties						0
20 Net income/(expenditure)		696	0	-25,740	0	-25,044
21 Transfers between funds		-14,942		14,942		0
22 Other gains/(losses)						0
23 Net movement in funds		-14,246	0	-10,798	0	-25,044
24 Total funds brought forward		2,249,928	0	28,885		2,278,813
25 Total funds carried forward		2,235,682	0	18,087	0	2,253,769

Name of Church

Christchurch Hitchin

Church No. 340515

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2024

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2023-24
		£	£	£	£	£
Income						
1 Offerings		106,186		5,913		112,099
2 Donations and Grants		9,209		3,442		12,651
3 Gift aid		23,892		2,184		26,076
4 Interest and investment income		13,187		1,568		14,755
5 Income from lettings		35,406				35,406
6 Internal organisations		5,050		1,685		6,735
7 Other charitable income		7,626		110		7,736
8 Total income		200,556	0	14,902	0	215,458
Expenditure						
9 Circuit and URC assessments		91,089				91,089
10 Grants and donations		12,939				12,939
10A Ministry, Worship and Teaching		1,461				1,461
11 Property maintenance		33,007				33,007
12 Insurance, utilities etc		19,742				19,742
13 Staff costs		11,056		29,609		40,665
14 Office expenses		9,993				9,993
15 Other expenditure		6,318		4,001		10,319
16 Internal organisations		0		2,839		2,839
17 Total charitable expenditure		185,605	0	36,449	0	222,054
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments						0
19 Gains/(losses) on investment properties						0
20 Net income/(expenditure)		14,951	0	-21,547	0	-6,596
21 Transfers between funds		-8,564		8,564		0
22 Other gains/(losses)						0
23 Net movement in funds		6,387	0	-12,983	0	-6,596
24 Total funds brought forward		2,243,541	0	41,868		2,285,409
25 Total funds carried forward		2,249,928	0	28,885	0	2,278,813

Name of Church

Christchurch Hitchin

Church No

340515

Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2025

Notes to the Accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted) £	Designated Funds (Unrestricted) £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Totals 2025 £	Totals 2024 £
Fixed Assets						
Church building and other property	2,000,000	/	/	/	2,000,000	2,000,000
Investment properties		/			0	
Investments					0	
Total fixed assets	2,000,000	0	0	0	2,000,000	2,000,000
Current Assets						
Debtors and prepayments	20,266		525		20,791	10,942
Loans by the Churches					0	0
Investments with TMCP	138,951				138,951	171,763
Central Finance Board Deposits	66,426		17,561		83,986	95,081
Cash at Bank and in hand	17,708				17,708	9,289
Total current assets	243,351	0	18,085	0	261,436	287,075
Current liabilities						
Creditors (due in under 1 year)	7,668				7,668	8,262
Grants payable					0	
Total current liabilities	7,668	0	0	0	7,668	8,262
Net current assets/liabilities	235,682	0	18,085	0	253,768	278,813
Total assets less current liabilities	2,235,682	0	18,085	0	2,253,768	2,278,813
Long term liabilities						
(due after more than one year)						
Grants payable after 2019-20					0	0
Loans to the Church					0	0
Net assets	2,235,682	0	18,085	0	2,253,768	2,278,813
Funds of the Church						
General Fund (Unrestricted)	2,235,682				2,235,682	2,249,928
Designated Funds (Unrestricted)		0			0	0
Total Unrestricted Funds	2,235,682	0	0	0	2,235,682	2,249,928
Restricted Funds			18,085		18,085	28,885
Endowment Funds					0	
Total Funds	2,235,682	0	18,085	0	2,253,768	2,278,813

Notes to the accounts 2024-25

1. Accounting Policies

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charity have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) (effective 1 January 2015), Financial Reporting Standard 102 (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the accruals basis and historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain assets.

Christchurch Hitchin meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in Sterling (£)

Incoming Resources

Income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the Church becomes entitled to the resources, and the trustees are reasonably certain they will receive them; and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Resources Expended

Expense is recognised when a liability is incurred, or a constructive obligation arises, that results in the payment being unavoidable. Liabilities are recognised as soon as an outflow of economic benefit is considered more likely than not.

Funds

The funds held constitute:

General funds held for any purpose of the Church which are unrestricted

Restricted funds held for a narrower purpose

There are no endowment funds. Details of each material fund are disclosed in Note 10 of these accounts. Any funds may be represented by more than cash.

Grants

Grants made by the Church from its own funds are recognised in full at the time of agreement or when the Church accepts that there is a legal or operational obligation to make the payment.

Debtors

Debtors are measured on initial recognition at the settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the Charity. Subsequently they are measured at cash or other consideration expected to be received.

Creditors

Creditors are measured at the settlement amount less any trade discounts.

VAT

The Church is not VAT registered; all expenses are recognised gross, with no deduction for input VAT.

Tangible Fixed Assets

Tangible Fixed Assets are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £1,000. The freehold property is shown in the accounts at 2015 deemed cost, of which the land component is deemed to be £0.6m. No depreciation is provided on the building as the trustees consider the current residual fair value to be not less than its current value. The property has been reviewed for impairment.

Beneficial Interest

The Church has a beneficial interest in the proceeds from the sale of Priory Way (the former URC manse) and Queen Street (the former Congregational Church). The approximate value at 31 August 2025 of the relevant Trust Funds held by the URC was £462,156

2. Payment to Trustees

There were no payments made to Trustees for additional services provided to the Church by agreement with the Church Meeting. This excludes stipends and expenses relating to reimbursement for travel and computing costs

3. Fees for examination or audit of the accounts

	2025	2024
	£	£
Independent Examiner Fee for reporting on the accounts	720	690
Other fees (eg advice, accountancy services) paid the Independent Examiner	-	-

4. Paid Employees

No employees have been paid more than £60,000 pa.

Staff costs during the year were:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Gross wages, salaries and benefits in Kind	37,879	36,150
Employers National Insurance costs	3,327	2,478
Pension Costs	2,085	2,037
Total staff costs	43,291	40,665

Average number of full time equivalent employees in the year were: 2 2

5. Capital commitments and Contingent Liabilities

At the 31 August 2025, there are no capital commitments, and no contingent liabilities have been identified at that date.

6. Monies received and passed on to External Organisations

	2025	2024
	£	£
Balance brought forward	0	0
Offerings/gifts - received for external organisations	0	0
Offerings/gifts - passed to external organisations	0	0
Balance carried forward	0	0

7. Tangible Fixed Assets

£'000	Land	Buildings	Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment	Assets under construction	Total
Cost					
Opening balance 1 September 2024	600	1,200	200		2,000
Additions					0
Revaluations					0
Disposals					0
Transfers					0
Closing balance 31 August 2025	600	1,200	200		2,000
Accumulated Depreciation					
Opening balance 1 September 2024	0	0	0	0	0
Depreciation charge for the year					0
Revaluations					0
Disposals					0
Transfers					0
Closing balance 31 August 2025	0	0	0	0	0
Net book Value 1 September 2024	600	1,200	200		2,000
Net book Value 31 August 2025	600	1,200	200		2,000

The value of the Church building and the land on which it stands is believed to be considerably greater than the value shown. There is no depreciation on the building or fixtures, fittings or equipment as it is judged that this is immaterial. There were no indicators of impairment since the market value is considered to be greater than the book value.

8 Debtors

	2025	2024
	£	£
Debtors - Gift Aid	11,130	9,380
Other Debtors	9,660	1,561
	<u>20,791</u>	<u>10,942</u>

9. Creditors

	2025	2024
	£	£
Accruals	7,668	8,262
	<u>7,668</u>	<u>8,262</u>

10. Analysis of restricted funds 2024-25

Fund name	Opening balance	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers ex Main A/c	Closing balance	Purpose of fund	
Youth (incl. Messy Church)	13479	Offerings					
		Staff support grant Gift Aid 2023/24	5565	1493	17488	5715	Promotion of youth work
		Interest Gift Aid 2024/25	928				
Interest Gift Aid 2024/25	411	32452					
Junior Church	995	Offerings					
		Interest Gift Aid 2024/25	45			1040	
G. Milledge	5961	Donations Interest Gift Aid 2024/25				Assist young people working overseas	
		Donations Interest Gift Aid 2024/25	9				
Pastoral	1609	Donations Interest Gift Aid 2024/25				Pastoral work	
		Donations Interest Gift Aid 2024/25	271	744	744		
Manila Fund	2301	Donations Interest Gift Aid 2024/25				Support Manila church	
		Donations Interest Gift Aid 2024/25	104		2405		
Lunch Club	2817	Int'l Organisations	Expenditure		0		
Badminton Club	695	Int'l Organisations	Int'l Organisations	-2817	695		
Flower fund	244	Donations	Expenditure		244	Weekly Church flowers	
Donation – chairs	64	Donations	Expenditure		64	Memorial donation	
Donation – kitchen	720	Donations	Expenditure	-720	0	Memorial donation	
Fund adjustment	0				0		
Adjustments - for accruals and monies not yet transferred							
Gift Aid (2023-24) received Nov 24		Gift Aid		-772	772	0	
Gift Aid (2024-25) received Nov 25		Gift Aid		-525	-525	0	
Total	28,885		8,948	34,689	14,942	18,085	

Christchurch, Hitchin, an LEP in the North Hertfordshire Circuit No 34-15
Year ended 31 August 2025

Declarations

Treasurer

I confirm that these accrual – based accounts for the year ended 31 August 2025 have been prepared from the records of the Church and that they include all funds under the control of the Church Leadership Group, being the trustees of the Church.

Signed:

Michael Rickard

Date:

11/5/26

Name of Treasurer: MICHAEL RICKARD

Address of Treasurer: 28 MEADOW BANK, HITCHIN SG4 0HY

Presentation to the Trustees for approval

I confirm that the Trustees Annual Report, the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and the Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2025 were approved by the Trustees.

Signed:

Stephen A Cook

Date:

11/5/26

Name: STEPHEN A. COOK

Independent Examiner`s Report to the Trustees of Christchurch, Hitchin, a Methodist/URC LEP, for the year ended 31 August 2025.

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31st August 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of independent examiner`s report

As the charity's trustees, 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.

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 which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across 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:

Neil Harding

Date: 26-5-26

Name of Independent Examiner: Neil Harding BA FCA

Relevant Professional qualification or body: ICAEW

Address: Bradshaw Johnson
Croft Chambers
11 Bancroft
Hitchin
Herts
SG5 1JQ

CHRISTCHURCH (METHODIST/UNITED REFORMED) CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1142830

Accounts

CHRISTCHURCH HITCHIN

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

AND

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY

YEAR TO 31 AUGUST 2024

Trustees report for the year ended 31st August 2024

Context

A team of Trustees have the duty and responsibility to report on the activities of the Charity that is Christchurch (Methodist and United Reformed) Church. The team consists of the Minister and 8 elected from and by the church membership, in accordance with the terms of the constitution. Christchurch Hitchin is located at Bedford Road, Hitchin, SG5 1HF. It is a registered charity, no. 1142830, and its constitution was formally updated in January 2019.

Those serving for some, or all of the year were as follows:

Paul Arnold, David Box, Angela Griggs, Revd. Val Reid, Philippa Arnold, Marion Towers, Matthew Rossall, Stephen Cook, Nikki Williams, Janet Tackley

Retired during the year:

David Box, Janet Tackley

Elected during the year:

Marion Towers, Matthew Rossall, Stephen Cook, Nikki Williams

The Trustees, normally called the Trustee Oversight Group, meet monthly, and have overall responsibility for all aspects of Church Life.

Objectives and Activities

The Trustees are committed to developing the work of the charity, to strengthening the discipleship of its members and to supporting and encouraging others to develop their faith and make a commitment as a follower of Christ.

The Mission Statement of the Church is: ***Led by the Spirit – Working in the Community – Bringing people to Christ.***

The “Growing Together” vision continues to be used to review our activities, in addition to the statement ‘Real Life, Real Love, Real You’ which was informally adopted in January 2020 as a way of thinking about all that we do as a charity.

The Purpose of the Charity, as set out in the Christchurch constitution, is to advance the Christian faith in the Area of Benefit in accordance with the principles and practices of the Methodist and United Reformed Churches.

The Trustees have a duty under the constitution to give the necessary direction to achieve its Purpose, and to “engage in a range of activities, either on its own or with others, including (but not restricted to):

- the celebration of public worship.
- the teaching of the Christian faith.
- mission and evangelism.
- pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved.
- the provision of facilities with a Christian ethos for the local community, including (but not restricted to) the elderly, the young and other groups with special needs; and
- the support of other charities in the UK and overseas

An introduction

Christchurch is a large congregation and as of 31 August 2024 there were 195 members. The average attendance at all services on a Sunday was 105, (consisting of 90 adults and 15 under 18's) as measured during the month of October 2023, in accordance with the procedures of the Methodist church.

Christchurch is a place where everyone is welcome. The Everyone Welcome Group is constantly reviewing what we have in place to ensure the church does not overlook the needs of anyone, but everyone would feel loved and experiences the love of God through the shared experiences of the church community. We celebrate our diversity which unites us a people of God and as a church community. The church community has not rested on its oars to ensure Christchurch is a safe space for both children and adults alike. Every aspect of church life is very important to us, as we seek to journey together in our faith journey.

We have lively worship every Sunday both in church and online through YouTube. We also have a lovely traditional service with holy communion on the first Sunday of every month at nine in the morning. We also have monthly worship services in Elmside Nursing Home on Tuesdays and Nightingale Road Day Centre on Thursdays. We do visit our elderly members who are at home and give them holy communion. Also, a variety of activities for children and adults take place in Christchurch building throughout the week. A team of dedicated and committed people work tirelessly behind the scenes, organising and ensuring these activities run successfully and within the church's guidelines. However, more hands are needed in various roles to help run the activities in the Church. Such supporting roles are intrinsic to the church's fruitful ministry

Growing Together towards God, who is Father, Son, and Spirit.

Our AGM in November 2023 brought new trustees and we welcomed a new Circuit steward with responsibility for Christchurch.

Growing together in faith sharing.

We have focused our thoughts, prayers, and discernment on supporting our new minister who arrives in September 2024 and in saying goodbye to Rev Val Reid who retired in August 2024.

Growing together as a community centred in Jesus Christ.

The Everyone Welcome Steering Group began this year to help Christchurch get better at helping everyone who connects with us or walks through our doors feel welcome, comfortable and safe.

We began by reviewing our facilities. Our first recommendation was to increase the accessibility and flexibility of our toilet provision which was quickly followed up by Finance and Property.

We considered how we worship together and suggested some changes in projected slides to make them easier to see, and how best to support and welcome our Elmside friends.

We had a major declutter of spaces and different rooms so that we look more appealing. There are further things we think could be improved for all who use our rooms and building.

We are learning about better communication to be more welcoming to anyone with communication or social communication needs, endeavouring to reach a status of Communication Accessible next year. This will include welcoming those who are neurodivergent, living with dementia or have learning difficulties. Towards this, we have begun extending our Makaton signing abilities. We have started to plan social events where many of us can get together and have fun and invite others,

Growing together in loving and serving others.

Our work in Refresh on a Tuesday and then extending to Friday, providing a warm space for the community.

Over the last year we have, among other things: Responded to queries about our youth and children's work, and safeguarding; Considered our relationship with uniformed organisations; Thought about funeral arrangements and room hire issues; Helped make decisions on our buildings and finances.

Looked ahead to the next chapter of our church story – how we can together discern God's vision for us and prayerfully find solutions to shortfalls in volunteering and financial resources.

Growing together as followers and leaders.

We have been thinking about the future governance of Christchurch. Being a Trustee at Christchurch is interesting and worthwhile. It is about wanting to support the vision and strategy of Christchurch. The Trustee Group exists to discern the vision and way forward for the church, and to communicate through the various areas to the church members to enable the areas to work towards this in their decisions and practice. Christchurch is a resilient community and an exciting place to be part of.

Worshiping Together

The inclusion of our assigned Musical Director for each Sunday service to work with the preacher in choosing the hymns and songs is working well.

The Sunday morning band has continued over the last year to enhance and enable the worship of the congregation to the best of its ability. Whilst there is a core of long-standing players and singers, we've welcomed new musicians in the last year, and encourage occasional players/singers to join us when they can. Our aim is to give the best we can individually and collectively, within a positive and welcoming environment.

We are working with the Makaton Angels to incorporate signing in more services, making the most of their growing repertoire of songs and prayers

The live streaming of services continues to be appreciated by those unable to join us in person for various reasons. We have roughly a dozen viewers live each Sunday morning and around 40 views of each service on catch-up over the following weeks. We continue to offer live streaming for other events, such as funerals and concerts. In addition to closer collaboration with the Youth, Children and Family team, we are also working with the "Everyone Welcome" team to improve our inclusivity in worship by looking at subtitles, remote screens and the fonts and colours used in worship presentations.

Teaching and Discipleship - headlines

- Main focus of teaching at Christchurch currently comes within our Sunday morning services and Junior Church sessions.
- Preachers follow the Lectionary.
- 'Small Groups' for adults, involving approximately 100 people meeting weekly or fortnightly. These have continued in a variety of formats. Some have continued to meet on Zoom since the lifting of the pandemic restrictions and others are now meeting in person again.
- Lunchtime meditation group
- 'Christchurch men's breakfast', a valuable time of fellowship for men (mostly of the more mature age group) although open to all ages.

Youth and children's and families

Youth, children, and families continued to be a key part of our mission during the year. With an active 'Junior Church' for children aged from birth to 18, this work has been supported with a full-time Youth & Children's worker.

An overview is given below. (Activities provided are age/stage appropriate with any necessary adjustments made to ensure ALL are included).

Early Years: (Age 0-5)

- Christchurch Hitchin Baby and Toddler Group with 40 families on the register (average attendance 20 families)
- Crèche - for Sunday mornings

Primary: (Age 5-11)

- Our 'Jump Start' group for children aged 5-11 meets most Sundays during the main service for bible teaching, games and fun! We have a very lively group with 14 children that regularly attend.
- Holiday Club returned in July. There were 30 children attending over the three-days.

Secondary: (Age 11-16/18)

- F3 group for children aged 11-16 meets most Sundays during the main service for bible teaching, discussion and fun!
- Youth Hangout – This has been running for a year and a half. We have seen this grow from 4 young people in the first week to now having 11-18 young people each week. We have a group of churches represented at Youth Hangout through volunteers and young people from 2 other churches in Hitchin. We also have the support of Phase with some of their team also on our volunteer team. We have done so many different things in the past 11 months, some of these things have been events the young people have asked to do, some have been things that we have planned but they have been enjoyed by all. This summer we went for the first time to our first summer youth festival. Youth Hangout hosted a youth Christmas service which all the churches were invited to on Saturday 9th December 2023. Uniformed Organisations - Our Scout Group, and our Rainbows, Brownies, and Guides, are all sponsored by Christchurch under formal agreements with their respective Districts.

Outreach

Reach Out initiatives and support fall under two headings: Home and Overseas.

Home

- Refresh – is open two morning a week, providing the opportunity for anyone in the local community to meet in a relaxed environment over a cuppa and a biscuit or piece of cake.
- Meeting Needs monthly deliveries of furniture and other non-perishable goods to people in need.
- Daisychains, a support group for families of pre-school children with additional needs.
- Simpsons Alms houses.
- Wednesday evening Badminton Club
- North Herts Circuit of the Methodist Church and the North Herts Group of United Reformed Churches – Christchurch plays an active role in these.
- Supporting local charities - Helping Herts Homeless for the Homeless and North Herts Sanctuary, for homeless young people, and Hitchin Food Bank.
-

Overseas

- Prayer and financial commitment continued to be key features of our commitment to serving people overseas.
- We continued to respond throughout the year to emergency appeals as a result of either man-made or natural disasters.
- We are an Eco Church, and volunteers run several recycling initiatives.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding at Christchurch follows our own policy which builds upon the safeguarding policies and procedures of the Methodist Church. Our safeguarding group is responsible for ensuring that these policies are understood and implemented correctly by all members of the church and users of our premises. The Christchurch safeguarding team receive support from the district and national safeguarding teams of the Methodist Church. Last year we implemented the use of a standard form for risk assessments. These forms are required to be reviewed every year, and if necessary, updated.

Safer Recruitment

Last year we reviewed the Methodist policies on Safer Recruitment, and it was felt that we now needed to ensure that safer recruitment procedures were understood and implemented. The Christchurch Safeguarding handbook has been updated and is on display in the Welcome area. This booklet is also accessible on the church website.

Church Safeguarding Policy

Each year we review and update our church safeguarding policy and present it to be ratified at the church meeting.

Training

All our volunteers who work with vulnerable adults, children and young people are required to apply for a criminal record check (DBS). Once this is granted, they will then have training on a Foundation course. This introduces the concepts of good practice, how to recognise abusive behaviour and the steps to take when a concern is raised.

Property

Christchurch Finance and Property Committee

The committee has 9 members but has the option to co-opt other people for specific projects. The full Finance and Property committee meets about 4 times a year but has a Finance Wing and also a Property Wing which meet between full F&P meetings to move specific items forward where a smaller gathering is sometimes more efficient.

Annual Property tasks undertaken during the year

Annual Returns completed, and any necessary work undertaken – Quinquennial, Methodist Property Return and Church Return Report.

Normal maintenance checks carried out – Boiler servicing, Fire Alarm System/Extinguishers/Blanket Inspections and Testing, PAT testing, Organ and piano tuning, Regular window cleaning, Visual site inspections both interior and exterior, Sewer pit inspection and water meter reading if necessary, Water flush checks, Lighting, etc.

- Garden working parties organised as and when necessary.
- Regular maintenance of first aid boxes.
- Risk Assessment and Accessibility Audit updated.

Other Property tasks undertaken during this year

- RAAC Concrete - Full investigation carried out to confirm none present.
- Lighting – Fluorescent tubes being gradually replaced with LED
- Toilets – Signage changed to provide a greater number of All Inclusive facilities.
- Ongoing decluttering

In total for the year ended 31 August 2024, £33,007 was spent on equipment, maintenance and cleaning.

Accounts

The financial deficit in 2023-24 was £6,597. The Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet are set out below. The Trustees have also formulated Accounting Policies and a Reserves Policy and these are set out below:

Reserves policy

It is the Trustees' policy to maintain a balance in reserve which equates to 6 months of the assessments due to the Methodist and United Reformed Churches, and wages for the staff employed directly by Christchurch, plus potential employment termination costs and redundancy liabilities. In addition, provision has been made for capital projects expected to be carried out during the year.

Public benefit

The trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Approved at the Trustees Meeting held on 7 May 2025 and signed on behalf of the Trustees:

Angela Griggs
Church Secretary

Declarations

Treasurer

I confirm that these accrual – based accounts for the year ended 31 August 2024 have been prepared from the records of the Church and that they include all funds under the control of the Church Leadership Group, being the trustees of the Church.

Signed:

Stephanie Breker

Date:

1st June 2025.

Name of Treasurer: *Stephanie Breker.*

Address of Treasurer: *111 Benslow Lane, Hitchin, SG4 9RA.*

Presentation to the Trustees for approval

I confirm that the Trustees Annual Report, the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and the Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2024 were approved by the Trustees.

Signed:

Steph A Cook

Date:

1/6/25

Name: *STEPHEN A COOK*

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Christchurch, Hitchin, a Methodist/URC LEP, for the year ended 31 August 2024.

The trustees are responsible for ensuring that the annual report and accounts present a true and fair view of the Church's income and expenditure for the year and of the assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date. The trustees consider that an audit is not necessary for this year under s144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility for:

- Examine the accounts under s145 of the Charities Act,
- Follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under s145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Declarations

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commission. 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, in nature or scale, or disclosure in the accounts seeking explanations from the trustees concerning 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. My 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 s130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Acthave 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.

Signed:

Neil Harding

Date:

9-6-25

Name of Independent Examiner: Neil Harding BA FCA

Relevant Professional qualification or body: ICAEW

Address: Bradshaw Johnson

Croft Chambers

11 Bancroft

Hitchin

Herts

SG5 1JQ

Name of Church

Christchurch Hitchin

Church No

340515

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2024

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2023-24
		£	£	£	£	£
Income						
1 Offerings		106,186	-	5,913	-	112,099
2 Donations and Grants		9,209	-	3,442	-	12,651
3 Gift aid		23,892	-	2,184	-	26,076
4 Interest and investment income		13,187	-	1,568	-	14,755
5 Income from lettings		35,406	-	-	-	35,406
6 Internal organisations		5,050	-	1,685	-	6,735
7 Other charitable income		7,626	-	110	-	7,736
8 Total income		200,556	-	14,902	-	215,458
Expenditure						
9 Circuit and URC assessments		91,089	-	-	-	91,089
10 Grants and donations		12,939	-	-	-	12,939
10A Ministry, Worship and Teaching		1,461	-	-	-	1,461
11 Property maintenance		33,007	-	-	-	33,007
12 Insurance, utilities etc		19,742	-	-	-	19,742
13 Staff costs		11,056	-	29,609	-	40,665
14 Office expenses		9,993	-	-	-	9,993
15 Other expenditure		6,318	-	4,001	-	10,319
16 Internal organisations		-	-	2,839	-	2,839
17 Total charitable expenditure		185,605	-	36,449	-	222,054
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments		-	-	-	-	-
19 Gains/(losses) on investment properties		-	-	-	-	-
20 Net income/(expenditure)		14,951	-	-21,547	-	-6,596
21 Transfers between funds		-8,564	-	8,564	-	-
22 Other gains/(losses)		-	-	-	-	-
23 Net movement in funds		6,387	-	-12,983	-	-6,596
24 Total funds brought forward		2,243,541	-	41,868	-	2,285,409
25 Total funds carried forward		2,249,928	-	28,885	-	2,278,813

Name of Church

Christchurch Hitchin

Church No 340515

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2023

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2022-23
		£	£	£	£	£
Income						
1 Offerings		104,903	-	5,629	-	110,532
2 Donations and Grants		5,998	-	4,610	-	10,608
3 Gift aid		23,017	-	1,717	-	24,734
4 Interest and investment income		7,488	-	1,142	-	8,630
5 Income from lettings		28,229	-	-	-	28,229
6 Internal organisations		4,600	-	3,471	-	8,071
7 Other charitable income		4,155	-	150	-	4,305
8 Total income		178,390	-	16,719	-	195,109
Expenditure						
9 Circuit and URC assessments		82,920	-	-	-	82,920
10 Grants and donations		4,634	-	-	-	4,634
10A Ministry, Worship and Teaching		2,091	-	-	-	2,091
11 Property maintenance		27,753	-	-	-	27,753
12 Insurance, utilities etc		22,149	-	-	-	22,149
13 Staff costs		11,490	-	29,068	-	40,558
14 Office expenses		8,552	-	-	-	8,552
15 Other expenditure		1,670	-	4,221	-	5,891
16 Internal organisations		-	-	3,436	-	3,436
17 Total charitable expenditure		161,259	-	36,725	-	197,984
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments		-	-	-	-	-
19 Gains/(losses) on investment properties		-	-	-	-	-
20 Net income/(expenditure)		17,131	-	-20,006	-	-2,875
21 Transfers between funds		-26,674	-	26,674	-	-
22 Other gains/(losses)		-	-	-	-	-
23 Net movement in funds		-9,543	-	6,668	-	-2,875
24 Total funds brought forward		2,253,084	-	35,200	-	2,288,284
25 Total funds carried forward		2,243,541	-	41,868	-	2,285,409

Name of Church

Christchurch Hitchin

Church No

340515

Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2024

	Notes to the Accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted) £	Designated Funds (Unrestricted) £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Totals 2024 £	Totals 2023 £
Fixed Assets							
Church building and other property		2,000,000				2,000,000	2,000,000
Investment properties		-	-	-	-	-	-
Investments		-	-	-	-	-	-
Total fixed assets		2,000,000	-	-	-	2,000,000	2,000,000
Current Assets							
Debtors and prepayments		10,170		772	-	10,942	9,759
Loans by the Churches		-	-	-	-	-	-
Investments with TMCP		171,763	-	-	-	171,763	163,401
Central Finance Board Deposits		66,968	-	28,113	-	95,081	101,196
Cash at Bank and in hand		9,289	-	-	-	9,289	14,845
Total current assets		258,190	-	28,885	-	287,075	289,201
Current liabilities							
Creditors (due in under 1 year)		8,262	-	-	-	8,262	3,792
Grants payable		-	-	-	-	-	-
Total current liabilities		8,262	-	-	-	8,262	3,792
Net current assets/liabilities		249,928	-	28,885	-	278,813	285,409
Total assets less current liabilities		2,249,928	-	28,885	-	2,278,813	2,285,409
Long term liabilities (due after more than one year)							
Grants payable after 2019-20		-	-	-	-	-	-
Loans to the Church		-	-	-	-	-	-
Net assets		2,249,928	-	28,885	-	2,278,813	2,285,409
Funds of the Church							
General Fund (Unrestricted)		2,249,928	-	-	-	2,249,928	2,243,541
Designated Funds (Unrestricted)		-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Unrestricted Funds		2,249,928	-	-	-	2,249,928	2,243,541
Restricted Funds		-	-	28,885	-	28,885	41,868
Endowment Funds		-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Funds		2,249,928	-	28,885	-	2,278,813	2,285,409

Notes to the accounts 2023-24

1. Accounting Policies

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charity have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) (effective 1 January 2015), Financial Reporting Standard 102 (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the accruals basis and historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain assets.

Christchurch Hitchin meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The financial statement are prepared in Sterling (£)

Incoming Resources

Income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the Church becomes entitled to the resources, and the trustees are reasonably certain they will receive them; and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Resources Expended

Expense is recognised when a liability is incurred, or a constructive obligation arises, that results in the payment being unavoidable. Liabilities are recognised as soon as an outflow of economic benefit is considered more likely than not.

Funds

The funds held constitute:

General funds held for any purpose of the Church which are unrestricted

Restricted funds held for a narrower purpose

There are no endowment funds. Details of each material fund are disclosed in Note 10 of these accounts. Any funds may be represented by more than cash.

Grants

Grants made by the Church from its own funds are recognised in full at the time of agreement or when the Church accepts that there is a legal or operational obligation to make the payment.

Debtors

Debtors are measured on initial recognition at the settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the Charity. Subsequently they are measured at cash or other consideration expected to be received.

Creditors

Creditors are measured at the settlement amount less any trade discounts.

VAT

The Church is not VAT registered; all expenses are recognised gross, with no deduction for input VAT.

Tangible Fixed Assets

Tangible Fixed Assets are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £1,000. The freehold property is shown in the accounts at 2015 deemed cost, of which the land component is deemed to be £0.6m. No depreciation is provided on the building as the trustees consider the current residual fair value to be not less than its current value. The property has been reviewed for impairment.

Beneficial Interest

The Church has a beneficial interest in the proceeds from the sale of Priory Way (the former URC manse) and Queen Street (the former Congregational Church). The approximate value at 31 August 2024 of the relevant Trust Funds held by the URC was £462,764

2. Payment to Trustees

There were no payments made to Trustees for additional services provided to the Church by agreement with the Church Meeting. This excludes stipends and expenses relating to reimbursement for travel and computing costs

3. Fees for examination or audit of the accounts

	2024	2023
	£	£
Independent Examiner Fee for reporting on the accounts	650	650
Other fees (eg advice, accountancy services) paid the Independent Examiner	-	-

4. Paid Employees

No employees have been paid more than £60,000 pa.

Staff costs during the year were:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Gross wages, salaries and benefits in Kind	36,150	35,878
Employers National Insurance costs	2,478	2,453
Pension Costs	2,037	2,227
Total staff costs	40,665	40,558

Average number of full time equivalent employees in the year were: 2 1

5. Capital commitments and Contingent Liabilities

At the 31 August 2024, there are no capital commitments, and no contingent liabilities have been identified at that date.

6. Monies received and passed on to External Organisations

	2024	2023
	£	£
Balance brought forward	0	0
Offerings/gifts - received for external organisations	0	0
Offerings/gifts - passed to external organisations	0	0
Balance carried forward	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

7. Tangible Fixed Assets

£'000	Land	Buildings	Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment	Assets under construction	Total
Cost					
Opening balance 1 September 2023	600	1,200	200	-	2,000
Additions	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluations	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-
Closing balance 31 August 2024	600	1,200	200	-	2,000
Accumulated Depreciation					
Opening balance 1 September 2023	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation charge for the year	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluations	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-
Closing balance 31 August 2024	-	-	-	-	-
Net book Value 1 September 2023	600	1,200	200	-	2,000
Net book Value 31 August 2024	600	1,200	200	-	2,000

The value of the Church building and the land on which it stands is believed to be considerably greater than the value shown. There is no depreciation on the building or fixtures, fittings or equipment as it is judged that this is immaterial. There were no indicators of impairment since the market value is considered to be greater than the book value.

8 Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Debtors - Gift Aid	9,380	8,509
Other Debtors	1,561	1,250
	<u>10,942</u>	<u>9,759</u>

9. Creditors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Accruals	8,262	3,792
	<u>8,262</u>	<u>3,792</u>

10. Analysis of restricted funds 2023-24

Fund name	Opening balance	Incoming resources		Resources expended		Transfers ex Main A/c	Closing balance	Purpose of fund
Youth (incl.Messy Church)	25885	Offerings	5637	Youth projects, i.e.	3664			Promotion of youth work
		Staff support grant	3380	Int'l Organisations		9285	13479	
		Gift Aid 2022/23	1272					
		Interest	1054					
		Gift Aid 2023/24	576	Staff costs	29946			
Junior Church	945	Offerings	275	Grants				
		Interest	50	Expenses		-275	995	
		Gift Aid 2023/24		Int'l Organisations				
G.Milledge	5629	Donations	50	Grants				Assist young people working overseas
		Interest	270				5961	
		Gift Aid 2023/24	12	Int'l Organisations				
Pastoral	1529	Donations	110	Expenses				Pastoral work
		Interest	80			-110	1609	
		Gift Aid 2023/24		Int'l Organisations				
Manila Fund	2186	Donations						Support Manila church
		Interest	115				2301	
		Gift Aid 2023/24		Expenditure				
Lunch Club	3971	Int'l Organisations	1685	Int'l Organisations	2839		2817	
Badminton Club	695	Int'l Organisations		Int'l Organisations	0		695	
Flower fund	244	Donations		Expenditure			244	Weekly Church flowers
Donation – chairs	64	Donations		Expenditure	0		64	Memorial donation
Donation – kitchen	720	Donations		Expenditure	0		720	Memorial donation
Fund adjustment	0						0	
Adjustments - for accruals and monies not yet transferred								
Gift Aid (2022-23) received Nov 23		Gift Aid	-436			436		
Gift Aid (2023-24) received Nov 24		Gift Aid	772			-772		
Total	41,868		14,902		36,449	8,564	28,885	

Comparative analysis of restricted funds 2021-22

Fund name	Opening balance	Incoming resources		Resources expended		Transfers ex Main A/c	Closing balance	Purpose of fund
Youth (incl.Messy Church)	19590	Offerings	5532	Youth projects, i.e.	3774			Promotion of youth work
		Staff support grant	4610	Int'l Organisations		26470	25885	
		Gift Aid 2021/22	1304					
		Interest	798					
		Gift Aid 2022/23	423	Staff costs	29068			
Junior Church	914	Offerings	97	Grants				
		Interest	32	Expenses		-111	945	
		Gift Aid 2022/23	13	Int'l Organisations				
G.Milledge	5382	Donations		Grants				Assist young people working overseas
		Interest	187			60	5629	
		Gift Aid 2022/23		Int'l Organisations				
Pastoral	1477	Offerings	120	Expenses	447			Pastoral work
		Interest	51			328	1529	
		Gift Aid 2022/23		Int'l Organisations				
Manila Fund	2113	Donations						Support Manila church
		Interest	73				2186	
		Gift Aid 2022/23		Expenditure				
Lunch Club	3936	Int'l Organisations	3471	Int'l Organisations	3436		3971	
Badminton Club	695	Int'l Organisations	0	Int'l Organisations	0		695	
Ladies Friendship Circle	65	Int'l Organisations	0	Int'l Organisations	0	-65	0	
Flower fund	244	Donations	30	Expenditure		-30	244	Weekly Church flowers
Donation – chairs	64	Donations	0	Expenditure	0		64	Memorial donation
Donation – kitchen	720	Donations	0	Expenditure	0		720	Memorial donation
Fund adjustment	0						0	
Adjustments - for accruals and monies not yet transferred								
Gift Aid (2021-22) received Nov.21		Gift Aid	-458			458		
Gift Aid (2022-23) received Dec 22		Gift Aid	436			-436		
Total	35200		16719		36725	26674	41868	

CHRISTCHURCH (METHODIST/UNITED REFORMED) CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1142830

Accounts

CHRISTCHURCH HITCHIN

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

AND

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY

YEAR TO 31 AUGUST 2023

Trustees report for the year ended 31st August 2023

Context

A team of Trustees have the duty and responsibility to report on the activities of the Charity that is Christchurch (Methodist and United Reformed) Church. The team consists of the Minister and 8 elected from and by the church membership, in accordance with the terms of the constitution. Christchurch Hitchin is located at Bedford Road, Hitchin, SG5 1HF. It is a registered charity, no. 1142830, and its constitution was formally updated in January 2019.

Those serving for some, or all of the year were as follows:

Paul Arnold, David Box, Vic Evans, Angela Griggs, Tracy King, Stephanie Breker, Julie Mills, Revd. Val Reid.

Retired during the year:

Vic Evans, Stephanie Breker

Elected during the year:

- Janet Tackley, Philippa Arnold

The Trustees, normally called the Trustee Oversight Group, meet monthly, and have overall responsibility for all aspects of Church Life.

Objectives and Activities

The Trustees are committed to developing the work of the charity, to strengthening the discipleship of its members and to supporting and encouraging others to develop their faith and make a commitment as a follower of Christ.

The Mission Statement of the Church is: ***Led by the Spirit – Working in the Community – Bringing people to Christ.***

The "Growing Together" vision continues to be used to review our activities, in addition to the statement 'Real Life, Real Love, Real You' which was informally adopted in January 2020 as a way of thinking about all that we do as a charity.

The Purpose of the Charity, as set out in the Christchurch constitution, is to advance the Christian faith in the Area of Benefit in accordance with the principles and practices of the Methodist and United Reformed Churches.

The Trustees have a duty under the constitution to give the necessary direction to achieve its Purpose, and to "engage in a range of activities, either on its own or with others, including (but not restricted to):

- the celebration of public worship.
- the teaching of the Christian faith.
- mission and evangelism.
- pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved.
- the provision of facilities with a Christian ethos for the local community, including (but not restricted to) the elderly, the young and other groups with special needs; and
- the support of other charities in the UK and overseas"

An introduction

Christchurch is a large congregation and as of 31 August 2023 there were 217 members. The average attendance at all services on a Sunday was 105, (consisting of 90 adults and 15 under 18s) as measured during the month of October 2022, in accordance with the procedures of the Methodist church.

The past year has been a chance to settle back into being 'church' and **Growing Together towards God, who is Father, Son, and Spirit**. Our AGM in November 2022 brought a new area lead for finance and we welcomed a new Circuit steward with responsibility for Christchurch.

Growing together in faith sharing. We have focused our thoughts, prayers, and discernment on the future minister for Christchurch as Val sits down (retires) in August 2024. We agreed to request our next minister from the Methodist church. We are now, with Pirton Methodist Church, in the Methodist stationing process with a view to hopefully having a new minister starting in September 2024.

Growing together as a community centred in Jesus Christ. Our church held discussions on joining the Inclusive Church network –it was felt that further thought is needed to discern the way forward. It was proposed that we still take the inclusive work forward and set up a group for this and link this with the EDI recommendations of the Methodist and URC Churches. Sara Crowley has kindly agreed to lead this. As Christchurch is registered for marriages under the Marriage Act, both for the marriage of opposite sex and same sex couples, we have added this on our website.

At our Church Meeting in June, we committed to spending the next year thinking about what it means to be a church that says 'Everyone Welcome' outside our front doors. We have taken some important steps, especially our decision to register the church for same-sex marriage. We need to think and pray about how we welcome those who are already part of our community, but who feel their needs are not fully met. And we need to think and pray about how we welcome those who are not already here, who don't fit our usual profile.

Growing together in loving and serving others. This is expressed through our work in Refresh on a Tuesday and then extending to Friday, providing a warm space for the community and refugees. The issue of homelessness was brought to the fore with a homeless woman camping outside our front door. The church came together to support and protect both her and the community, and the Trustees and minister worked closely with the council, police, and homeless charities to provide the support required for this vulnerable person.

Growing together as followers and leaders. We have been thinking about the future governance of Christchurch and the Trustees raised awareness of the issue with two Christchurch community moments during Sunday services focused on being a trustee and the church secretary. The Trustee Group exists to discern the vision and way forward for the church, and to communicate through the various areas to the church members, to support the area leads to work towards this in their decisions and practice. Christchurch is a resilient community and an exciting place to be part of.

Worshipping Together

The inclusion of our assigned Musical Director for each Sunday service to work with the preacher in choosing the hymns and songs is working well. We are pleased to welcome two new Worship Leaders from Christchurch into the team.

There is on average 32 views each Sunday on our live streamed worship to You Tube, with typically 6 to 10 viewers watching us in real time. The recent introduction to the live streaming of engaging videos to enhance sung worship, prayers and Holy Communion.

Teaching and Discipleship - headlines

- Main focus of teaching at Christchurch currently comes within our Sunday morning services and Junior Church sessions.
- Preachers normally follow the Lectionary.
- 'House Groups' for adults, involving approximately 100 people meeting weekly or fortnightly. These have continued in a variety of formats. Some have continued to meet on Zoom since the lifting of the pandemic restrictions and others are now meeting in person again.
- Lunchtime meditation group
- 'Christchurch men's breakfast', a valuable time of fellowship for men (mostly of the more mature age group) although open to all ages.

Youth, children and families

Youth, children, and families continued to be a key part of our mission during the year. With an active 'Junior Church' for children aged from birth to 18, this work has been supported with a full-time Youth & Children's worker.

An overview is given below. (Activities provided are age/stage appropriate with any necessary adjustments made to ensure ALL are included).

Early Years: (Age 0-5)

- Christchurch Hitchin Baby and Toddler Group with 40 families on the register (average attendance 20 families)
- Crèche - for Sunday mornings

Primary: (Age 5-11)

- Our 'Pig' group for children aged 5-11 meets most Sundays during the main service for bible teaching, games and fun! We have a very lively group with 14 children that regularly attend.
- Holiday Club returned in July. There were 48 children attending over the three-days.

Secondary: (Age 11-16/18)

- Youth Hangout – This has grown from 4 young people in the first week to now having 8-9 a week. It is supported by a number of Hitchin Churches.

Outreach

Reach Out initiatives and support fall under two headings: Home and Overseas.

Home

- Refresh – is open two mornings a week, providing the opportunity for anyone in the local community to meet in a relaxed environment over a cuppa and a biscuit or piece of cake.
- Lunch Club serving elderly folk, referred through social and health services.
- Meeting Needs monthly deliveries of furniture and other non-perishable goods to people in need.
- Daisychains, a support group for families of pre-school children with additional needs.
- Simpsons Alms houses.
- Helping Herts Homeless supporting work with people who are homeless in this area, and Hitchin Food Bank.
- North Herts Circuit of the Methodist Church and the North Herts Group of United Reformed Churches – Christchurch plays an active role in these.

Overseas

- Prayer and financial commitment continued to be key features of our commitment to serving people overseas.
- We continued to respond throughout the year to emergency appeals as a result of either man-made or natural disasters.
- We are an Eco Church, and volunteers run several recycling initiatives.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding at Christchurch follows our own policy which builds upon the safeguarding policies and procedures of the Methodist Church. Our safeguarding group is responsible for ensuring that these policies are understood and implemented correctly by all members of the church and users of our premises. The Christchurch safeguarding team receive support from the district and national safeguarding teams of the Methodist Church. Last year we implemented the use of a standard form for risk assessments. These forms are required to be reviewed every year, and if necessary, updated.

Safer Recruitment

Last year we reviewed the Methodist policies on Safer Recruitment, and it was felt that we now needed to ensure that safer recruitment procedures were understood and implemented. The Christchurch Safeguarding handbook has been updated and is on display in the Welcome area. This booklet is also accessible on the church website.

Church Safeguarding Policy

Each year we review and update our church safeguarding policy and present it to be ratified at the church meeting.

Training

All our volunteers who work with vulnerable adults, children and young people are required to apply for a criminal record check (DBS). Once this is granted, they will then have training on a Foundation level safeguarding course. This introduces the concepts of good practice, how to recognise abusive behaviour and the steps to take when a concern is raised.

Property

Christchurch Finance and Property Committee

The committee has 9 members but has the option to co-opt other people for specific projects. The full Finance and Property committee meets about 4 times a year but has a Finance Wing and also a Property Wing which meet between full F&P meetings to move specific items forward where a smaller gathering is sometimes more efficient.

Annual Property tasks undertaken during the year

- Annual Returns completed, and any necessary work undertaken – Quinquennial, Methodist Property Return and Church Return Report.
- Normal maintenance checks carried out – Boiler servicing, Fire Alarm System/Extinguishers/Blanket Inspections and Testing, PAT testing, Organ and piano tuning, Regular window cleaning, Visual site inspections both interior and exterior, Sewer pit inspection and water meter reading if necessary, Water flush checks, Lighting, etc.
- Garden working parties organised as and when necessary.
- Defibrillator training for volunteers and regular maintenance of first aid boxes.
- Risk Assessment updated.

Other Property tasks undertaken during this year

- New licence agreements have been agreed with most of the room hirers.
- The car park lease was renewed and signed in June 2023.
- After receiving notice of termination from the existing Broadband Provider options for future requirements have been reviewed and a new provider identified.
- Updated Fire Evacuation notices have been exhibited in all rooms in the church building.
- The purchase of an Audio/Visual Trolley so that external hirers are able to use the facilities for meetings in the Sanctuary.

In total for the year ended 31 August 2023, £27,753 was spent on equipment, maintenance and cleaning.

Support for other charities in the UK and overseas

Whilst opportunities for fundraising were limited during the year, the church still donated over £4,500 to local and global charities. The church has also continued to support its mission partners overseas, both from the general funds and through individual's own fundraising.

Accounts

The financial deficit in 2022-23 was £2,875. The Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet are set out below. The Trustees have also formulated Accounting Policies and a Reserves Policy and these are set out below:

Reserves policy

It is the Trustees' policy to maintain a balance in reserve which equates to 6 months of the assessments due to the Methodist and United Reformed Churches, and wages for the staff employed directly by Christchurch, plus potential employment termination costs and redundancy liabilities. In addition, provision has been made for capital projects expected to be carried out during the year.

Public benefit

The trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Approved at the Trustees Meeting held on 13th May 2024 and signed on behalf of the Trustees:

Angela Griggs
Church Secretary



Declarations

Treasurer

I confirm that these accrual – based accounts for the year ended 31 August 2023 have been prepared from the records of the Church and that they include all funds under the control of the Church Leadership Group, being the trustees of the Church.

Signed: *Lydia Becket*

Date: 05 06 24

Name of Treasurer: LYDIA BECKET

Address of Treasurer: 132 TOP STREET WAY, HARPENDEN, HERTS, AL5 5TS

Presentation to the Trustees for approval

I confirm that the Trustees Annual Report, the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and the Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2023 were approved by the Trustees.

Signed: *P. Arnold*

Date:

9/6/24

Name: *Paul Arnold*

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Christchurch, Hitchin, a Methodist/URC LEP, for the year ended 31 August 2023.

The trustees are responsible for ensuring that the annual report and accounts present a true and fair view of the Church's income and expenditure for the year and of the assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date. The trustees consider that an audit is not necessary for this year under s144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility for:

- Examine the accounts under s145 of the Charities Act,
- Follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under s145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Declarations

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commission. 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, in nature or scale, or disclosure in the accounts seeking explanations from the trustees concerning 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. My 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 s130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Acthave 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.

Signed:

Neil Harding

Date:

17-6-24

Name of Independent Examiner: Neil Harding BA FCA

Relevant Professional qualification or body: ICAEW

Address: Bradshaw Johnson
Croft Chambers
11 Bancroft
Hitchin
Herts
SG5 1JQ

Name of Church

Christchurch Hitchin

Church No

340515

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2023

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2022-23
		£	£	£	£	£
Income						
1 Offerings		104,903		5,629		110,532
2 Donations and Grants		5,998		4,610		10,608
3 Gift aid		23,017		1,717		24,734
4 Interest and investment income		7,488		1,142		8,630
5 Income from lettings		28,229				28,229
6 Internal organisations		4,600		3,471		8,071
7 Other charitable income		4,155		150		4,305
8 Total income		178,390	0	16,719	0	195,109
Expenditure						
9 Circuit and URC assessments		82,920				82,920
10 Grants and donations		4,634				4,634
10A Ministry, Worship and Teaching		2,091				2,091
11 Property maintenance		27,753				27,753
12 Insurance, utilities etc		22,149				22,149
13 Staff costs		11,490		29,068		40,558
14 Office expenses		8,552				8,552
15 Other expenditure		1,670		4,221		5,891
16 Internal organisations				3,436		3,436
17 Total charitable expenditure		161,259	0	36,725	0	197,984
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments						0
19 Gains/(losses) on investment properties						0
20 Net income/(expenditure)		17,131	0	-20,006	0	-2,875
21 Transfers between funds		-26,674		26,674		0
22 Other gains/(losses)						0
23 Net movement in funds		-9,543	0	6,668	0	-2,875
24 Total funds brought forward		2,253,084	0	35,200		2,288,284
25 Total funds carried forward		2,243,541	0	41,868	0	2,285,409

Name of Church

Christchurch Hitchin

Church No 340515

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2022

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2021-22
		£	£	£	£	£
Income						
1 Offerings		118,623		10,361		128,985
2 Donations and Grants		17,291		0		17,291
3 Gift aid		23,745		1,375		25,120
4 Interest and investment income		514		74		588
5 Income from lettings		26,937				26,937
6 Internal organisations		0		4,270		4,270
7 Other charitable income		1,757		80		1,837
8 Total income		188,868	0	16,161	0	205,028
Expenditure						
9 Circuit and URC assessments		83,605				83,605
10 Grants and donations		5,810				5,810
10A Ministry, Worship and Teaching		1,556				1,556
11 Property maintenance		55,817				55,817
12 Insurance, utilities etc		12,454				12,454
13 Staff costs		8,702		6,400		15,102
14 Office expenses		6,452				6,452
15 Other expenditure		7,916		1,668		9,585
16 Internal organisations				4,199		4,199
17 Total charitable expenditure		182,313	0	12,267	0	194,580
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments						0
19 Gains/(losses) on investment properties						0
20 Net income/(expenditure)		6,555	0	3,894	0	10,449
21 Transfers between funds		-3,029		3,029		0
22 Other gains/(losses)						0
23 Net movement in funds		3,526	0	6,923	0	10,449
24 Total funds brought forward		2,249,558		28,277		2,277,835
25 Total funds carried forward		2,253,084	0	35,200	0	2,288,284

Name of Church

Christchurch Hitchin

Church No

340515

Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2023

Notes to the Accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (Unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Totals 2023	Totals 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets						
Church building and other property	2,000,000				2,000,000	2,000,000
Investment properties					0	
Investments					0	
Total fixed assets	2,000,000	0	0	0	2,000,000	2,000,000
Current Assets						
Debtors and prepayments	9,323		436		9,759	8,786
Loans by the Churches					0	0
Investments with TMCP	163,401				163,401	158,768
Central Finance Board Deposits	59,764		41,432		101,196	105,115
Cash at Bank and in hand	14,845				14,845	17,465
Total current assets	247,333	0	41,868	0	289,201	290,124
Current liabilities						
Creditors (due in under 1 year)	3,792				3,792	1,840
Grants payable					0	
Total current liabilities	3,792	0	0	0	3,792	1,840
Net current assets/liabilities	243,541	0	41,868	0	285,409	288,284
Total assets less current liabilities	2,243,541	0	41,868	0	2,285,409	2,288,284
Long term liabilities (due after more than one year)						
Grants payable after 2019-20					0	0
Loans to the Church					0	0
					0	0
Net assets	2,243,541	0	41,868	0	2,285,409	2,288,284
Funds of the Church						
General Fund (Unrestricted)	2,243,541				2,243,541	2,263,084
Designated Funds (Unrestricted)		0			0	
Total Unrestricted Funds	2,243,541	0	0	0	2,243,541	2,263,084
Restricted Funds			41,868		41,868	35,200
Endowment Funds				0	0	
Total Funds	2,243,541	0	41,868	0	2,285,409	2,288,284

Notes to the accounts 2022-23

1. Accounting Policies

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charity have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) (effective 1 January 2015), Financial Reporting Standard 102 (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the accruals basis and historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain assets. Christchurch Hitchin meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. The financial statements are prepared in Sterling (£)

Incoming Resources

Income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the Church becomes entitled to the resources, and the trustees are reasonably certain they will receive them, and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Resources Expended

Expense is recognised when a liability is incurred, or a constructive obligation arises, that results in the payment being unavoidable. Liabilities are recognised as soon as an outflow of economic benefit is considered more likely than not.

Funds

The funds held constitute:

General funds held for any purpose of the Church which are unrestricted
Restricted funds held for a narrower purpose

There are no endowment funds. Details of each material fund are disclosed in Note 10 of these accounts. Any funds may be represented by more than cash.

Grants

Grants made by the Church from its own funds are recognised in full at the time of agreement or when the Church accepts that there is a legal or operational obligation to make the payment.

Debtors

Debtors are measured on initial recognition at the settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the Charity. Subsequently they are measured at cash or other consideration expected to be received.

Creditors

Creditors are measured at the settlement amount less any trade discounts.

VAT

The Church is not VAT registered; all expenses are recognised gross, with no deduction for input VAT.

Tangible Fixed Assets

Tangible Fixed Assets are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £1,000. The freehold property is shown in the accounts at 2015 deemed cost, of which the land component is deemed to be £0.6m. No depreciation is provided on the building as the trustees consider the current residual fair value to be not less than its current value. The property has been reviewed for impairment.

Beneficial Interest

The Church has a beneficial interest in the proceeds from the sale of Priory Way (the former URC manse) and Queen Street (the former Congregational Church). The approximate value at 31 August 2023 of the relevant Trust Funds held by the URC was £462,764

2. Payment to Trustees

There were no payments made to Trustees for additional services provided to the Church by agreement with the Church Meeting. This excludes stipends and expenses relating to reimbursement for travel and computing costs

3. Fees for examination or audit of the accounts

	2023	2022
	£	£
Independent Examiner Fee for reporting on the accounts	650	650
Other fees (eg advice, accountancy services) paid the Independent Examiner	-	-

4. Paid Employees

No employees have been paid more than £60,000 pa.

Staff costs during the year were:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Gross wages, salaries and benefits in Kind	35,878	14,103
Employers National Insurance costs	2,453	489
Pension Costs	2,227	511
Total staff costs	40,558	15,102

Average number of full time equivalent employees in the year were: 2 1

5. Capital commitments and Contingent Liabilities

At the 31 August 2023, there are no capital commitments, and no contingent liabilities have been identified at that date.

6. Monies received and passed on to External Organisations

	2023	2022
	£	£
Balance brought forward	0	0
Offerings/gifts - received for external organisations	0	0
Offerings/gifts - passed to external organisations	0	0
Balance carried forward	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

7. Tangible Fixed Assets

£'000	Land	Buildings	Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment	Assets under construction	Total
Cost					
Opening balance 1 September 2022	600	1,200	200		2,000
Additions					0
Revaluations					0
Disposals					0
Transfers					0
Closing balance 31 August 2023	600	1,200	200		2,000
Accumulated Depreciation					
Opening balance 1 September 2022	0	0	0	0	0
Depreciation charge for the year					0
Revaluations					0
Disposals					0
Transfers					0
Closing balance 31 August 2023	0	0	0	0	0
Net book Value 1 September 2022	600	1,200	200		2,000
Net book Value 31 August 2023	600	1,200	200		2,000

The value of the Church building and the land on which it stands is believed to be considerably greater than the value shown. There is no depreciation on the building or fixtures, fittings or equipment as it is judged that this is immaterial. There were no indicators of impairment since the market value is considered to be greater than the book value.

8 Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Debtors - Gift Aid	8,509	8,786
Other Debtors	1,250	0
	<u>9,759</u>	<u>8,786</u>

9. Creditors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Accruals	3,792	1,840
	<u>3,792</u>	<u>1,840</u>

10. Analysis of restricted funds 2022-23

Fund name	Opening balance	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers ex Main A/c	Closing balance	Purpose of fund		
Youth (Incl. Messy Church)	19590	Offerings	5532	Youth projects, i.e.	3774	25885	Promotion of youth work	
		Staff support grant	4610	Int'l Organisations				26470
		Gift Aid 2021/22	1304					
		Interest	798					
Junior Church	914	Gift Aid 2022/23	423	Staff costs	29068	945		
		Offerings	97	Grants				
		Interest	32	Expenses				-111
G. Milledge	5382	Gift Aid 2022/23	13	Int'l Organisations		5629	Assist young people working overseas	
		Donations	187	Grants				60
		Interest						
Pastoral	1477	Gift Aid 2022/23	120	Expenses	447	1529	Pastoral work	
		Interest	51	Int'l Organisations				328
		Donations						
Manila Fund	2113	Gift Aid 2022/23	73	Expenditure		2186	Support Manila church	
		Donations						
		Interest						
Lunch Club	3936	Int'l Organisations	3471	Int'l Organisations	3436	3971		
Badminton Club	695	Int'l Organisations	0	Int'l Organisations	0	695		
Ladies Friendship Circle	65	Int'l Organisations	0	Int'l Organisations	0	0	Closed, remaining funds donated	
Flower fund	244	Donations	30	Expenditure		244	Weekly Church flowers	
Donation - chairs	64	Donations	0	Expenditure	0	64	Memorial donation	
Donation - kitchen	720	Donations	0	Expenditure	0	720	Memorial donation	
Fund adjustment	0					0		
Adjustments - for accruals and monies not yet transferred								
Gift Aid (2021-22) received Nov 22		Gift Aid	-458			458		
Gift Aid (2022-23) received Nov 23		Gift Aid	436			-436		
Total	35200		16719		36725	26674	41868	

Comparative analysis of restricted funds 2021-22

Fund name	Opening balance	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers ex Main A/c	Closing balance	Purpose of fund		
Youth (Incl. Messy Church)	12880	Offerings	6655	Youth projects, i.e.	1095	19590	Promotion of youth work	
		Staff support grant	3266	Int'l Organisations				1949
		Gift Aid 2020/21	908					
		Interest	74					
Junior Church	909	Gift Aid 2021/22	1352	Staff costs	6400	914		
		Offerings		Grants				
		Interest	5	Expenses				
G. Milledge	5360	Gift Aid 2021/22	22	Int'l Organisations		5382	Assist young people working overseas	
		Donations		Grants				
		Interest						
Pastoral	1371	Gift Aid 2021/22	80	Expenses	573	1477	Pastoral work	
		Interest	6	Int'l Organisations				573
		Donations	20					
Manila Fund	2104	Gift Aid 2021/22	9	Expenditure		2113	Support Manila church	
		Donations						
		Interest						
Lunch Club	3865	Int'l Organisations	4270	Int'l Organisations	4199	3936		
Badminton Club	695	Int'l Organisations	0	Int'l Organisations	0	695		
Ladies Friendship Circle	65	Int'l Organisations	0	Int'l Organisations	0	65		
Flower fund	244	Donations	0	Expenditure		244	Weekly Church flowers	
Donation - chairs	64	Donations	0	Expenditure	0	64	Memorial donation	
Donation - kitchen	720	Donations	0	Expenditure	0	720	Memorial donation	
Fund adjustment	0					0		
Adjustments - for accruals and monies not yet transferred								
Gift Aid (2020-21) received Nov 21		Gift Aid	-965			965		
Gift Aid (2021-22) received Dec 22		Gift Aid	458			-458		
Total	28277		16161		12267	3029	35200	

CHRISTCHURCH (METHODIST/UNITED REFORMED) CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1142830

Accounts

CHRISTCHURCH HITCHIN

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

AND

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY

YEAR TO 31 AUGUST 2022

Trustees report for the year ended 31st August 2022

Context

A team of Trustees have the duty and responsibility to report on the activities of the Charity that is Christchurch (Methodist and United Reformed) Church. The team consists of the Minister and 8 elected from and by the church membership, in accordance with the terms of the constitution. Christchurch Hitchin is located at Bedford Road, Hitchin, SG5 1HF. It is a registered charity, no. 1142830, and its constitution was formally updated in January 2019.

Those serving for some, or all of the year were as follows:

Paul Arnold, David Box, Vlc Evans, Angela Griggs, Tracy King, Stephanie Breker, Julie Mills, Revd. Val Reid.

Retired during the year:

Annette England, Andy Feltoe

Elected during the year:

None

The Trustees, normally called the Trustee Oversight Group, meet monthly, and have overall responsibility for all aspects of Church Life.

Objectives and Activities

The Trustees are committed to developing the work of the charity, to strengthening the discipleship of its members and to supporting and encouraging others to develop their faith and make a commitment as a follower of Christ.

The Mission Statement of the Church is: ***Led by the Spirit – Working in the Community – Bringing people to Christ.***

The “Growing Together” vision continues to be used to review our activities, in addition to the statement ‘Real Life, Real Love, Real You’ which was informally adopted in January 2020 as a way of thinking about all that we do as a charity. This phrase has become increasingly relevant as we have journeyed through the last three years of the global Covid-19 pandemic.

The Purpose of the Charity, as set out in the Christchurch constitution, is to advance the Christian faith in the Area of Benefit in accordance with the principles and practices of the Methodist and United Reformed Churches.

The Trustees have a duty under the constitution to give the necessary direction to achieve its Purpose, and to “engage in a range of activities, either on its own or with others, including (but not restricted to):

- the celebration of public worship.
- the teaching of the Christian faith.
- mission and evangelism.
- pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved.
- the provision of facilities with a Christian ethos for the local community, including (but not restricted to) the elderly, the young and other groups with special needs; and
- the support of other charities in the UK and overseas

An introduction

Christchurch is a large congregation and as of 31 August 2022 there were 217 members. The average attendance at all services on a Sunday was 105, (consisting of 90 adults and 15 under 18's) as measured during the month of October 2021, in accordance with the procedures of the Methodist church.

The period covered by this report, represents a unique period in the life of Christchurch in that across the globe people were living under a variety of restrictions as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. This impacted all areas of the church. The trustees focussed on thinking creatively to ensure that members and adherents stayed connected and that no one became isolated.

As part of our planning for reopening, it was agreed by the Annual General Meeting in November 2021 that we would go through a time of reflection which would be facilitated by running a number of focus groups. We called this 'The Listening Project'. It was a time of listening to those involved in Christchurch currently and in the past and of course a time of listening to what God was telling us. We wanted to understand why some longstanding members no longer attend Christchurch and how the current membership could be encouraged and motivated to be more actively involved. Ultimately, as a result of the learning from the focus groups, the Christchurch Charter was born. This was written with input from the diverse range of people and personalities that make up this community. We committed:

- To encourage each other: To look for the positive and assume everyone's doing their best and to take every opportunity to say thank you!
- To try to understand: There may be all sorts of reasons why someone's saying or doing something we disagree with: we try to find out what they are. We listen carefully. We respond kindly. We respect everyone's views.
- To celebrate difference: We appreciate diversity in our community and our activities. We value experience and innovation. We expect that we will all make mistakes from time to time. We forgive each other.

Church meetings continued to be held regularly in person and on Zoom. This has allowed people to access the church meetings in different ways.

Trustee meetings took place at least monthly as the team responded to frequent changes in the law. The risk assessment was under constant review.

The vacant Youth Worker post was filled in June 2022 having been vacant by that time for about 18 months the Minister, trustees and Area Leads worked well as a team to lead the church through the uncertainties of the pandemic.

In November 2021 we came together for a series of Saturday morning discussions on the theme of 'radical hospitality', using material prepared by the URC for the Inclusive Church movement. We are deeply committed to being open and hospitable, and these conversations encouraged the church to think more widely about just what that might mean.

In March 2022, there was an Extraordinary Church Meeting to discuss the Methodist Church report 'God in Love Unites Us'. We needed to decide as a church whether or not to register our premises to conduct same sex weddings. It was clear from this meeting that we do not all think alike on this matter, and that we all approach our reading of the Bible in different ways. But seeds planted through our listening project in January were also beginning to grow. We were able to share our

different perspectives openly, and to listen to each other with respect. The indicative vote taken at the March meeting was clearly in favour of registering for same-sex marriage, but the numbers were close. So, the trustees decided to open out the consultation to everyone connected with the church. We did this through letters and emails, and through an 'ask the minister' session in May. Following this open consultation, it was clear that a very large majority of people believed that God was calling us to take a step of faith, and to welcome the LGBTQI community at Christchurch through offering same sex marriage to those for whom a church wedding felt important. This whole process has meant that we have all grown in our thinking and in our faith, and we have grown as a community in our willingness to be open to all.

Worshipping Together

In September 2021 we returned to an in-person service on Sunday mornings, with a new start time of 10:30. A 45-minute service was held initially, gradually increasing in length to an hour over time. We continued to make the service available online on YouTube for those not attending in person – initially as a recording published within 24 hours but returning to live streaming from May 2022. In January we launched a church-wide survey to gauge the feeling of post-pandemic worship at Christchurch among our congregation. We had a total of 69 responses to the thirteen questions about current worship and possible future opportunities. Several actions have been taken because of feedback from the survey – giving more space and reflection time in worship and singing songs together without breaks between them. In response to a clear desire for a short duration, early Sunday morning worship service in the traditional style, we recommenced worship at 9am on a Sunday, but in a modified form to pre-pandemic times. We have been meeting in the Silver Birch Lounge each first Sunday of the month since June 2022 with a service of Holy Communion. We continually look at the music offering at Christchurch and a plan for a more consistent approach to song selection is being put in place, while keeping the flexibility for preachers to be spirit-led. A reduction in the number of available preachers on the Circuit Plan has resulted in more "Local Arrangements" services at which worship is planned and led by members of the church.

People of all ages have continued to contribute to worship through singing, playing instruments, and sharing readings.

Teaching and Discipleship - headlines

- Main focus of teaching at Christchurch currently comes within our Sunday morning services and Junior Church sessions.
- Preachers follow the Lectionary.
- 'House Groups' for adults, involving approximately 100 people meeting weekly or fortnightly. These have continued in a variety of formats. Some have continued to meet on Zoom since the lifting of the pandemic restrictions and others are now meeting in person again.
- Lunchtime meditation group
- 'Christchurch Men's breakfast', a valuable time of fellowship for men (mostly of the more mature age group) although open to all ages.

Youth, Children and Families

Youth, children, and families continued to be a key part of our mission during the year, despite the challenges of coming out of covid restrictions. With an active 'Junior Church' for children aged from birth to 18, this work has been managed solely by volunteers until the full-time Youth & Children's worker came into post.

An overview is given below. (Activities provided are age/stage appropriate with any necessary adjustments made to ensure ALL are included).

Early Years: (Age 0-5)

- Parents & Pre-school groups restarted meeting in person
- This group became Christchurch Hitchin Baby and Toddler Group with 35 families on register (average attendance 20 families)
- Crèche - for Sunday mornings, only 2 children currently on crèche register (with one regular volunteer)
- Cuddle corner has still not "formally" restarted during the main services, albeit that it is great to see families using this facility at morning services
- 'Beginners' group for those aged 3 – 5 years; 5 on register

Primary: (Age 5-11)

- Our 'Pig' group for children aged 5-11 meets most Sundays during the main service for bible teaching, games and fun! We have a very lively group with 14 children that regularly attend and another 5 that are still on the register but haven't attended since we started meeting back together in person.

Secondary: (Age 11-16/18)

- During lockdown, 'All In' continued to meet virtually, maintaining regular contact with between 5 to 10 of our young people, switching to in-person for outside meetings as appropriate. Due to other commitments for the core group of young people, the meetings have moved away from the traditional Sunday morning sessions, to either Sunday or Friday evenings, continuing to be attended by between 5 and 10 young people, to cater for the different ages of our young people.
- Over the summer room 4 was redecorated and made into a youth room to create a safe and fun space for the young people to have. This room is planned to be used by our new Sunday morning group, starting September 2022 which we have created from children in the older end of PIG and the younger end of All:In. The Sunday morning group is for school years 5-8.
- The traditional spring residential weekend has not been possible due to the pandemic restrictions and not having a Youth and children's worker.

Ministry for Leaders

- Volunteers who work to run groups benefit from providing mutual support to each other and from the wider church community.
- A number stepped down during the pandemic, but a core team remains. However, it is hoped that once the pressures of the pandemic ease, that volunteers will feel able to return to their former or alternative roles, or that others will feel called into this area of church life.
- We run regular training events for leaders, some in-house and some run ecumenically in the town.

Outreach

Reach Out initiatives and support fall under two headings: Home and Overseas. During lockdown, 'Home' activities did not been take place due to the Covid 19 pandemic. These have restarted again, in new formats.

Home

- Refresh, started on a Tuesday morning as a drop in, welcoming anyone, regulars and visitors, for tea, coffee and company. As well as serving our local community we have, since March 2022, been welcoming individuals and families from the Ukraine, initially offering them a place to meet their fellow countrywomen (most are female with children). We have also provided, toiletries, clothes, books, and toys. Until the end of the summer school holidays, we had lots of Ukrainian children attending. During this period, we set up lots of toys and activities in the hall for them to enjoy. Most, if not all, of the school-age children have now been offered school places. Likewise, many of the adults have now secured jobs either paid or voluntary so their lives too, are moving on. Knit and Natter also started during this Tuesday morning.
- English Class for Ukrainians - We had offers from volunteers from other Hitchin churches willing to help, with fluent Ukrainian, Russian and/or language teaching experience. We started meeting on Friday mornings at Christchurch in June 2022, arranging 3-4 graded groups for the 20-25 students, as well as a "play corner" for accompanying children not yet with school places, supervised by very resourceful, experienced, and dedicated volunteers from our church family
- Lunch Club serving elderly folk, referred through social and health services.
- Parent and Toddler group, weekly.
- Meeting Needs monthly deliveries of furniture and other non-perishable goods to people in need.
- Family Film Club during the winter months.
- Daisychains, a support group for families of pre-school children with additional needs.
- Christians Against Poverty, a debt counselling service.
- Simpsons Alms houses.
- Helping Herts Homeless for the Homeless and North Herts Sanctuary, for homeless young people, and Hitchin Food Bank.
- North Herts Circuit of the Methodist Church and the North Herts Group of United Reformed Churches -- Christchurch plays an active role in these.

Overseas

- Prayer and financial commitment continued to be key features of our commitment to serving people overseas.
- We continued to respond throughout the year to emergency appeals as a result of either man-made or natural disasters. Traidcraft items were available throughout the pandemic with orders placed online.
- We are an Eco Church, and volunteers run several recycling initiatives.

Pastoral and staying connected

Pastoral Report 2022

During the past year we have been able to provide pastoral care and support for most of our church members and the wider community. This is due to the wonderful work done by our Pastoral Friends. – Those in small groups receive their pastoral care within 1. 19 their group. Some of our long-established Pastoral Friends have moved or are moving away from Hitchin hence the need for more people to come forward as Pastoral Friends in the coming year. A development this year has been that two further people have joined the pastoral lead to be part of the Pastoral Leadership Group. This has enabled us to work as a team dividing up responsibility for different aspects of the role. This is proving effective and supportive as we work together with the minister. We have all benefitted from two training sessions this year where we were able to support and share together.

- Bereavement – once again we have experienced several deaths within our church community, also there are bereaved people who have lost family members during the past year. The minister and the Pastoral Area Lead provide support at this time, often also leading the funeral service. An annual memorial service is held to which the families of church members who have died are invited. These peoples' names are read out and they are remembered. The service is also for anyone who has been bereaved during the past year. These families also receive a letter from the church at the time of their bereavement and a Christmas card. We also send Christmas cards to others who have been going through difficult times. Letters are also sent to members on special occasions.
- Our normal regular pastoral care included taking home communion to those who are in care homes or who are house bound. We have particular pastoral care for residents in Archers Court and Elmside MHA. Because they are adjacent to the church, a rota is organized to bring residents over to worship.
- Each week flowers are taken out from the church after a service is live or live streamed. These are delivered to those who are going through challenging times and are further way of contacting these people and reminding them that they are remembered.
- We have a Christchurch Prayer book where members and regular adherents are prayed for on a rota basis by the minister and the Pastoral Area Lead.
- The Pastoral Area Lead gives a regular report at the Members' meeting [which has taken place alternately on-premises or on zoom] to keep them up to date with pastoral changes and also giving people the opportunity to remember those who have died.
- We will continue to welcome newcomers and support each other pastorally in more effective ways.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding at Christchurch follows our own policy which builds upon the safeguarding policies and procedures of the Methodist Church. Our safeguarding group is responsible for ensuring that these policies are understood and implemented correctly by all members of the church and users of our premises. The Christchurch safeguarding team receive support from the district and national safeguarding teams of the Methodist Church.

The new safeguarding team meet regularly with a focus on the core safeguarding policies and procedures :-

- **Safer recruitment.** This includes performing criminal record checks for volunteers who have significant contact with young people and vulnerable adults.
- **Safeguarding training.** Training was a challenge during lockdown as online courses took some time to be rolled out by the Methodist Church. Where possible some basic training was provided by our own safeguarding trainers.
- **Assessing safeguarding risk** for the many church activities. Risk assessments during the pandemic involved new safeguarding risks as the church made use of technologies such as Zoom and YouTube for online services and activities.

The last year has been a particularly busy time for the safeguarding group. Areas needed to be considered have included the relaxation of Covid restrictions, the gentle return to church activities, risk assessments, safeguarding training and the ways to safely continue outreach and church-based activities. As we continue to offer new ways of offering outreach and re-establishing church-based groups, safeguarding considerations have been essential in planning for all new and existing groups. The Christchurch handbook is now on the Christchurch website to guide people through all the procedures. From this year every group activity that is organised by Christchurch will need to complete an annual risk assessment. We will require all groups to complete a risk assessment and return it to our church administrator, by the end of November. The safeguarding group are always available to offer help and guidance. Over the last church year, the training team have trained 30 volunteers from Christchurch. The feedback from the new Foundation course has been very positive. We are continuing the process of updating the safeguarding database.

Property

Christchurch Finance and Property Committee

The committee has 9 members but has the option to co-opt other people for specific projects. The full Finance and Property committee meets about 4 times a year but has a Finance Wing and also a Property Wing which meet between full F&P meetings to move specific items forward where a smaller gathering is sometimes more efficient.

Annual Property tasks undertaken during the year

- Annual Returns completed and any necessary work undertaken – Quinquennial, Methodist Property Return and Church Return Report.
- Normal maintenance checks carried out – Boiler servicing, Fire Alarm System/Extinguishers/Blanket Inspections and Testing, PAT testing, Organ and piano tuning, Regular window cleaning, Visual site inspections both interior and exterior, Sewer pit inspection and water meter reading if necessary, Water flush checks, Lighting, etc.
- Garden working parties organised as and when necessary.
- Defibrillator training for volunteers and regular maintenance of first aid boxes.
- Risk Assessment updated.

Other Property tasks undertaken during this year

- An independent Fire Assessment of the building has been carried out. A Fire Risk Assessment has been written using template from Methodist Insurance website; Fire Evacuation Notices have been updated to show Emergency Exits, and a Fire Evacuation was undertaken in February on a Sunday.
- A Health and Safety policy was written. This is now available on the church website and sent out to all external hirers.
- A digital collection plate was installed in October 2021.
- More comfy upholstered chairs have been placed in the sanctuary and the old ones disposed of.
- The Wi-Fi system has been upgraded and the Sound and Audio/Visual facilities upgraded to include a new sound desk in the Sanctuary allowing live streaming of services on Sunday mornings, a display monitor in the Welcome Area to show live services and also a notice reel during the week, installation of large retractable projection screen and projector in the Church Hall.
- Room 10 has been completely de-cluttered to make a pleasant meeting room.
- Room 4 has been altered to become a Youth Room – built in cupboards and old wall blackboards were removed, walls were all repainted and new furniture purchased to suit its new purpose.
- Centralisation of maintenance records - checklists incorporated to ensure regular checks are undertaken in a timely fashion and are well documented.

In total for the year ended 31 August 2022, £55,817 was spent on equipment, maintenance and cleaning. This includes £31,770 spent on the Sound and Audio Visual equipment as noted above.

Support for other charities in the UK and overseas

Whilst opportunities for fundraising were limited during the year, the church still donated over £6,000 to local and global charities. The church has also continued to support its mission partners overseas, both from the general funds and through individual's own fundraising.

Accounts

The financial surplus in 2021-22 was £10,449. The Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet are set out below. The Trustees have also formulated Accounting Policies and a Reserves Policy and these are set out below:

Reserves policy

It is the Trustees' policy to maintain a balance in reserve which equates to 6 months of the assessments due to the Methodist and United Reformed Churches, and wages for the staff employed directly by Christchurch, plus potential employment termination costs and redundancy liabilities. In addition, provision has been made for capital projects expected to be carried out during the year.

Public benefit:

The trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Approved at the Trustees Meeting held on 4th May 2023 by video call and signed on behalf of the Trustees:



Tracy King
Church Secretary

Declarations

Treasurer

I confirm that these accrual – based accounts for the year ended 31 August 2022 have been prepared from the records of the Church and that they include all funds under the control of the Church Leadership Group, being the trustees of the Church.

Signed: Stephanie Brooker Date: 22/06/2023

Name of Treasurer: Stephanie Brooker

Address of Treasurer: 111 Benslow Lane, Hitchin, SG4 9RA

Presentation to the Trustees for approval

I confirm that the Trustees Annual Report, the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and the Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2022 were approved by the Trustees.

Signed: AJP Date: 22/06/23

Name: Angela Jean Griggs

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Christchurch, Hitchin, a Methodist/URC LEP, for the year ended 31 August 2022.

The trustees are responsible for ensuring that the annual report and accounts present a true and fair view of the Church's income and expenditure for the year and of the assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date. The trustees consider that an audit is not necessary for this year under s144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility for:

- Examine the accounts under s145 of the Charities Act
- Follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under s145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention

Declarations

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commission. 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, in nature or scale, or disclosure in the accounts seeking explanations from the trustees concerning 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. My 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 s130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Acthave 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.

Signed:

Neil Harding

Date:

27-6-23

Name of Independent Examiner: Neil Harding BA FCA

Relevant Professional qualification or body: ICAEW

Address: Bradshaw Johnson
Croft Chambers
11 Bancroft
Hitchin
Herts
SG5 1JQ

Name of Church

Christchurch Hitchin

Church No

340515

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2022

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted) £	Designated Funds (unrestricted) £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2021-22 £
Income						
1 Offerings		118,623	0	10,361	0	128,985
2 Donations and Grants		17,291	0	0	0	17,291
3 Gift aid		23,745	0	1,375	0	25,120
4 Interest and Investment Income		514	0	74	0	588
5 Income from lettings		26,937	0	0	0	26,937
6 Internal organisations		0	0	4,270	0	4,270
7 Other charitable Income		1,757	0	80	0	1,837
8 Total income		188,868	0	16,161	0	205,028
Expenditure						
9 Circuit and URC assessments		83,605	0	0	0	83,605
10 Grants and donations		5,810	0	0	0	5,810
10A Ministry, Worship and Teaching		1,556	0	0	0	1,556
11 Property maintenance		55,817	0	0	0	55,817
12 Insurance, utilities etc		12,454	0	0	0	12,454
13 Staff costs		8,702	0	6,400	0	15,102
14 Office expenses		6,452	0	0	0	6,452
15 Other expenditure		7,916	0	1,668	0	9,585
16 Internal organisations		0	0	4,199	0	4,199
17 Total charitable expenditure		182,313	0	12,267	0	194,580
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments						0
19 Gains/(losses) on Investment properties						0
20 Net income/(expenditure)		6,555	0	3,894	0	10,449
21 Transfers between funds		-3,029	0	3,029	0	0
22 Other gains/(losses)						0
23 Net movement in funds		3,526	0	6,923	0	10,449
24 Total funds brought forward		2,249,558		28,277		2,277,835
25 Total funds carried forward		2,253,084	0	35,200	0	2,288,284

Name of Church

Christchurch Hitchin

Church No

340515

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2021

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted) £	Designated Funds (unrestricted) £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2020-21 £
Income						
1 Offerings		113,624	0	8,067	0	121,690
2 Donations and Grants		2,796	0	2,613	0	5,409
3 Gift aid		25,378	0	2,075	0	27,454
4 Interest and Investment Income		607	0	17	0	623
5 Income from lettings		10,745	0	0	0	10,745
6 Internal organisations		0	0	0	0	0
7 Other charitable income		1,182	0	1,813	0	2,995
8 Total Income		154,332	0	14,585	0	168,917
Expenditure						
9 Circuit and URC assessments		98,316	0	0	0	98,316
10 Grants and donations		8,033	0	0	0	8,033
10A Ministry, Worship and Teaching		2,129	0	0	0	2,129
11 Property maintenance		17,670	0	0	0	17,670
12 Insurance, utilities etc		8,454	0	0	0	8,454
13 Staff costs		8,520	0	14,534	0	23,054
14 Office expenses		5,235	0	0	0	5,235
15 Other expenditure		240	0	2,606	0	2,845
16 Internal organisations		0	0	0	0	0
17 Total charitable expenditure		148,596	0	17,139	0	165,736
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments						0
19 Gains/(losses) on investment properties						0
20 Net income/(expenditure)		5,736	0	-2,555	0	3,181
21 Transfers between funds		4,368	0	-4,368	0	0
22 Other gains/(losses)						0
23 Net movement in funds		10,104	0	-6,923	0	3,181
24 Total funds brought forward		2,239,454		35,200		2,274,654
25 Total funds carried forward		2,249,558	0	28,277	0	2,277,835

Name of Church

Christchurch Hitchin

Church No

340515

Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2022

	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (Unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Totals 2022	Totals 2021
Notes to the Accounts	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets						
Church building and other property	2,000,000				2,000,000	
Investment properties					0	
Investments					0	
Total fixed assets	2,000,000	0	0	0	2,000,000	2,000,000
Current Assets						
Debtors and prepayments	8,328		458		8,786	10,578
Loans by the Churches					0	0
Investments with TMCP	158,758				158,758	143,481
Central Finance Board Deposits	70,373		34,742		105,115	104,196
Cash at Bank and In hand	17,465				17,465	27,404
Total current assets	254,924	0	35,200	0	290,124	285,659
Current liabilities						
Creditors (due in under 1 year)	1,840				1,840	7,824
Grants payable within 2019-20					0	
Total current liabilities	1,840	0	0	0	1,840	7,824
Net current assets/liabilities	253,084	0	35,200	0	288,284	277,835
Total assets less current liabilities	2,253,084	0	35,200	0	2,288,284	2,277,835
Long term liabilities (due after more than one year)						
Grants payable after 2019-20					0	
Loans to the Church					0	
					0	
Net assets	2,253,084	0	35,200	0	2,288,284	2,277,835
Funds of the Church						
General Fund (Unrestricted)	2,253,084				2,253,084	2,249,558
Designated Funds (Unrestricted)		0			0	
Total Unrestricted Funds					2,253,084	2,249,558
Restricted Funds			35,200		35,200	28,277
Endowment Funds				0	0	
Total Funds	2,253,084	0	35,200	0	2,288,284	2,277,835

Signed

Church Treasurer

Notes to the accounts 2021-22

1. Accounting Policies

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charity have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) (effective 1 January 2015), Financial Reporting Standard 102 (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the accruals basis and historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain assets.

Christchurch Hitchin meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in Sterling (£)

Incoming Resources

Income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the Church becomes entitled to the resources, and the trustees are reasonably certain they will receive them; and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Resources Expended

Expense is recognised when a liability is incurred, or a constructive obligation arises, that results in the payment being unavoidable. Liabilities are recognised as soon as an outflow of economic benefit is considered more likely than not.

Funds

The funds held constitute:

General funds held for any purpose of the Church which are unrestricted

Restricted funds held for a narrower purpose

There are no endowment funds. Details of each material fund are disclosed in Note 10 of these accounts. Any funds may be represented by more than cash.

Grants

Grants made by the Church from its own funds are recognised in full at the time of agreement or when the Church accepts that there is a legal or operational obligation to make the payment.

Debtors

Debtors are measured on initial recognition at the settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the Charity. Subsequently they are measured at cash or other consideration expected to be received.

Creditors

Creditors are measured at the settlement amount less any trade discounts.

VAT

The Church is not VAT registered; all expenses are recognised gross, with no deduction for input VAT.

Tangible Fixed Assets

Tangible Fixed Assets are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £1,000. The freehold property is shown in the accounts at 2015 deemed cost, of which the land component is deemed to be £0.6m. No depreciation is provided on the building as the trustees consider the current residual fair value to be not less than its current value. The property has been reviewed for impairment.

Beneficial Interest

The Church has a beneficial interest in the proceeds from the sale of Priory Way (the former URC manse) and Queen Street (the former Congregational Church). The approximate value at 31 August 2022 of the relevant Trust Funds held by the URC was 260k.

2. Payment to Trustees

There were no payments made to Trustees for additional services provided to the Church by agreement with the Church Meeting. This excludes stipends and expenses relating to reimbursement for travel and computing costs

3. Fees for examination or audit of the accounts

	2022	2021
	£	£
Independent Examiner Fee for reporting on the accounts	650	600
Other fees (eg advice, accountancy services) paid the Independent Examiner	-	-

4. Paid Employees

No employees have been paid more than £60,000 pa.

Staff costs during the year were:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Gross wages, salaries and benefits in Kind	14,103	21,100
Employers National Insurance costs	489	725
Pension Costs	511	1,229
Total staff costs	15,102	23,054

Average number of full time equivalent employees in the year were: 1 1

5. Capital commitments and Contingent Liabilities

At the 31 August 2022, there are no capital commitments, and no contingent liabilities have been identified at that date.

6. Monies received and passed on to External Organisations

	2022	2021
	£	£
Balance brought forward	0	0
Offerings/gifts - received for external organisations	0	0
Offerings/gifts - passed to external organisations	0	0
Balance carried forward	0	0

7. Tangible Fixed Assets

£'000	Land	Buildings	Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment	Assets under construction	Total
Cost					
Opening balance 1 September 2021	600	1,200	200		2,000
Additions					0
Revaluations					0
Disposals					0
Transfers					0
Closing balance 31 August 2022	600	1,200	200		2,000
Accumulated Depreciation					
Opening balance 1 September 2021	0	0	0	0	0
Depreciation charge for the year					0
Revaluations					0
Disposals					0
Transfers					0
Closing balance 31 August 2022	0	0	0	0	0
Net book Value 1 September 2021	600	1,200	200		2,000
Net book Value 31 August 2022	600	1,200	200		2,000

The value of the Church building and the land on which it stands is believed to be considerably greater than the value shown. There is no depreciation on the building or fixtures, fittings or equipment as it is judged that this is immaterial. There were no indicators of impairment since the market value is considered to be greater than the book value.

8 Debtors

	2022	2021
	£	£
Prepayments	0	0
Debtors - Gift Aid	8,786	10,578
Other Debtors	0	0
	<u>8,786</u>	<u>10,578</u>

9. Creditors

	2022	2021
	£	£
Accruals	1,840	7,824
	<u>1,840</u>	<u>7,824</u>

10. Analysis of restricted funds 2021-22

Fund name	Opening balance	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers ex Main A/c	Closing balance	Purpose of fund
Youth (Incl.Messy Church)	12880	Offerings 6655 Staff support grant 3266 Gift Aid 2020/21 908 Interest 74 Gift Aid 2021/22 1352	Youth projects, i.e. Int'l Organisations Staff costs	1095 1949 6400	19590	Promotion of youth work
Junior Church	909	Offerings Interest Gift Aid 2021/22	Grants Expenses Int'l Organisations		914	
G.Milledge	5360	Donations Interest Gift Aid 2021/22	Grants Int'l Organisations		5382	Assist young people working overseas
Pastoral	1371	Offerings Interest Gift Aid 2021/22	Expenses Int'l Organisations	573 573	1477	Pastoral work
Manila Fund	2104	Donations Interest Gift Aid 2021/22	Expenditure		2113	Support Manila church
Lunch Club	3865	Int'l Organisations	Int'l Organisations	4199	3936	
Badminton Club	695	Int'l Organisations	Int'l Organisations	0	695	
Ladies Friendship Circle	65	Int'l Organisations	Int'l Organisations	0	65	
Flower fund	244	Donations	Expenditure		244	Weekly Church flowers
Donation – chairs	64	Donations	Expenditure	0	64	Memorial donation
Donation – kitchen	720	Donations	Expenditure	0	720	Memorial donation
Fund adjustment	0				0	
Adjustments - for accruals and monies not yet transferred						
Gift Aid (2020-21) received Nov.21		Gift Aid			965	
Gift Aid (2021-22) received Dec 22		Gift Aid			-458	
Total	28277			12267	3029	35200

Comparative analysis of restricted funds 2020-21

Fund name	Opening balance	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers ex Main A/c	Closing balance	Purpose of fund
Youth (Incl.Messy Church)	17126	Offerings 7372 Staff support grant 2613 Gift Aid 2019/20 Interest 9 Gift Aid 2020/21 2265	Youth projects, i.e. Int'l Organisations Staff costs	354 -1616 14534	12880	Promotion of youth work
Junior Church	909	Offerings Interest Gift Aid 2020/21	Grants Expenses Int'l Organisations	571 265	909	
G.Milledge	5353	Donations Interest Gift Aid 2020/21	Grants Int'l Organisations		5360	Assist young people working overseas
Pastoral	1130	Offerings Interest Gift Aid 2020/19	Expenses Int'l Organisations	452 397	1371	Pastoral work
Manila Fund	1478	Donations Interest Gift Aid 2019/20	Expenditure	1228	2104	Support Manila church
Lunch Club	3865	Int'l Organisations	Int'l Organisations	0	3865	
Badminton Club	695	Int'l Organisations	Int'l Organisations	0	695	
Ladies Friendship Circle	65	Int'l Organisations	Int'l Organisations	0	65	
Holiday Club	0	Income Gift Aid 2019/20	Expenditure		0	Summer Holiday Club week
Flower fund	184	Donations	Expenditure		244	Weekly Church flowers
Donation – chairs	64	Donations	Expenditure	0	64	Memorial donation
Donation – kitchen	720	Donations	Expenditure	0	720	Memorial donation
Fund adjustment	3611				-3611	0
Adjustments - for accruals and monies not yet transferred						
Gift Aid (2019-20) received Nov.20		Gift Aid			721	
Gift Aid (2020-21) received Oct.21		Gift Aid			-965	
Total	35200			17139	-4368	28277

CHRISTCHURCH (METHODIST/UNITED REFORMED) CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1142830

Accounts

Charity no. 1142830

CHRISTCHURCH HITCHIN

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

AND

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY

YEAR TO 31 AUGUST 2021

Trustees report for the year ended 31st August 2021

Context

A team of Trustees have the duty and responsibility to report on the activities of the Charity that is Christchurch (Methodist and United Reformed) Church. The team consists of the Minister, the Deacon and 8 elected from and by the church membership, in accordance with the terms of the constitution. Christchurch Hitchin is located at Bedford Road, Hitchin, SG5 1HF. It is a registered charity, no. 1142830, and its constitution was formally updated in January 2019.

Those serving for some, or all of the year were as follows:

Paul Arnold, David Box, Annette England, Vic Evans, Andy Feltoe, Angela Griggs, Tracy King, Stephanie Breker, Julie Mills, Revd. Val Reid.

Retired during the year:

Deacon Sheralee Devitt, Sara Crowley, Chris Blackman, Tim Rajan, Christine Warren, David Rossall, Peter Ward

Elected during the year:

Paul Arnold, David Box, Angela Griggs

The Trustees, normally called the Trustee Oversight Group, meet monthly, and have overall responsibility for all aspects of Church Life.

Objectives and Activities

The Trustees are committed to developing the work of the charity, to strengthening the discipleship of its members and to supporting and encouraging others to develop their faith and make a commitment as a follower of Christ.

The Mission Statement of the Church is: ***Led by the Spirit – Working in the Community – Bringing people to Christ.***

The “Growing Together” vision continues to be used to review our activities, in addition to the statement ‘Real Life, Real Love, Real You’ which was informally adopted in January 2020 as a way of thinking about all that we do as a charity. This phrase has become increasingly relevant as we have journeyed through the last two years of the global Covid-19 pandemic.

The Purpose of the Charity, as set out in the Christchurch constitution, is to advance the Christian faith in the Area of Benefit in accordance with the principles and practices of the Methodist and United Reformed Churches.

The Trustees have a duty under the constitution to give the necessary direction to achieve its Purpose, and to “engage in a range of activities, either on its own or with others, including (but not restricted to):

- the celebration of public worship.
- the teaching of the Christian faith.
- mission and evangelism.
- pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved.
- the provision of facilities with a Christian ethos for the local community, including (but not restricted to) the elderly, the young and other groups with special needs; and
- the support of other charities in the UK and overseas

An introduction

Christchurch is a large congregation and as of 31 August 2021 there were 235 members. The average attendance at all services on a Sunday was 180, (consisting of 130 adults and 30 under 19's) as measured during the month of October 2020, in accordance with the procedures of the Methodist church.

The period covered by this report, represents a unique period in the life of Christchurch in that across the globe people were living under a variety of restrictions as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. This impacted all areas of the church. The trustees focussed on thinking creatively to ensure that members and adherents stayed connected and that no one became isolated.

Church meetings continued to be held regularly but on Zoom. This meant that some who would normally attend in person were unable to participate. However, those that could access the technology would invite others to their home to ensure where possible everyone who wanted to take part could do so. The trustees wrote a pastoral letter each week to members. Again, where technology was a potential barrier, the letter was posted to people at home.

Trustee meetings took place at least monthly as the team responded to frequent changes in the law. The risk assessment was under constant review – Should we open for worship? Should on premises worship be paused? How many people should we have in the building? Can we open to other users/hirers? Do we have sufficient hand sanitiser and masks in stock? How many times a day should the building be cleaned?

Our minister took a three-month sabbatical between April and July 2021. The trustees worked tirelessly in her absence, seeking support from the Superintendent where necessary. It was during this period that our Family Worker resigned her post. With the Youth Worker post having been vacant by that time for some 9 months, and the post of Deacon having not been replaced in 2020, the Minister, trustees and Area Leads worked well as a team to lead the church through the uncertainties of the pandemic.

Worshipping Together

By August 2020 a pattern had been established of streaming a live service from the Sanctuary, followed by a zoom meeting for conversation. In September, a socially distanced 4pm service was added, which came and went a little as restrictions allowed.

We continued to offer transcripts of the services to those unable to access technology and resources for children to use at home. People of all ages have continued to contribute to worship through singing, playing instruments, and sharing readings.

In the Spring, following wide consultation, we started to plan our return to an in-person service on Sunday mornings, and by August 2021, these plans were in place for the following month.

Teaching and Discipleship - headlines

- Main focus of teaching at Christchurch currently comes within our Sunday morning services and Junior Church sessions.
- Preachers follow the Lectionary.
- 'House Groups' for adults, involving approximately 100 people meeting weekly or fortnightly. These have continued in a variety of formats. Some have continued to meet on Zoom since the lifting of the pandemic restrictions and others are now meeting in person again.
- 'Elevenses', a valuable time of fellowship for men (mostly of the more mature age group,) although open to all ages. Now meeting in person again following a period on Zoom during the pandemic.
- 'Friday night drinks' attended by those of working age predominantly. This continued on Zoom during the pandemic but now takes place in person once again which means it is now fully meeting its initial purpose of providing a place for fellowship and fun at the end of the working week.

Youth, Children and Families

Youth, children, and families continued to be a key part of our mission during the year, despite the challenges of lockdown. With an active 'Junior Church' for children aged from birth to 18, this work has been managed solely by volunteers in the continued absence of a full-time Youth & Children's worker. Efforts to recruit a replacement for this role have been actively pursued throughout this period.

An overview is given below. (Activities provided are age/stage appropriate with any necessary adjustments made to ensure ALL are included).

Early Years: (Age 0-5)

- No Parents & Pre-school groups met during lockdown
- This group became Christchurch Hitchin Baby and Toddler Group with 35 families on register (average attendance 20 families)
- Crèche - for Sunday mornings after lockdown, only 2 children currently on crèche register (with one regular volunteer)
- Cuddle corner has still not "formally" restarted during the main services, albeit that it is great to see families using this facility at morning services
- 'Beginners' group for those aged 3 – 5 years; 5 on register

Primary: (Age 5-11)

- Our 'Pig' group for children aged 5-11 meets most Sundays during the main service for bible teaching, games and fun! We have a very lively group with 17 children that regularly attend and another 5 that are still on the register but haven't attended since we started meeting back together in person.

Secondary: (Age 11-16/18)

- During lockdown, 'All In' continued to meet virtually, maintaining regular contact with between 5 to 10 of our young people, switching to in-person for outside meetings as appropriate. Due to other commitments for the core group of young people, the meetings have moved away from the traditional Sunday morning sessions, to either Sunday or Friday evenings, continuing to be attended by between 5 and 10 young people, to cater for the different ages of our young people.
- The traditional spring residential weekend was not possible due to the pandemic/lockdown.

Family ministry

- This year our Family Worker resigned and has not been replaced.
- As at the end of this reporting period there were no immediate plans to replace the Family Worker, with efforts focussed on recruiting a Youth and Children's worker as a priority.

Ministry for Leaders

- Volunteers who work to run groups benefit from providing mutual support to each other and from the wider church community.
- A number stepped down during the pandemic but a core team remains. However, it is hoped that once the pressures of the pandemic ease, that volunteers will feel able to return to their former or alternative roles, or that others will feel called into this area of church life.
- We run regular training events for leaders, some in-house and some run ecumenically in the town.

Outreach

Reach Out initiatives and support fall under two headings: Home and Overseas. During lockdown, 'Home' activities did not take place due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is anticipated that many will start again, possibly in new formats once restrictions allow.

Home

- Open Church, weekday drop in, welcoming anyone, regulars and visitors, for tea, coffee and company.
- Saturday morning coffee.
- Art Space (an art club).
- Lunch Club serving elderly folk, referred through social and health services.
- Parent and Toddler group, weekly.
- Meeting Needs monthly deliveries of furniture and other non-perishable goods to people in need.
- Coffee+, a family coffee morning with play space.
- Family Film Club during the winter months. For those wishing to explore faith in different contexts and Messy Church for those wishing to explore faith in different contexts.
- Prayer station outside Christchurch offered prayers, conversation and a listening ear if needed.
- Daisychains, a support group for families of pre-school children with additional needs.
- Christians Against Poverty, a debt counselling service.
- Simpsons Alms houses.
- North Herts Sanctuary for the Homeless and Jubilee House, for homeless young people, and Hitchin Food Bank.

- Throughout 2020, posters were regularly exhibited in the display units along the front of the church. This included messages of hope and expressions of the love of Christ as well as a well-received exhibition 'Great Black Britons', inspired by the Black Lives Matter' movement.
- North Herts Circuit of the Methodist Church and the North Herts Group of United Reformed Churches – Christchurch plays an active role in these.
- Good Friday Walk of Witness

Overseas

- Prayer and financial commitment continued to be key features of our commitment to serving people overseas. A partner with SIM International is supporting persecuted Christians in the Middle East.
- A family living and working in Egypt, sent by Interserve.
- We also continued to partner with Jon and Lisa Short, who work with Christian students in Madrid until August 2021.
- We continued to respond throughout the year to emergency appeals as a result of either man-made or natural disasters. Traidcraft items were available throughout the pandemic with orders placed online.
- We are an Eco Church, and volunteers run several recycling initiatives.

Pastoral and staying connected

Pastoral Report 2021

- Pastoral care has, this year, been led and overseen by the minister and the Pastoral Area Lead. We realise that, in the future, there may be the need to make this core team larger. [This was evident when the minister was on her sabbatical] This core team is backed up by a team of approximately 50 Pastoral friends who each have special care of a small group of members and adherents. In addition, our small fellowship groups offer pastoral care to their members. During the year 2020-2021 much of our pastoral care has been achieved by keeping in touch by telephone, email, or text rather than face to face visiting in people's homes. Urgent pastoral needs have been passed onto the minister or Pastoral Area Lead so that they too can support these people's needs and also the individual Pastoral friend.
- Our aim has been to provide pastoral cover for all our members and regular adherents. We have almost achieved this but, as with any church, there are constant changes, and we still need to recruit more Pastoral friends. We are planning to look at our adherent list in the coming year to make sure our list is up to date. This is a particular challenge at a large church such as Christchurch and particularly during the months of lock down.
- Training has been provided twice on Zoom during this past year for our Pastoral friends. There was a good attendance on both occasions and positive feedback was received.
- Bereavement – once again we have experienced several deaths within our church community, also there are bereaved people who have lost family members during the past year. The minister and the Pastoral Area Lead provide support at this time, often also leading the funeral service. An annual memorial service is held to which the families of church members who have died are invited. These peoples' names are read out and they are remembered. The service is also for anyone who has been bereaved during the past year. We were fortunate that when we held the service in the year 2020, we could meet together face to face as it was at a time between lockdowns. These families also receive a letter from the church at the time of their bereavement and a Christmas card. We also send Christmas cards to others who have been going through difficult times. Letters are also sent to members on special occasions.

Property

The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown restrictions had a very significant impact on the management of the building at Christchurch which resulted in the preparation of numerous in depth Risk Assessments for all groups preparing to resume using the building whenever possible to do so. Separate Risk Assessments were written for those using different areas of the building, e.g. the Sanctuary, Kitchen and small rooms - all of them written in response to Government guidelines and Methodist and United Reformed Church advice.

Sanitising stations, a one-way system to move around the building, mask wearing and additional cleaning measures were introduced, as well as Legionella testing for the water system and re-assessment of heating and ventilation requirements so that use of the building for services and meetings could resume as safely as possible.

Opportunities were taken to redecorate some parts of the building during periods of closure, particularly the corridor and smaller rooms, so that they looked fresh and clean when the building reopened.

In total, £17,670 was spent on maintenance and cleaning. This includes £2,000 spent on redecoration and £2,800 on the vestry cupboards.

A Property Schedule was prepared for forwarding to the Methodist Superintendent, in accordance with Methodist Church procedures.

Support for other charities in the UK and overseas

Whilst opportunities for fundraising were limited during the year, the church still donated over £6,000 to local and global charities. The church has also continued to support its mission partners overseas, both from the general funds and through individual's own fundraising.

Accounts

The financial surplus in 2020-21 was £3,181. The Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet are set out below. The Trustees have also formulated Accounting Policies and a Reserves Policy and these are set out below:

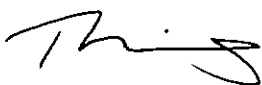
Reserves policy

It is the Trustees' policy to maintain a balance in reserve which equates to 6 months of the assessments due to the Methodist and United Reformed Churches, and wages for the staff employed directly by Christchurch, plus potential employment termination costs and redundancy liabilities. In addition, provision has been made for capital projects expected to be carried out during the year.

Public benefit

The trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Approved at the Trustees Meeting held on 25th May 2022 by video call and signed on behalf of the Trustees:



Tracy King
Church Secretary

- Our normal regular pastoral care included taking home communion to those who are in care homes or who are house bound. This has been difficult during this past year because of Covid-19 restrictions but we hope to resume this practice as soon as we can. The same is true for visits to members in care homes or in hospital. We have particular pastoral care for residents in Archers Court and Elmside MHA. Because they are adjacent to the church, a rota is organized to bring residents over to worship when we have live services.
- Each week flowers are taken out from the church after a service is live or live streamed. These are delivered to those who are going through challenging times and are further way of contacting these people and reminding them that they are remembered.
- We have a Christchurch Prayer book where members and regular adherents are prayed for on a rota basis by the minister and the Pastoral Area Lead.
- The Pastoral Area Lead gives a regular report at the Members' meeting [which has taken place on Zoom] to keep them up to date with pastoral changes and also giving people the opportunity to remember those who have died.
- As we begin to move out of Covid-19 restrictions, people belonging to the Christchurch community can hopefully meet face to face at coffee after church and other events. We will continue to welcome newcomers and support each other pastorally in more effective ways.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding at Christchurch follows our own policy which builds upon the safeguarding policies and procedures of the Methodist Church. Our safeguarding group is responsible for ensuring that these policies are understood and implemented correctly by all members of the church and users of our premises. The Christchurch safeguarding team receive support from the district and national safeguarding teams of the Methodist Church.

The new safeguarding team began meeting regularly in the Autumn of 2020 with a focus on the core safeguarding policies and procedures :-

- **Safer recruitment.** This includes performing criminal record checks for volunteers who have significant contact with young people and vulnerable adults.
- **Safeguarding training.** Training was a challenge during lockdown as online courses took some time to be rolled out by the Methodist Church. Where possible some basic training was provided by our own safeguarding trainers.
- **Assessing safeguarding risk** for the many church activities. Risk assessments during the pandemic involved new safeguarding risks as the church made use of technologies such as Zoom and YouTube for online services and activities.

In addition to normal safeguarding activities, the team determined that it would be necessary to create a 'Safeguarding Handbook' for the church to make it as easy as possible for group leaders and managers to understand and adhere to the safeguarding procedures. The first draft of the handbook was largely complete by the summer of 2021 with a plan to launch it in the autumn of 2021.

Declarations

Treasurer

I confirm that these accrual – based accounts for the year ended 31 August 2021 have been prepared from the records of the Church and that they include all funds under the control of the Church Leadership Group, being the trustees of the Church.

Signed:

Date: 7th June 2022

Stephanie Breker

Name of Treasurer: Stephanie Breker

Address of Treasurer: 111 Benslow Lane, Hitchin, SG4 9RA

Presentation to the Trustees for approval

I confirm that the Trustees Annual Report, the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and the Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2021 were approved by the Trustees at a meeting on 25 May 2022.

Signed: JMJ

Date: 7th June 2022.

Name: Julie MILLS

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Christchurch, Hitchin, a Methodist/URC LEP, for the year ended 31 August 2021.

The trustees are responsible for ensuring that the annual report and accounts present a true and fair view of the Church's income and expenditure for the year and of the assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date. The trustees consider that an audit is not necessary for this year under s144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility for:

- Examine the accounts under s145 of the Charities Act
- Follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under s145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention

Declarations

Basis of independent examiner's report

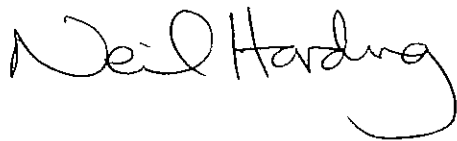
My examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Church and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items, in nature or scale, or disclosure in the accounts seeking explanations from the trustees concerning 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. My 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 s130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Acthave 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.

Signed:



Date:

22-6-22

Name of Independent Examiner: Neil Harding BA FCA

Relevant Professional qualification or body: ICAEW

Address: Bradshaw Johnson

Croft Chambers

11 Bancroft

Hitchin

Herts

SG5 1JQ

Name of Church

Christchurch Hitchin

Church No

340515

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2021

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2020-21
		£	£	£	£	£
Income						
1 Offerings		113,624		8,067		121,690
2 Donations and Grants		2,796		2,613		5,409
3 Gift aid		25,378		2,075		27,454
4 Interest and investment income		607		17		623
5 Income from lettings		10,745		0		10,745
6 Internal organisations		0		0		0
7 Other charitable income		1,182		1,813		2,995
8 Total income		154,332	0	14,585	0	168,917
Expenditure						
9 Circuit and URC assessments		98,316		0		98,316
10 Grants and donations		8,033		0		8,033
10A Ministry, Worship and Teaching		2,129		0		2,129
11 Property maintenance		17,670		0		17,670
12 Insurance, utilities etc		8,454		0		8,454
13 Staff costs		8,520		14,534		23,054
14 Office expenses		5,235		0		5,235
15 Other expenditure		240		2,606		2,845
16 Internal organisations		0		0		0
17 Total charitable expenditure		148,586	0	17,139	0	165,736
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments						0
19 Gains/(losses) on investment properties						0
20 Net Income/(expenditure)		5,736	0	-2,555	0	3,181
21 Transfers between funds		4,368		-4,368		0
22 Other gains/(losses)						0
23 Net movement in funds		10,104	0	-6,923	0	3,181
24 Total funds brought forward		2,239,454		35,200		2,274,654
25 Total funds carried forward		2,249,558	0	28,277	0	2,277,835



Name of Church

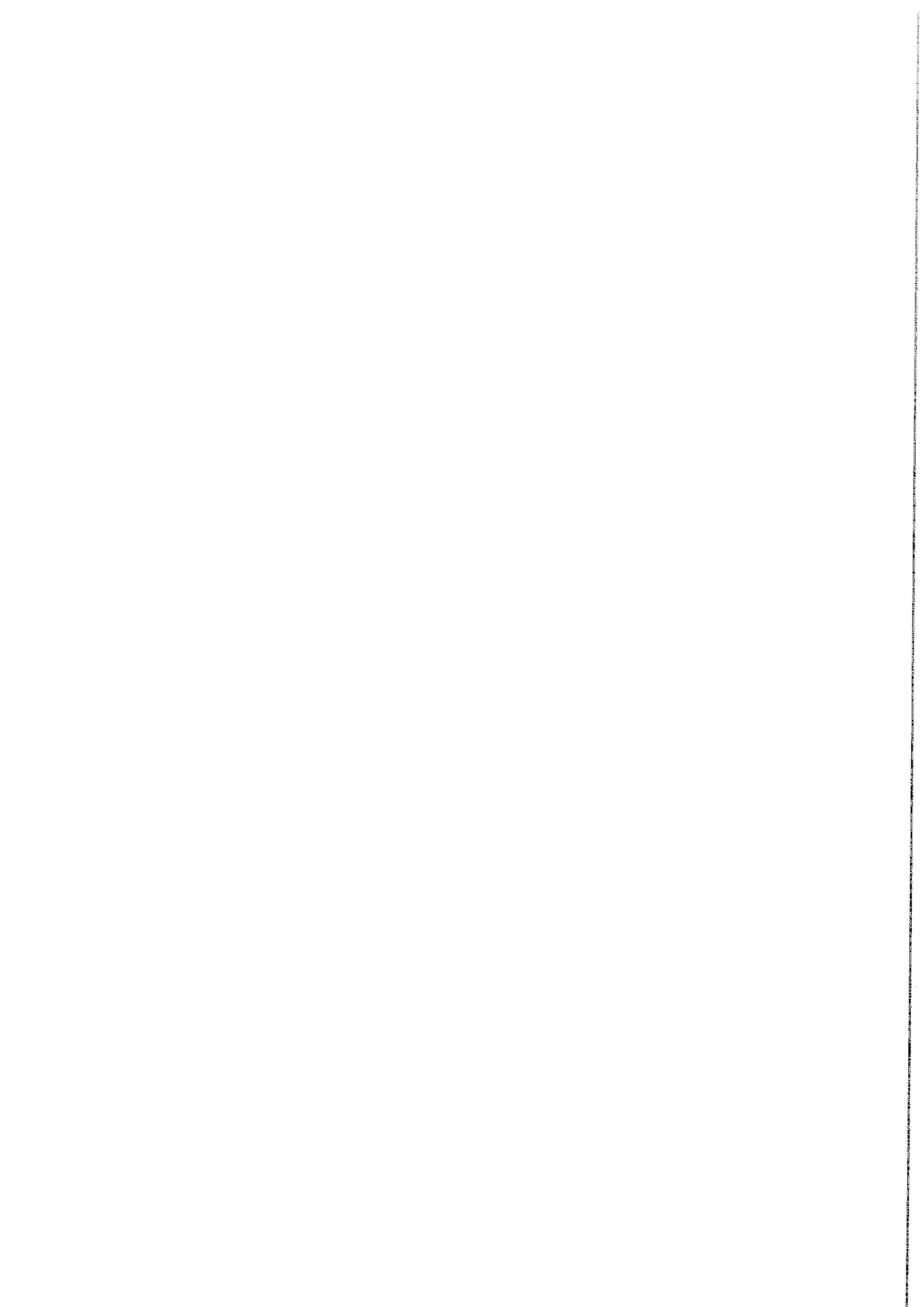
Christchurch Hitchin

Church No

340515

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2020

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2019-20
		£	£	£	£	£
Income						
1 Offerings		116,213	0	9,929	0	126,142
2 Donations and Grants		5,437	0	15,364	0	20,801
3 Gift aid		29,228	0	2,414	0	31,642
4 Interest and investment income		1,612	0	154	0	1,766
5 Income from lettings		32,466	0		0	32,466
6 Internal organisations		0	0	7,689	0	7,689
7 Other charitable income		17,224	0	9,218	0	26,442
8 Total income		202,180	0	44,768	0	246,948
Expenditure						
9 Circuit and URC assessments		109,722	0	0	0	109,722
10 Grants and donations		8,512	0	5,632	0	14,144
10A Ministry, Worship and Teaching		4,951	0	0	0	4,951
11 Property maintenance		18,536	0	0	0	18,536
12 Insurance, utilities etc		11,836	0	0	0	11,836
13 Staff costs		19,722	0	45,461	0	65,183
14 Office expenses		5,116	0	0	0	5,116
15 Other expenditure		15,950	0	2,927	0	18,877
16 Internal organisations		0	0	14,155	0	14,155
17 Total charitable expenditure		194,345	0	68,175	0	262,520
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments						0
19 Gains/(losses) on investment properties						0
20 Net income/(expenditure)		7,835	0	-23,407	0	-15,571
21 Transfers between funds		-46,676	0	46,676	0	0
22 Other gains/(losses)						0
23 Net movement in funds		-38,841	0	23,269	0	(15,571)
24 Total funds brought forward		2,278,294	0	11,930	0	2,290,225
25 Total funds carried forward		2,239,454	0	35,200	0	2,274,654



Name of Church

Christchurch Hitchin

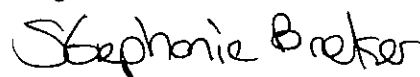
Church No

340515

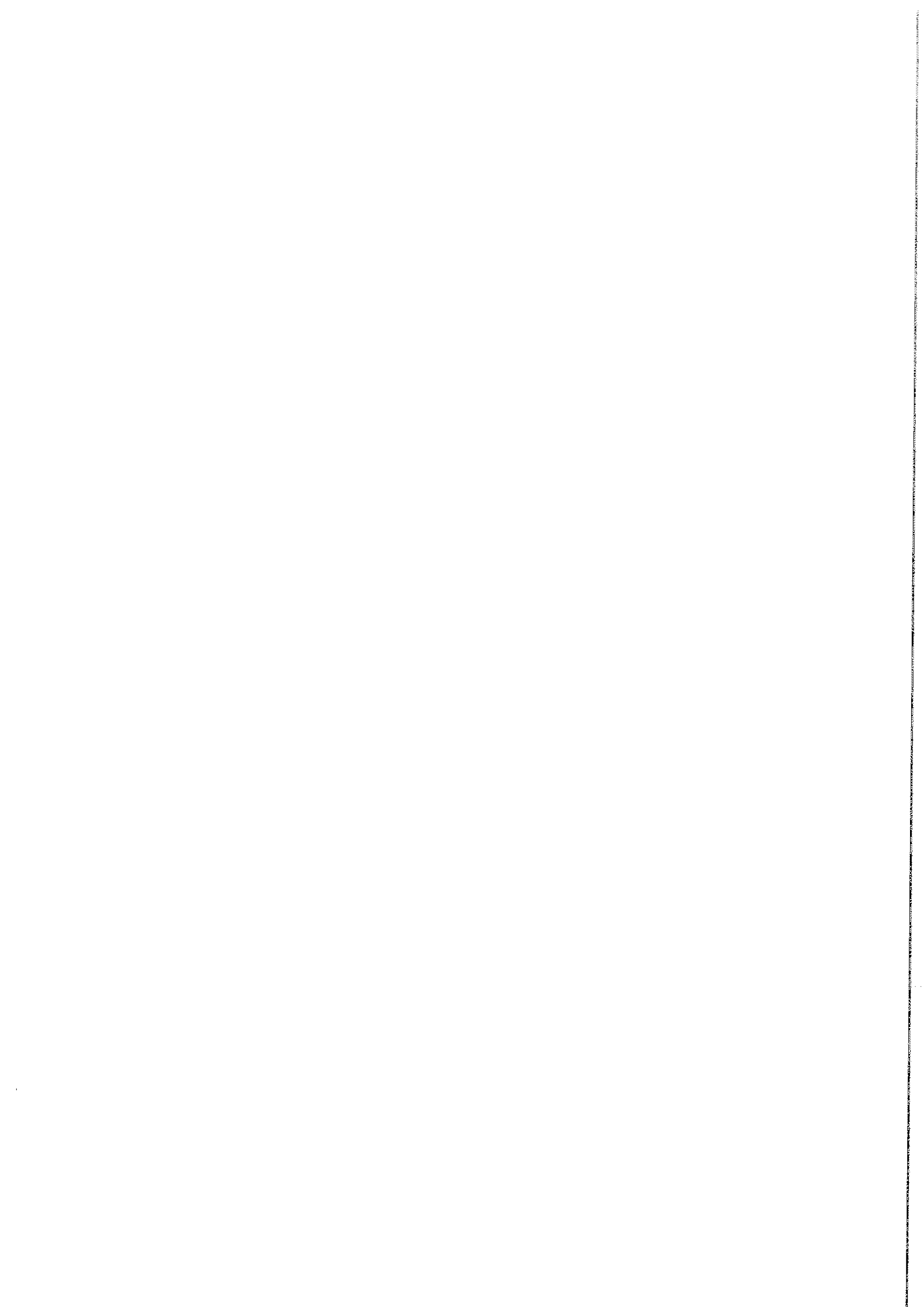
Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2021

		General Fund (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (Unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Totals 2021	Totals 2020
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets							
Church building and other property	7	2,000,000				2,000,000	
Investment properties						0	
Investments						0	
Total fixed assets		2,000,000	0	0	0	2,000,000	2,000,000
Current Assets							
Debtors and prepayments	8	9,613		965		10,578	15,498
Loans by the Churches						0	0
Investments with TMCP		143,481				143,481	141,287
Central Finance Board Deposits		78,884		27,312		104,196	105,711
Cash at Bank and in hand		27,404				27,404	15,961
Total current assets		257,382	0	28,277	0	285,659	278,457
Current liabilities							
Creditors (due in under 1 year)	9	7,824				7,824	3,804
Grants payable within 2019-20						0	
Total current liabilities		7,824	0	0	0	7,824	3,804
Net current assets/liabilities		249,558	0	28,277	0	277,835	274,654
Total assets less current liabilities		2,249,558	0	28,277	0	2,277,835	2,274,654
Long term liabilities (due after more than one year)							
Grants payable after 2019-20						0	
Loans to the Church						0	
Net assets		2,249,558	0	28,277	0	2,277,835	2,274,654
Funds of the Church							
General Fund (Unrestricted)		2,249,558				2,249,558	2,239,454
Designated Funds (Unrestricted)			0			0	
Total Unrestricted Funds						2,249,558	2,239,454
Restricted Funds				28,277		28,277	35,200
Endowment Funds					0	0	
Total Funds		2,249,558	0	28,277	0	2,277,835	2,274,654

Signed



Church Treasurer



Notes to the accounts 2020-21

1. Accounting Policies

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charity have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) (effective 1 January 2019), Financial Reporting Standard 102 (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the accruals basis and historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain assets.

Christchurch Hitchin meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in Sterling (£).

Incoming Resources

Income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the Church becomes entitled to the resources, and the trustees are reasonably certain they will receive them; and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Resources Expended

Expense is recognised when a liability is incurred, or a constructive obligation arises, that results in the payment being unavoidable. Liabilities are recognised as soon as an outflow of economic benefit is considered more likely than not.

Funds

The funds held constitute:

General funds held for any purpose of the Church which are unrestricted

Restricted funds held for a narrower purpose

There are no endowment funds. Details of each material fund are disclosed in Note 10 of these accounts. Any funds may be represented by more than cash.

Grants

Grants made by the Church from its own funds are recognised in full at the time of agreement or when the Church accepts that there is a legal or operational obligation to make the payment.

Debtors

Debtors are measured on initial recognition at the settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the Charity. Subsequently they are measured at cash or other consideration expected to be received.

Creditors

Creditors are measured at the settlement amount less any trade discounts.

VAT

The Church is not VAT registered; all expenses are recognised gross, with no deduction for input VAT.

Tangible Fixed Assets

Tangible Fixed Assets are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £1,000. The freehold property is shown in the accounts at 2015 deemed cost, of which the land component is deemed to be £0.6m. No depreciation is provided on the building as the trustees consider the current residual fair value to be not less than its current value. The property has been reviewed for impairment.

Beneficial Interest

The Church has a beneficial interest in the proceeds from the sale of Priory Way (the former URC manse) and Queen Street (the former Congregational Church). The approximate value at 31 August 2021 of the relevant Trust Funds held by the URC was £260k.

2. Payment to Trustees

There were no payments made to Trustees for additional services provided to the Church by agreement with the Church Meeting. This excludes stipends and expenses relating to reimbursement for travel and computing costs

3. Fees for examination or audit of the accounts

	2021	2020
	£	£
Independent Examiner Fee for reporting on the accounts	600	600
Other fees (eg advice, accountancy services) paid the Independent Examiner	-	-

4. Paid Employees

No employees have been paid more than £60,000 pa.

Staff costs during the year were:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Gross wages, salaries and benefits in kind	10,326	58,236
Employers National Insurance costs	253	3,533
Pension Costs	618	3,414
Total staff costs	22,588	65,183

Average number of full time equivalent employees in the year were: 1 3

5. Capital Commitments and Contingent Liabilities

At the 31 August 2021, there are no capital commitments, and no contingent liabilities have been identified at that date.

6. Monies received and passed on to External Organisations

	2021	2020
	£	£
Balance brought forward	0	-60
Offerings/gifts - received for external organisations	0	5,286
Offerings/gifts - passed to external organisations	0	5,226
Balance carried forward	0	0

7. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Land	Buildings	Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment	Assets under construction	Total
Cost					
Opening balance 1 September 2020	600,000	1,200,000	200,000		2,000,000
Additions					0
Revaluations					0
Disposals					0
Transfers					0
Closing balance 31 August 2021	600,000	1,200,000	200,000		2,000,000
Accumulated Depreciation					
Opening balance 1 September 2020	0	0	0	0	0
Depreciation charge for the year					0
Revaluations					0
Disposals					0
Transfers					0
Closing balance 31 August 2021	0	0	0	0	0
Net book Value 1 September 2020	600,000	1,200,000	200,000		2,000,000
Net book Value 31 August 2021	600,000	1,200,000	200,000		2,000,000

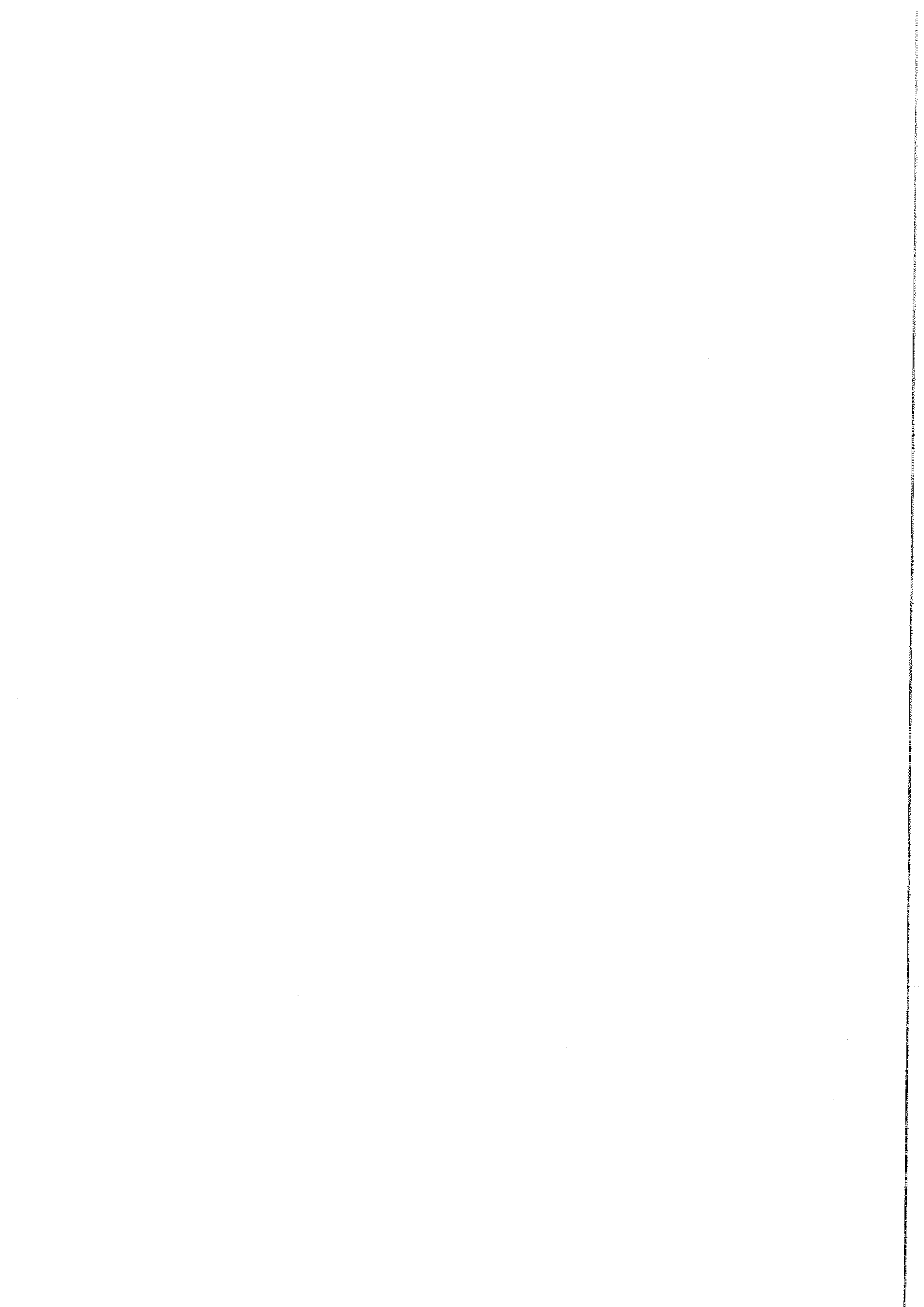
The value of the Church building and the land on which it stands is believed to be considerably greater than the value shown. There is no depreciation on the building or fixtures, fittings or equipment as it is judged that this is immaterial. There were no indicators of impairment since the market value is considered to be greater than the book value.

8 Debtors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Debtors - Gift Aid	10,578	10,924
Other Debtors	0	4,574
	<u>10,578</u>	<u>15,498</u>

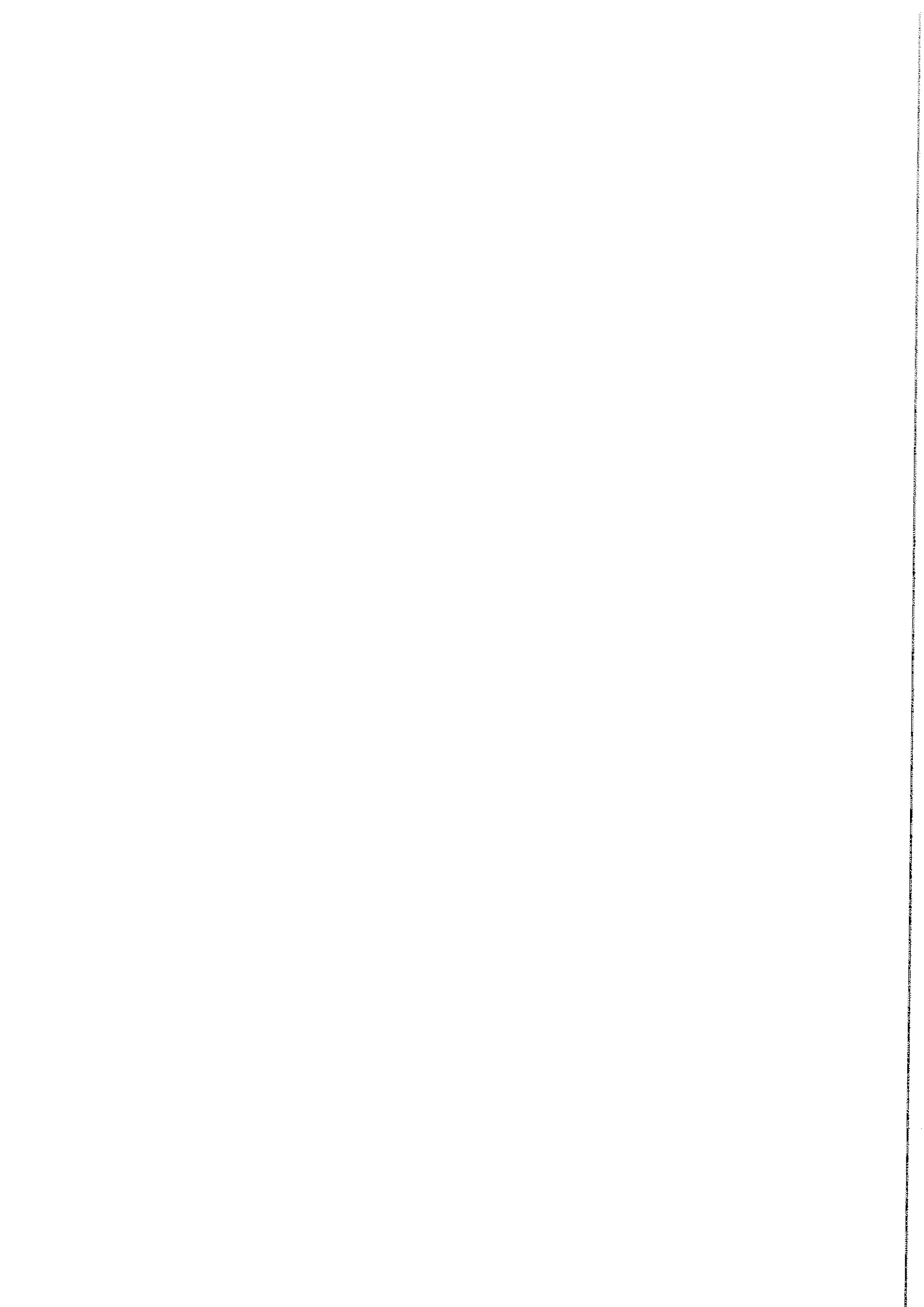
9. Creditors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Accruals	7,824	3,804
	<u>7,824</u>	<u>3,804</u>



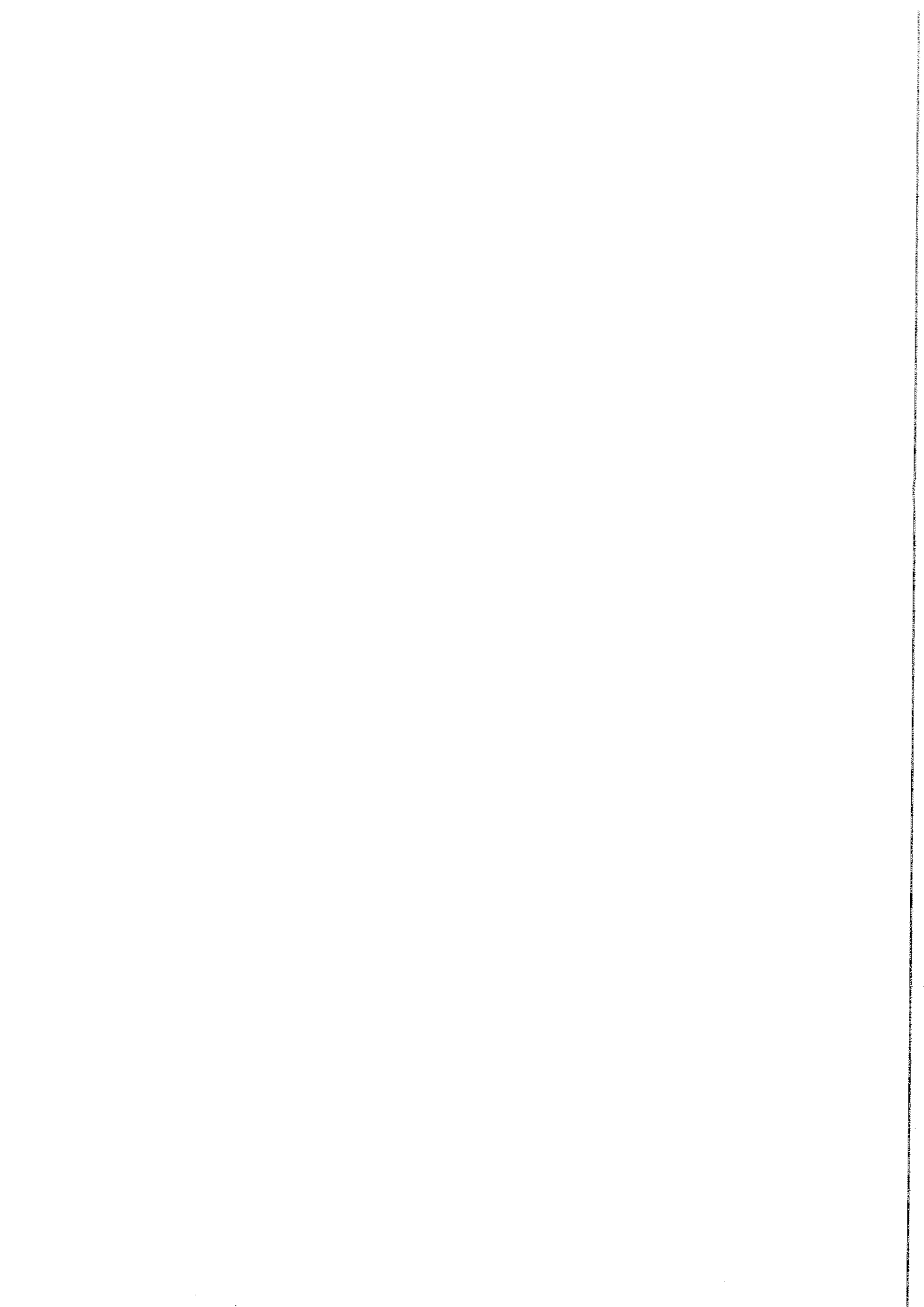
10. Analysis of restricted funds 2020-21

Fund name	Opening balance	Incoming resources		Resources expended		Transfers ex Main A/c	Closing balance	Purpose of fund
Youth (incl. Messy Church)	17126	Offerings	7372	Youth projects, i.e.	354	-1616	12880	Promotion of youth work
		Staff support grant	2613	Int'l Organisations				
		Gift Aid 2019/20	9					
		Gift Aid 2020/21	2265	Staff costs	14534			
Junior Church	909	Offerings	306	Grants	571	265	909	
		Interest		Expenses				
		Gift Aid 2020/21		Int'l Organisations				
G.Milledge	5353	Donations	7	Grants				Assist young people working overseas
		Interest						
		Gift Aid 2020/21		Int'l Organisations			5360	
Pastoral	1130	Offerings	240	Expenses	452	397		Pastoral work
		Interest	1					
		Gift Aid 2020/19	55	Int'l Organisations			1371	
		Donations	1152					
		Interest						
		Gift Aid 2019/20	261	Expenditure	1228		2104	Support Manila church
Manila Fund	1478	Int'l Organisations	0	Int'l Organisations	0		3865	
		Int'l Organisations	0	Int'l Organisations	0		695	
		Int'l Organisations	0	Int'l Organisations	0		65	
		Income						Summer Holiday Club week
		Gift Aid 2019/20		Expenditure			0	
Flower fund	184	Donations	60	Expenditure			244	Weekly Church flowers
Donation – chairs	64	Donations	0	Expenditure	0		64	Memorial donation
Donation – kitchen	720	Donations	0	Expenditure	0		720	Memorial donation
Fund adjustment	3611						-3611	
Adjustments - for accruals and monies not yet transferred								
Gift Aid (2019-20) received Nov.20		Gift Aid	-721				721	
Gift Aid (2020-21) received Oct.21		Gift Aid	965				-965	
Total	35200		14585		17139		-4368	28277



Comparative analysis of restricted funds 2019-20

Fund name	Opening balance	Incoming resources		Resources expended		Transfers ex Main A/c	Closing balance	Purpose of fund
Youth (Incl. Messy Church)	615	Offerings	9437	Youth projects, i.e.		5420	17126	Promotion of youth work
		Staff support grant Gift Aid 2018/19	15364	Int'l Organisations	5420			
Junior Church	902	Interest	94	Staff costs	45461	33638		
		Gift Aid 2019/20	1342	Grants	315	657		
G. Millidge	4282	Offerings	653	Int'l Organisations	1000		909	Assist young people working overseas
		Interest	6	Grants	400			
Pastoral	1169	Gift Aid 2019/20	5	Int'l Organisations	0		5353	Pastoral work
		Donations	1185	Grants	601			
Manila Fund (new)	0	Interest	8	Int'l Organisations				
		Interest	53	Expenditure				
Bible Student	757	Gift Aid 2019/20	6	Grants	2002	-750	1478	Supporting mission in Spain
		Donations	1383	Expenditure	0			Fund closed on 31.08.19
Lunch Club	4611	Interest	5	Grants				
		Other income	1990	Int'l Organisations	6524		3865	
Badminton Club	592	Int'l Organisations	5778	Int'l Organisations	560		695	
		Int'l Organisations	663	Int'l Organisations	50		65	
Ladies Friendship Circle	53	Int'l Organisations	62	Int'l Organisations				Summer Holiday Club week
		Int'l Organisations	160	Expenditure	655	470	0	
Holiday Club	0	Income	25	Expenditure	10		184	Weekly Church flowers
		Gift Aid 2018/19	0	Expenditure	1623	-2750		
Flower fund	195	Donations	4828	Expenditure	2914		0	Funding local charities
		Donations	0	Donations	639		0	Fund closed 31.08.20
Jubilee Fund	2459	Income	601	Expenditure	0			Memorial donation
		Donations	0	Expenditure	0			
ECO Group	64	Donations	0	Expenditure	0		720	Memorial donation
		Donations	0	Expenditure	0			
Donation - kitchen	720	Donations	0	Expenditure				Repair of fleche (tower)
		Donations	0					
Fleche lighting	1520	Donations	0					
		Donations	0					
Fund adjustment	-6009						3611	
Adjustments - for accruals and monies not yet transferred								
Gift Aid (2018-19) received Nov.19			-2122			2122		
Gift Aid (2019-20) received Oct.20			721			-721		
Not yet transferred to Manila a/c			43			-43		
Total		11930	44768	68174	46675	35200		



CHRISTCHURCH (METHODIST/UNITED REFORMED) CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1142830

Accounts

CHRISTCHURCH HITCHIN

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

AND

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY

YEAR TO 31 AUGUST 2020

Trustees report for the year ended 31st August 2020

Context

A team of Trustees have the duty and responsibility to report on the activities of the Charity that is Christchurch (Methodist and United Reformed) Church. The team consists of the Minister, the Deacon and 8 elected from and by the church membership, in accordance with the terms of the constitution. Christchurch Hitchin is located at Bedford Road, Hitchin, SG5 1HF. It is a registered charity, no. 1142830, and its constitution was formally updated in January 2019.

Those serving for some or all of the year were as follows:

Deacon Sheralee Devitt, Sara Crowley, Chris Blackman, Tim Rajan, Christine Warren, David Rossall, Julie Mills, Peter Ward, Vic Evans.

Retired during the year:

Sheralee Devitt, Tim Rajan, David Rossall and Christine Warren

Elected during the year:

Annette England, Andy Feltoe and Tracy King

The Trustees, normally called the Trustee Oversight Group, meet monthly, and have overall responsibility for all aspects of Church Life.

Objectives and Activities

The Trustees are committed to developing the work of the charity, to strengthening the discipleship of its members and to supporting and encouraging others to develop their faith and make a commitment as a follower of Christ.

The Mission Statement of the Church is: ***Led by the Spirit – Working in the Community – Bringing people to Christ.***

We continue to use our “Growing Together” vision to review our activities. However, in addition to this, a phrase ‘heard’ by the Trustees at a ‘Meeting for Clearness’ in January 2020 has also proved to be truly relevant to the community over the past year as we have travelled through lockdown. This statement is ‘Real Life, Real Love, Real You’.

The Purpose of the Charity, as set out in the Christchurch constitution, is to advance the Christian faith in the Area of Benefit in accordance with the principles and practices of the Methodist and United Reformed Churches.

The Trustees have a duty under the constitution to give the necessary direction to achieve its Purpose, and to “engage in a range of activities, either on its own or with others, including (but not restricted to):

- the celebration of public worship.
- the teaching of the Christian faith.
- mission and evangelism.
- pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved.
- the provision of facilities with a Christian ethos for the local community, including (but not restricted to) the elderly, the young and other groups with special needs; and
- the support of other charities in the UK and overseas

An introduction

Christchurch is a large congregation and as of 31 August 2020 there were 250 members. The average attendance at all services on a Sunday was 183, (consisting of 153 adults and 30 under 19's) as measured during the month of October 2019, in accordance with the procedures of the Methodist church.

The period covered by this report, represents two distinct periods in the life of Christchurch. The first, Sept 2019 - March 2020, when church life continued much as in recent years and the second, from March – August 2020 when Covid -19 resulted in a national lockdown.

2019 was enjoyed as a year of celebration for our Golden Jubilee, during which we had welcomed new people and returning former members through our doors. On the back of that we were feeling a renewed sense of family and of belonging together and were looking with optimism to continue to reach out to the wider community and to open our doors even more widely to EVERYONE.

An away day of the Trustee Oversight Group (TOG) in January 2020, led by our then 'new' minister Val Reid was a time of renewal and looking forward. A new vision emerged that day which was encapsulated in the phrase which emerged 'Real Life, Real Love, Real you'. It was discerned that we were being called to a new way of being in community together and also within the town wide community. As part of our Jubilee celebrations, the cross on the top of the church which had remained unlit for several years had been repaired and lit up once again. This, shining out for all to see, seemed to reflect our sense of optimism in what felt like a new season of our walk with Christ. We were ready to run! There was a sense that God was calling us to shake off the old ways of doing and being Christchurch to which we had become attached, but which were not necessarily relevant in 2020. This new way required us to be honest and open with each other and with our community. We wanted to live out our faith in practical ways which would be relevant to those who had found Christ and yet accessible to those who were seeking.

And then, the pandemic took hold. This heralded the start of the second distinct period to be reported on here, from March 2020 - August 2020. Suddenly, we could no longer enter the church premises. The busy building which saw hundreds of people of all ages pass through its doors each week fell silent. No more Sunday services, no more Junior Church, no more Monthly news magazine, band, flower arranging or hirers coming and going. Room bookings ceased.

Not to be held back, many members felt reinvigorated in their faith and responded with creativity. We might not have been in the building, the lights might not be on, but we were still very much at home. This report seeks to define these two distinct periods in the life of Christchurch in the year to August 2020.

Worshipping Together

From August 2019 – March 2020, gathered worship took place at two main services each Sunday, with a traditional service at 9am followed by a small number enjoying breakfast together. The 10.45am 'Worship for All' service included Junior Church for children and young people aged from 0 – 18years. Holy Communion was celebrated once a month at each service. We were also worshipping at intervals throughout the year with others in our town as part of the HitchIn Churches Together initiative. Live music plays a significant role in our worship with a talented team of musicians including a band, pianists, organists and vocalists. Words are projected and sound is managed by those working 'the sound desk'.

With the onset of lockdown, a highly skilled team of technicians and worship leaders showed amazing resilience and agility and our services started to be streamed via YouTube and the Christchurch YouTube channel was born. Once government restrictions allowed, services were streamed from the sanctuary.

We offered transcripts of the services to those unable to access technology and provided backpacks containing resources for children to use at home. People of all ages have continued to contribute to worship through singing, playing instruments, sharing readings, and puppets have made an appearance. In parallel to this a new ministry emerged with the development of Family Church; An interactive service led by our Family Worker for young and the not so young alike. This may continue in some form 'in person' from the church premises once restrictions are lifted sufficiently. This is regularly attended by 12 or more children and up to about 20 adults.

Teaching and Discipleship - headlines

- Main focus of teaching at Christchurch currently comes within our Sunday morning services and Junior Church sessions.
- Preachers follow the Lectionary, although during Advent 2019, Christchurch devised its own themed services.
- "Growing Leaders" second cohort attended over ten months from September 2019 until June 2020. A course designed to equip people at all levels of leadership (at church, work or in voluntary roles). Started September 2019 with face-to-face meetings and continued during lockdown via Zoom.
- 'House Groups' for adults, involving approximately 100 people meeting weekly or fortnightly. Each found a new way of being together during lockdown; from What's app groups to meeting on zoom, connections were maintained.
- 'Men's Breakfast' prior to lockdown met once a month for a time of friendship and fun. This has continued over zoom since lockdown began, now re-named 'Elevenses'. A valuable time of fellowship for men (mostly of the more mature age group,) although open to all ages.
- 'Friday night drinks' attended by those of working age predominantly. This used to take place in a local pub but has necessarily transferred to zoom.

Youth, Children and Families

Youth children and families was a key part of our mission during the year, both prior and during lockdown. With an active 'Junior Church' for children aged from birth to 18, this work is managed by volunteers in partnership with our employed Family and Youth Worker. An overview is given below. Activities provided are age/stage appropriate with any necessary adjustments made to ensure ALL are included.

Early Years: (Age 0-5)

- Weekly Parents & Pre-school group
- Sunday morning creche and cuddle corner
- 'Beginners' group for those aged 3 – 5 years
- Weekly toddler group

Primary: (Age 5-11)

- 'Pig!' our vibrant Sunday morning group during which children learn together about Jesus and the bible through age-appropriate activities.

Secondary: (Age 11-16/18)

- As young people make the transition through secondary school, our Junior Church aims to support them with teaching is relevant, and with practical opportunities to serve and participate in the wider church and in the local community.
- 'All In' is the Sunday evening youth club and was attended by between 5 and 10 young people on a Sunday evening when it was possible to meet in person with as many as 15 on occasion.
- Residential weekend during March 2020 was highly successful, attended by 15 young people. The summer term residential was not possible due to the pandemic.
- The team of volunteers proved to be highly creative and have enabled 'All In' to continue in the form of socials on zoom during the pandemic. In addition, for the older end of the scale there are other support groups. The leaders have been ensuring that personal contact is maintained.

Young Adult: (Age 16/18-25)

- We continue to journey with young people as they begin to make their own way in the world. Our Youth Worker visited those at university to check on how they were doing and to maintain the connection. In addition, Young people were encouraged to participate in social activities on zoom throughout lockdown.

Ministry for Leaders

- Volunteers who work to run groups benefit from providing mutual support to each other and from the wider church community.
- A number have stepped down during the pandemic but a core team remains. However, it is hoped that once the pressures of the pandemic ease, that volunteers will feel able to return to their former or alternative roles, or that others will feel called into this area of church life.
- We run regular training events for leaders, some in-house and some run ecumenically in the town.

Family ministry

- This has taken on an important new dimension during the pandemic with Family Church taking place via zoom every Sunday. Popular, with whole families worshipping together in new and creative ways.
- Open to all ages, it has been attended regularly by at least 12 adults and over 20 children, a truly intergenerational ministry.
- It is hoped that this will continue in some form once lockdown is over, and the building is open.

It is encouraging that Children who accessed any church activity at least once over lockdown between March and August (including holiday club) totalled 59. Young people who accessed any

church activity at least once over lockdown between March and August totalled 18, bringing the grand total to 77.

Outreach:

Reach Out initiatives and support fall under two headings: Home and Overseas. During lockdown, 'Home' activities have not been taking place. It is anticipated that many will start again, possibly in new formats once restrictions allow.

Home

- Open Church, weekday drop in, welcoming anyone, regulars and visitors, for tea, coffee and company.
- Saturday morning coffee.
- Art Space (an art club).
- Lunch Club serving elderly folk, referred through social and health services.
- Parent and Toddler group, weekly.
- Meeting Needs monthly deliveries of furniture and other non-perishable goods to people in need.
- Coffee+, a family coffee morning with play space.
- Family Film Club during the winter months. For those wishing to explore faith in different contexts and Messy Church for those wishing to explore faith in different contexts.
- Prayer station outside Christchurch offered prayers, conversation and a listening ear if needed.
- Hitchin Street Angels, where a calming chat is offered to those who need it on the streets of our town on a Saturday night.
- Daisy Chains, a support group for families of pre-school children with additional needs.
- Christians Against Poverty, a debt counselling service.
- Simpsons Alms houses.
- North Herts Sanctuary for the Homeless and Jubilee House, for homeless young people, and Hitchin Food Bank.
- During lockdown, posters were regularly exhibited in our display units along the front of the church. This included messages of hope and expressions of the love of Christ as well as a well-received exhibition 'Great Black Britons', Inspired by the Black Lives Matter' movement.
- North Herts Circuit of the Methodist Church and the North Herts Group of United Reformed Churches – Christchurch plays an active role in these.
- Good Friday Walk of Witness

Overseas

- Prayer and financial commitment continued to be key features of our commitment to serving people overseas. A partner with SIM International is supporting persecuted Christians in the Middle East.
- We partnered with a community in Manila, The Philippines, through Compassion.
- A family living and working in Egypt, sent by Interserve.
- We also continued to partner with Jon and Lisa Short, who work with Christian students in Madrid.
- We continued to respond throughout the year to emergency appeals as a result of either man-made or natural disasters. Traidcraft stall was held at church at least once a month prior to lockdown with members encouraged to continue to support Traidcraft throughout the pandemic with orders placed online.
- We are an Eco Church, and volunteers run several recycling initiatives.

Pastoral and staying connected.

- Pastoral care, including visiting the sick and bereaved, is led and overseen by the Ministry Team who in turn work with a Pastoral Area Lead and a team of pastoral friends. Home communion is also offered to those who cannot get to services pre-pandemic and it is hoped this will be able to start again once restrictions allow. Small groups and other organisations that are under the Christchurch umbrella play a large role in offering pastoral care and support. Pastoral care is offered to church members at Archers Court, Elmside and The Cedars, which are properties associated with MHA (formerly Methodist Homes for the Aged).
- In the summer of 2020, we committed to introducing a pastoral care system where every member of the church is linked to a pastoral friend, someone to contact on a regular basis for support. We hope to have linked every member of the church with someone by the end of August 2021. The aspiration is that most members and adherents will take a role in providing pastoral care and all will receive pastoral care through linking with a pastoral friend.
- Weekly newsletter, which up until March 2020 contained short items of news and publicised forthcoming events, became a vital means of connection from March 2020 as we entered lockdown when it started to be sent out via e-mail or posted to all members. It contained not only news, but a pastoral letter written by the minister. During the period March – July 2020, the trustees were also publishing a daily ‘Thought for the Day’ shared via Facebook and published in Weekly.
- Bereavement - Inevitably during the period in question there have sadly been some deaths in our community. It has been difficult not being able to come together in one place to celebrate their lives. However, technology has meant we have been able to share in funeral services streamed from the crematorium and we look forward to being able to come together to remember all those who have died once we are back in the building.
- Sunday morning coffee – after the 10.45am service has long been a way of catching up with each other. Whilst not suitable for all, zoom has been used for virtual coffee after the Sunday morning service by up to about 30 homes a week during the pandemic.
- Shopping - A network of 15 volunteers was established over lockdown one, March – July 2020 when those who had to self-isolate or who were shielding were not able to leave their homes. Food and medication were delivered to people’s homes in support of the most vulnerable amongst us.
- Church meetings continued across the year, latterly via zoom.

Safeguarding

- New safeguarding team established during summer 2020.
- The group plan regular training for all members who are in roles which make this directly relevant to them. Safeguarding is based on the Methodist Church policy “Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults”.
- Our safeguarding group is responsible for implementing this policy and ensuring that all users of our premises are aware of the policy and its implications.

Property

Maintenance and cleaning of the premises at Christchurch are managed and monitored by the Finance & Property Committee. A Property Schedule has been prepared for forwarding to the Methodist Superintendent, in accordance with Methodist Church procedures.

During the year, approximately £25,500 has been spent on routine cleaning, maintenance and repairs. This included approximately £3,000 for interior redecorating of the Main Hall area and approximately £2,000 for refurbishment of toilets.

Risk Assessment

Each year, the Trustees carry out a Risk Assessment covering a range of risks, including fire, accidents and other Health & Safety matters, finance and staff shortage. Follow-up action is initiated, as necessary. A comprehensive COVID specific Risk Assessment project was undertaken prior to re-opening the building in summer 2020.

What of the future?

Three open consultations were held via zoom, June 2020 during which members and adherents were invited to start thinking about Christchurch in the post pandemic era. The trustees had developed a sense that God was calling the Christchurch community to focus primarily on Worship, Open Church and Communication. Over three consecutive evenings, a meeting was held to focus on each of these three areas. Key messages were noted to be used to inform future planning.

From report for year ended August 2020: Support of other charities in the UK and overseas.

Whilst opportunities for fundraising were limited during the year, the church still donated over £6,000 to local and global charities. The church has also continued to support its mission partners overseas, both from the general funds and through individual's own fundraising.

Accounts

The financial deficit in 2019-20 was £15,571. The Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet are set out below. The Trustees have also formulated Accounting Policies and a Reserves Policy and these are set out below:

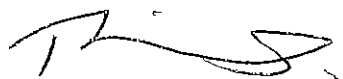
Reserves policy

It is the Trustees' policy to maintain a balance in reserve which equates to 6 months of the assessments due to the Methodist and United Reformed Churches, and wages for the staff employed directly by Christchurch, plus potential employment termination costs and redundancy liabilities. In addition, provision has been made for capital projects expected to be carried out during the year.

Public benefit

The trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Approved at the Trustees Meeting held on 19th May, by video call in compliance with Government Covid-19 restrictions, and signed on behalf of the Trustees:



Tracy King
Church Secretary

Declarations

Treasurer

I confirm that these accrual – based accounts for the year ended 31 August 2020 have been prepared from the records of the Church and that they include all funds under the control of the Church Leadership Group, being the trustees of the Church.

Signed: 


Date: 06,06,21

Name of Treasurer: Chris Blackman

Address of Treasurer: 3 Benslow Rise, Hitchin, Herts, SG4 9QX

Presentation to the Trustees for approval

I confirm that the Trustees Annual Report, the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and the Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2020 were approved by the Trustees at a meeting on 19 May 2021.

Signed: 

Date: 6/6/21

Name: Julie Mills, Senior Steward and Chair of the Trustees Meeting

Independent Examiner`s Report to the Trustees of Christchurch, Hitchin, a Methodist/URC LEP, for the year ended 31 August 2020.

The trustees are responsible for ensuring that the annual report and accounts present a true and fair view of the Church`s income and expenditure for the year and of the assets and liabilities at the balance sheet date. The trustees consider that an audit is not necessary for this year under s144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility for:

- Examine the accounts under s145 of the Charities Act
- Follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under s145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention

Declarations

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commission. 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, in nature or scale, or disclosure in the accounts seeking explanations from the trustees concerning 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. My 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 s130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Acthave 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.

Signed:

Neil Harding

Date:

8/6/21

Name of Independent Examiner: Neil Harding

Relevant Professional qualification or body: *FCA*

Address: Partner, Bradshaw Johnson
Croft Chambers
11 Bankcroft
Hitchin
Herts
SG5 1JQ

Name of Church

Christchurch Hitchin

Church No

340515

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2020

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2019-20
		£	£	£	£	£
Income						
1 Offerings		116,213		9,929		126,142
2 Donations and Grants		5,437		15,364		20,801
3 Gift aid		29,228		2,414		31,642
4 Interest and investment income		1,612		154		1,766
5 Income from lettings		32,466				32,466
6 Internal organisations		0		7,689		7,689
7 Other charitable income		17,224		9,218		26,442
8 Total income		202,180	0	44,768	-	246,948
Expenditure						
9 Circuit and URC assessments		109,722				109,722
10 Grants and donations		8,512		5,632		14,144
10A Ministry, Worship and Teaching		4,951				4,951
11 Property maintenance		18,536				18,536
12 Insurance, utilities etc		11,836				11,836
13 Staff costs		19,722		45,461		65,183
14 Office expenses		5,116				5,116
15 Other expenditure		15,950		2,927		18,877
16 Internal organisations				14,155		14,155
17 Total charitable expenditure		194,345	0	68,175	0	262,519
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments						0
19 Gains/(losses) on investment properties						0
20 Net income/(expenditure)		7,835	0	-23,407	0	(15,571)
21 Transfers between funds		-46,676		46,676		0
22 Other gains/(losses)						0
23 Net movement in funds		-38,841	0	23,269	0	(15,571)
24 Total funds brought forward		2,278,294		11,930		2,290,225
25 Total funds carried forward		2,239,454	0	35,200	0	2,274,654

Name of Church

Christchurch Hitchin

Church No

340515

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2019

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2018-19
		£	£	£	£	£
Income						
1 Offerings		125,185		9,441		134,626
2 Donations		5,829		1,520		7,349
3 Gift aid		30,428		2,601		33,029
4 Interest and investment income		1,689		140		1,829
5 Income from lettings		34,709				34,709
6 Internal organisations		0		9,548		9,548
7 Other charitable income		10,091		7,152		17,243
8 Total income		207,931	-	30,402	-	238,333
Expenditure						
9 Circuit assessment or share		108,998				108,998
10 Grants and donations		10,581		2,601		13,182
10A Ministry, Worship and Teaching		5,481				5,481
11 Property maintenance		17,528				17,528
12 Insurance, utilities etc		12,534				12,534
13 Staff costs		17,111		32,726		49,837
14 Office expenses		4,218				4,218
15 Other expenditure		7,508		3,278		10,786
16 Internal organisations				16,174		16,174
17 Total charitable expenditure		183,959	0	54,779	0	238,738
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments						0
19 Gains/(losses) on investment properties						0
20 Net income/(expenditure)		23,972	0	(24,377)	0	(405)
21 Transfers between funds		(21,069)		21,069		0
22 Other gains/(losses)						0
23 Net movement in funds		2,903	0	(3,308)	0	(405)
24 Total funds brought forward		2,275,392	-	15,238	-	2,290,630
25 Total funds carried forward		2,278,294	-	11,930	-	2,290,225

Long term liabilities (due after more than one year)							
Grants payable after 2019-20						0	
Loans to the Church						0	
						0	
Net assets					35,200	0	2,274,654
							2,290,225

Funds of the Church							
General Fund (Unrestricted)							2,239,454
Designated Funds (Unrestricted)						0	
Total Unrestricted Funds							2,239,454
Restricted Funds					35,200		35,200
Endowment Funds						0	0
Total Funds					35,200	0	2,274,654
							2,278,295
							2,278,295
							11,930
							2,290,225

Signed



Church Treasurer

Notes to the Accounts (for 2019-20)

1. Accounting policies

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the accruals basis and the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain assets.

Christchurch, Hitchin meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in Pounds Sterling (£).

Incoming Resources

Income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the Church becomes entitled to the resources, and the trustees are reasonably certain they will receive the resources; and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Resources Expended

This is recognised when a liability is incurred, or a constructive obligation arises, that results in the payment being unavoidable. Liabilities are recognised as soon as an outflow of economic benefit is considered more likely than not under the legal or constructive obligation committing the Church to pay out resources.

Funds

The funds held constitute: General Funds held for any purpose of the Church which are Unrestricted; Restricted funds which are held for a narrower purpose. There are no Endowment funds. Details of each material fund are disclosed in the final note to these accounts. Any funds may be represented by more than just cash.

Grants

Grants made by the Church from its own funds are recognised in full at the time of agreement or when the Church accepts that there is a legal or operational obligation to make the payment.

Debtors

Debtors (including trade debtors and loans receivable) are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the charity. Subsequently, they are measured at cash or other consideration expected to be received.

Creditors

The charity has creditors which are measured at settlement amounts less any trade discounts.

VAT

The Church is not VAT registered: all input VAT is charged with the expenses to which it refers.

Tangible fixed assets for use by the Church

Tangible fixed assets are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £1,000. The freehold property is shown in the accounts at 2015 deemed cost, of which the land component is deemed to be £0.6M. No depreciation is provided on the building because the trustees consider the current residual fair value of the church buildings (on the assumption that it had reached the end of its useful economic life by the year-end) to be not less than its current value. Any depreciation would not be material. The property has been reviewed for impairment.

Beneficial Interest

The Church has a beneficial interest in the proceeds from the sale of Priory Way (the former URC manse) and Queen Street (former Congregational church). The approximate value at 31 August 2020 of the relevant Trust Funds held by the URC was £260k.

2. Payment to Trustees

There were no payments made to Trustees for additional services provided to the Church by agreement with the Church Meeting, this excludes stipends and expenses relating to reimbursement for travel and computing costs.

3. Fees for examination or audit of the accounts

	2020 £	2019 £
Independent Examiner's fees for reporting on the accounts	600	612
Other fees (e.g. advice, accountancy services) paid to the independent examiner or auditor	NIL	NIL

4. Paid employees

No employees have been paid more than £60,000 p.a.

Staff Costs paid during the year were:

	2020 £	2019 £
Gross wages, salaries and benefits in kind	58,236	44,279
Employer's National Insurance costs	3,533	2,988
Pension costs	3,414	2,570
Total staff costs	65,183	49,837
Average number of full-time equivalent employees in the year were:	3	2

5. Capital Commitments and Contingent Liabilities

At the 31st August 2020 there are no capital commitments.

No Contingent liabilities were identified at 31st August 2020.

6. For information only: Money received and passed on to External Organisations

	2020 £	2019 £
Balance brought forward from last year	(60)	0
Offerings/Gifts - received for External Organisations	5,286	5,832
Offerings/Gifts - passed to External Organisations	5,226	5,892
Balance carried forward	0	(60)

7 Tangible Fixed Assets

	Land £	Church buildings £	Fixtures, fittings and equipment £	Payments on account and assets under construction £	Total £
Balance brought forward	600,000	1,200,000	200,000		2,000,000
Additions					0
Revaluations (+/-)					0
Disposals (-)					
Transfers * (+/-)					
Balance carried forward	600,000	1,200,000	200,000		2,000,000

Accumulated depreciation

Balance brought forward	600,000	1,200,000	200,000		2,000,000
Depreciation charge for year (-)					
Revaluations (+/-)					
Disposals (-)					
Transfers* (+/-)					
Balance carried forward	600,000	1,200,000	200,000		2,000,000

Net Book Value

Brought forward	600,000	1,200,000	200,000		2,000,000
Carried forward	600,000	1,200,000	200,000		2,000,000

Note: The value of the Church building and the land on which it stands is believed to be considerably greater than the amount shown as its value in the Balance Sheet. There is no depreciation on the building or fixtures, fittings and equipment, as it is judged that this will be immaterial and the impairment review at the end of the year confirmed that the market value was greater than the book value.

8. Debtors

	2020 £	2019 £
Prepayments		1,079
Debtors – Gift Aid	10,924	10,558
Other debtors	4,574	1,450
Total	15,498	13,087

9. Creditors

	2020 £	2019 £
Accruals	3,804	6,153
Total	3,804	6,153

10. Analysis of restricted funds 2019-20

Fund name	Opening	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers ex	Closing	Purpose of fund
Youth (incl. Messy Church)	615	Offerings Staff support grant Gift Aid 2018/19 Interest Gift Aid 2019/20	9437 15364 2097 94 1342	5420 5420 45461	17126	Promotion of youth work
Junior Church	902	Offerings Interest Gift Aid 2019/20	653 6 5	315 1000	657 909	
G. Milledge	4282	Donations Interest Gift Aid 2019/20	1185 35 250	400	5353	Assist young people working overseas
Pastoral	1169	Interest Interest Gift Aid 2019/20	8 53 6	601	1130	Pastoral work
Manila Fund (new)	0	Donations Interest Gift Aid 2019/20	1383 5 90			
Bible Student	757	Interest Other income	5 1990	0	1478	Support Manila church project
Lunch Club	4611	Int'l Organisations	5778	6524	3865	
Badminton Club	592	Int'l Organisations	663	560	695	
Ladies Friendship Circle	53	Int'l Organisations	62	50	65	
Holiday Club	0	Income Gift Aid 2018/19	160 25			Summer Holiday Club week
Flower fund	195	Donations	0	655	470	
Jubilee Fund	2459	Donations	4828	10	184	Weekly Church flowers
ECO Group		Donations	601	1623 2914	0	Funding local charities Fund closed 31.08.20
Donation – chairs	64	Income Donations	0 0	639	38	
Donation – kitchen	720	Donations	0	0	64	Memorial donation
Fleche lighting	1520	Donations	0	0	720	Memorial donation
Fund adjustment	-6009	Donations	0		0	Repair of fleche (tower)
Adjustments - for accruals and monies not yet transferred						
Gift Aid (2018-19) received Nov.19		Gift Aid	-2122			
Gift Aid (2019-20) received Oct.20		Gift Aid	721	2122		
Not yet transferred to Manila a/c		Donations	43	-721		
Total	11930		44768	46676	35200	

Comparative analysis of restricted funds 2018-19

Fund name	Opening balance	Incoming resources		Resources expended		Transfers ex Main A/c	Closing balance	Purpose of fund
Youth (incl. Messy Church)	3221	Offerings Gift Aid 2017/18 Interest	8937 2077 104	Youth projects, i.e. Int'l Organisations	5228	5228	615	Promotion of youth work
Junior Church	896	Gift Aid 2018/19	0	Staff costs	32726	19000		
G. Milledge	2268	Offerings Interest	504 6	Grants Int'l Organisations	240 1865	1601	902	
Pastoral	1075	Donations Interest	1995 19	Grants Int'l Organisations	0	0	4282	Assist young people working overseas
Garden	219	Interest Gift Aid 2017/18 Donation	7 7 40		778	791	1169	Pastoral work
Bible Student	13	Other income Donations	28 0	Int'l Organisations Expenditure	0	-219	0	Fund closed on 31.08.19
Lunch Club	5340	Other income	4	Grants	1750	750	757	Supporting mission in Spain
Badminton Club	652	Int'l Organisations	6898	Int'l Organisations	7626		4611	
Ladies Friendship Circle	35	Int'l Organisations	550	Int'l Organisations	610		592	
Holiday Club	0	Int'l Organisations Other income	85 100	Int'l Organisations Expenditure	67	813	53	
Flower fund	120	Other income Gift Aid 2017/18	71 4	Expenditure	0		195	Weekly Church flowers
Jubilee Fund	216	Donations Gift Aid 2018/19	5213 5	Expenditure Donations	2364 611		2459	Funding local charities
Donation – chairs	64	Donations	0	Expenditure	0		64	Memorial donation
Donation – kitchen	720	Donations	0	Expenditure	0		720	Memorial donation
Fleche lighting	0	Donations	1520		0		1520	Repair of fleche (tower)
Fund adjustment	398		-14			-6393	-6009	
Adjustments - for accruals and monies not yet transferred								
Gift Aid (2017-18) received Nov.18		Gift Aid	-2093			2093		
Gift Aid (2018-19) received Nov.19		Gift Aid	1223			-1223		
Not yet transferred to Youth		Gift Aid rec'd Jun.19	1372			-1372		
Total	15238		30402		54779	21069	11930	