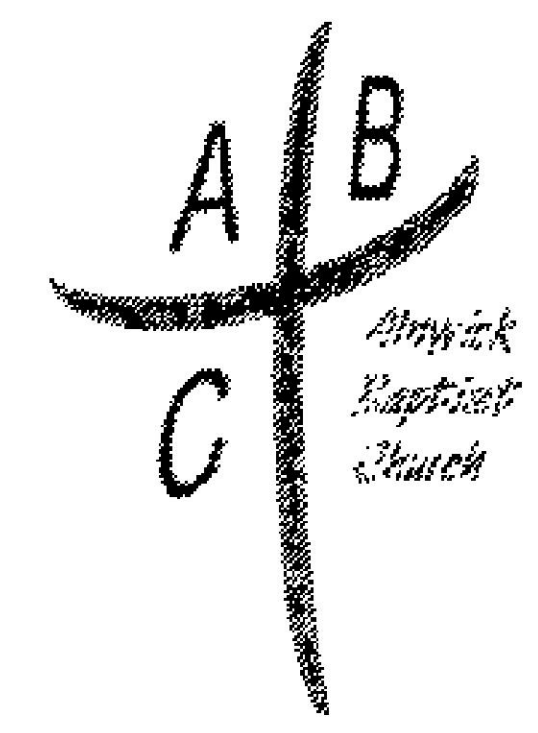


ALNWICK BAPTIST CHURCH

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

ALNWICK BAPTIST CHURCH TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021



1. Statutory Information

Alnwick Baptist Church (Lisburn Street, Alnwick, Northumberland NE66 1UR) was entered on the Register of Charities on 9 September 2011 with a new Charity Register Number of 1143745. The financial year runs from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. The governing documents are a Trust Deed (dated 1 July 1976), in respect of which the current Church Trustees are Mr Alastair Conn, Mr Brian Friend, Mr William McDonald and Mr Ian Simpson, and the Church Constitution (agreed 10 March 2011). The mission statement of Alnwick Baptist Church is "To encourage people to accept and celebrate Jesus in their lives and to dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to following Him." The Church banks with Lloyds Bank, Alnwick. The independent examiner is Mrs Jane Harvey of Greaves Grindle, Alnwick.

2. Trustees and Governance

The Charity Trustees who served during the year were as follows:

Rev Caroline Friend (Co-Minister)
Rev Chris Friend (Co-Minister)
Mr Alastair Conn (Church Treasurer)
Mrs Julie Hammond
Mr Chris Hinds (Church Secretary)
Prof Carol Jagger
Mrs Rowena King *retired 1 April 2020*
Mr Andrew Kohler
Mr Ian Simpson
Dr Ian Smith
Mrs Karen Smith
Mrs Dorothy Walls

Dr Margaret Andrew and Miss Susan Prince were appointed as trustees on 2 May 2021.

Charity Trustee selection method:

- names will be brought to the Church through the existing Elders.
- a quorum of 40% of Church Members is required at the Church Meeting.
- confirmation is by ballot, with at least two-thirds of the members (present & voting) in favour of the appointment.
- Elders must be Church Members, hold the doctrinal beliefs as stated for the minister in the Church Constitution and have been baptised as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Elders serve for 3 years and may be re-appointed.
- Deacons must be Church Members and the majority of the Diaconate must have been baptised as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Deacons serve for 3 years and may be re-appointed.
- Elders and Deacons are encouraged to read the Baptist Union Corporation Limited Guidelines relating to their responsibilities and positions.
- the Elders and Deacons are aware of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in "The Advancement of Religion for the Public Benefit" and have regard to it in their administration of the Church.

The Elders and Deacons as Charity Trustees met jointly 6 times during the year, 5 of which were virtual by Zoom due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. The Elders and the Deacons met regularly, also mainly by Zoom, to deal with all the affairs of the Church: spiritual, pastoral and practical.

3. Charitable Objective

Alnwick Baptist Church (ABC) is currently governed by a Trust Deed and the Church Constitution which state that the principal purpose of the Church is the advancement of the Christian faith according to the principles of the Baptist denomination to include the advancement of education, community service and other such general charitable purposes in such parts of the United Kingdom and the world as the Church shall determine. The Elders and Deacons' objectives are to ensure that Church life and work within the local area help to fulfill that mission, both locally and more widely.

4. Organisational Structure and Decision Making Process

Members of the Church are accepted in accordance with the Trust Deed and Church Constitution which require them to acknowledge the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ; the absolute authority of the Holy Scriptures; salvation only by repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and to have made a personal confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Members' Meeting normally takes place 3 times per year and has responsibility for the overall policy of the Church. In accordance with the Church Constitution, the Members appoint Charity Trustees, who together with the Minister(s), Church Secretary and Treasurer (who are also appointed by the Members) and collectively known as the Eldership and Diaconate, are responsible for the day to day running of the Church's work and witness, and the financial and legal aspects of the charity. All Members are encouraged to take an appropriate part in the spiritual and practical tasks involved in the furtherance of the charitable objective. Members' meetings are open to non-members who are also able to join in the discussions but only Members are entitled to vote.

Relevant matters may be submitted for the Church Meeting by the Elders and Deacons for guidance, or may be raised by Members in the Church Meeting for further consideration by the Elders and Deacons. Though the Trust Deeds and Church Constitution permit decisions to be made at Church Meetings by appropriate majorities, the Church seeks to work by consensus wherever possible.

5. Objectives and Activities

In order to achieve the principal objective which is set out above, the Church provides a variety of activities both to its membership and to the community generally. The aim is to show the love of Jesus Christ in both word and deed and to bring people into a closer relationship with Him as living Lord.

Central to the work and witness of the Church is the provision of regular public services of Christian worship. These normally take place each Sunday at 10:30am, a communion service on the third Sunday of each month at 7:00pm and a service on the last Sunday of most months at 7.00pm which provides the opportunity for people to receive prayer for healing and wholeness, or other issues in their lives, in the context of worship in a quiet, contemplative, unhurried environment. There are also occasional services at other times which are advertised variously through the weekly noticesheets, invitation leaflets, in the local press and on the church noticeboard. There is a children's programme during most morning services. The Church seeks to be a friendly and welcoming community and anybody is free to attend any of these services.

However during the COVID-19 pandemic regular public services of worship have been via virtual means for example using electronic media such as YouTube, Facebook and Zoom.

The Church runs a series of mid-week groups for the growth of faith and discipleship in the homes of some Members. These groups are an important part of the prayer and practical support the church family give to one another and an opportunity to develop the themes and application of the Sunday sermon.

2020/2021 has been hugely impacted by the pandemic and all face to face contact ceased for most of the year. Midweek Groups continued online and this enabled essential contact albeit in a virtual sense which was still life-giving to those who linked in. The Prayer Course by Pete Greig provided great online material to discuss and Prayer Course II was equally well received and poignant for what we've been going through in lockdown. Around 50 people are involved in these groups. Given the exceptional nature of this last year, we abandoned plans to reset the Groups and will look to this again at the end of 2021. Naturally, all of the other face to face activities whether it be our Missional Communities, drop-in, Book Club, Guys Group and others have all had to cease until such time as easing of restrictions allows for this.

Further details of these activities can be obtained from the Charity Trustees on request.

The Church runs and supports various events for people of all ages to allow opportunities to build relationships, explore different expressions of worship and develop personal faith. The Church operates systems to ensure that all people working with children and adults at risk are safely recruited into their roles including DBS checks where necessary. A statement of the Church's Safeguarding Policy is reviewed at a Church Meeting once per year. The church appoints Designated Persons for Safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and one of the Charity Trustees is designated to oversee the safeguarding procedures (currently Andrew Kohler).

6. Activities and Achievements

The Church does not measure the success of its programmes only in numbers, including financial returns, but also in less tangible areas like opportunities for fellowship and the encouragement given to Members and the wider congregation. The Charity Trustees recognise that these are difficult to measure, and in spite of the great restrictions that have been in place for the last year, the achievement of the church in 2020/21 has been marked by its ability to innovate in order to maintain fellowship with each other, a resilience which is admirable in the face of isolation and the pastoral care and prayer life by the church for the church and the wider community and a desire to still be the hands and feet of Jesus in what we say and do. There has been a real sense of 'team' with people using their gifts as part of every member in ministry and this has been wonderful to see. The multi-platform voice of our recorded services has been incredibly refreshing.

Our Pastoral Team coordinated by Rowena King has been exceptional as too the Prayer Line facilitated by Andrew and Lesley Kohler. In addition, we were able to appoint Sarah Hamer during lockdown as Children and Families Worker. She has started Family Church on a monthly basis and has had the flexibility to move from in person to online and back again to reach out to a number of new families.

As of end March 2021, services have once again been allowed to resume and we've adopted a hybrid model with a live service one Sunday and a recorded the next. Whilst singing has not been permitted, for those who've attended, the fact that we are meeting in person, albeit socially distanced, has been a joy for those attending.

In normal circumstances 120 people, young and old, attend ABC on a regular basis with usually 100 people at the main Sunday morning Service. As of January 2021 we have a formal membership of 84. We've still been able to welcome people as members through postal voting and also seen new folk among us as they've moved into the area. We've also shared in sadness following the deaths of three of our Members and attendees.

Usually Harvest, Christmas and Easter are key times in the calendar when we can celebrate with community. The pandemic put pay to meeting together in all these settings and we reverted to a live stream carol service from Lisburn Street and were able to meet socially distanced on Christmas morning.

We have considered as a church whether or not to move to another building. This involved a Building Working Group concentrating on a particular site and then feeding back a proposal to the church family. After feedback and further time to pray and reflect, we felt this was not the right time to proceed and to continue to wait on God.

Our Prayer Meetings have continued online and continued to pray for our church, community and the wider world. This is done as part of our mid-week groups and at specific meetings for prayer, either on Saturday mornings or at other times. A small group meets each month to pray for Christians experiencing persecution in different parts of the world using material produced primarily by Open Doors.

We aim to provide a variety of ways for people to connect with the Christian faith. As well as the Sunday Services and other groups described above, Thursday@7 continues to operate on a weekly basis online during restrictions but hopefully in person before too long, enabling people to *'do shared lives and provide the opportunity to ask the bigger questions'*, in an informal and relational way based in the new Starbucks. The monthly 'Gathering' has now been going for over four years attracting a number of people keen to explore faith issues. Again, this has taken place online but ordinarily would be in people's homes with an informal discussion about 'Jesus encounters' in the Bible followed by a meal together. Hopefully that format too can return later in 2021. Alongside that, Messy Church has run online and reached over 30 families with craft packs and online videos which families have engaged in. In addition, the Weavers Court Retirement Complex, whilst having to shelve the monthly Songs of Praise during the pandemic, has still been able to have Faith Talks with virtual packs created by Karen Smith and Caroline Friend. There is still a strong emphasis on missional listening Teams to look to join in with what God is already doing in our community.

We lead Christian services at Abbeyfield Residential Care Home and at St Paul's Court sheltered housing, providing support and friendship to residents, and a team visits Abbeyfield once a month to listen, chat and offer a thought for the day. Even in lockdown, we've been able to provide recorded services for Abbeyfield. Our hope as restrictions ease is to support in person again.

Beyond lockdown, we hope that our building will still be used by Rangers, another way in which we seek to serve our local community.

Several congregation members are also involved in work at HMP Northumberland, including services for prisoners by **Good News For Everyone** (formerly GideonsUK, Charity No. 221605), the **Sycamore Tree Project** (part of Prison Fellowship, Charity No. 1102254) for restorative justice and the welcome centre for families visiting prisoners. This year however no visits were made to the prison due to pandemic restrictions.

Community links

We seek to be a positive impact within our local community in many ways. Some of these activities are as ABC, some are by the Church and/or its Members providing support to other charities or organisations.

Christians Against Poverty (Charity No. 1097217)

A major commitment of the Church is running a debt advice centre in Alnwick, part of CAP, offering free debt advice and support to anyone in the local community who requests it.

During this year of Covid restrictions, our CAP debt centre has remained open, but we have not been able to meet clients in their homes. It has been possible to offer the service with a mixture of phone calls and online measures, and the majority of clients who contacted us are now debt-free or on a route out of debt.

One good outcome of this is that we have been able, probably temporarily, to enlarge our referral area to include part of Berwick, and also help with referrals from busier centres when we have had quieter periods.

We expect an influx of referrals as lockdown eases, and the moratorium on evictions comes to an end.

Contagious Youth Project (Charity No. 1089954)

Contagious works in schools and among children and young people through youth clubs and other activities. The Mighty Oaks Alnwick project, providing coffee and tea from a van in Alnwick, is part of Contagious. Church members support Contagious financially and as volunteers, assisting schools work, youth groups and acting as trustees. Due to Covid-19, Mighty Oaks has not been operating at all this year.

Chris and Caroline Friend and David Archer continue to work in the Duchess High School as volunteer Chaplains. They work closely with the Pastoral Team and between them see up to 15 young people each week on a one to one basis. This year, their work has been constricted with mandatory school closures.

The Church and some of its members continue to provide support to the local community centre, **Community@NE66** (Charity No. 1171202) both in a 'hands on' capacity and also serving as trustees, and the **Alnwick District Food Bank** (Charity No. 1173294), which is now a charity in its own right, comprising trustees of both faith (at least four churches in Alnwick represented) and not.

Christians Together in Alnwick (CTiA) exists to bring the churches of Alnwick together. We are active supporters and take part in combined activities such as the Good Friday service in the town's market square. As with many activities, this was not able to take place in 2021.

7. Financial Review and Policies

The Church continues to raise the funds which it needs to carry on its activities from within its own membership and congregation. No wider public appeal was made for funds during the year.

The most significant recurring expenses are related to the ongoing employment of:-

- Rev Chris Friend and Rev Caroline Friend as Co-Ministers of the Church, who lead and co-ordinate the Church's activities including the Sunday Services, provide pastoral care for the congregation and other people, and equip and encourage the membership in their life, Christian witness and service.
- Mr Neill Parker as CAP debt advice centre manager, on a part-time basis.
- Mrs Sarah Hamer as Children and Families Worker, on a part-time basis (appointed July 2020).

The Church expresses its part in the life of the wider church by making donations to national and international Christian organisations and societies with Christian aims and objectives compatible with the Church's own charitable purpose.

The Church is heavily dependent on its membership working as volunteers in all aspects of the Church's activities, many of which are run with little or no impact on the Church's expenditure, but nevertheless contribute substantially to the achievement of the Church's objectives.

The financial statements set out on pages 8 to 12 cover the Church's financial year ended 31 March 2021.

Total receipts for the year amounted to £135,593 (preceding year £147,179) and total payments were £128,654 (preceding year £188,764), producing a surplus for the year of £6,939 (preceding year deficit £41,585). The deficit for the preceding year included non-recurring payments totalling £50,600 relating to the final settlement of the Church's employer liability to the Baptist Union Scheme.

Regular monthly giving to ABC, mostly through Gift Aid, continued at a similar level to the previous financial year, and the Charity Trustees are grateful for the consistency of this financial support, especially during a period of pandemic when Church activities have necessarily been restricted. Total financial reserves at 31 March 2021, all of which are unrestricted as to their future use, amounted to £100,028 (31 March 2020 £93,089).

The Church continued to allocate a significant amount of its income to supporting a range of external organisations engaged in Christian outreach and teaching, promotion of justice and care for the poor and needy and the development of personal faith, as well as funding the CAP Alnwick debt counselling centre.

The Charity Trustees would like to express their appreciation to Jane Harvey of Greaves Grindle, Chartered Accountants, Alnwick for once again carrying out the independent examination of the Church's financial statements.

Reserves policy

The Charity Trustees' policy is that the minimum amount of unrestricted funds to be retained should cover normal operating costs for six months, as well as holding a reserve for the cost of replacing equipment (photocopier, PA system etc) - say £70,000 in total. The actual reserves shown in the financial statements as at 31 March 2021 are slightly in excess of this figure. The Trustees consider this is an acceptable position in view of the continuing uncertainties associated with the pandemic.

Investment policy

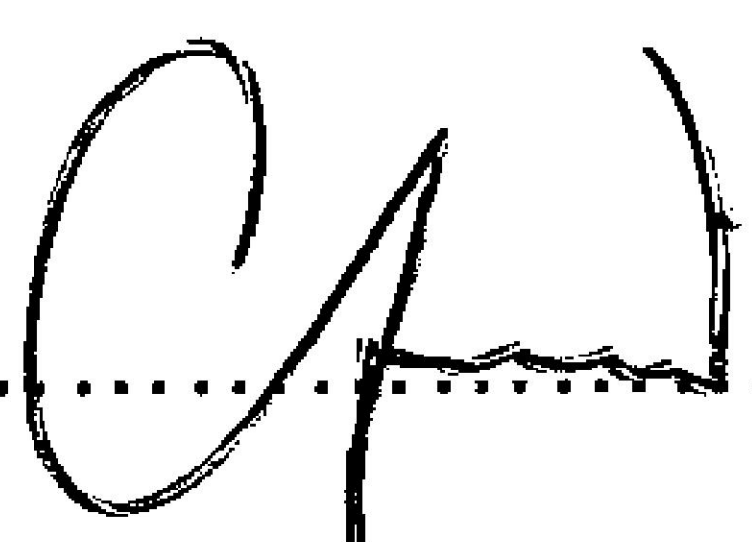
The Charity Trustees seek to invest the Church's funds in such a way as to produce investment income whilst minimising the risk of capital loss. Interest-bearing deposits are currently held with the COIF Charities Deposit Fund and the Baptist Union Corporation Loan Fund.

The Charity Trustees have made an assessment of the major risks facing the Church, and are satisfied that there are policies in place to minimise these risks.

8. Signature and Declaration

I declare that in my capacity of Charity Trustee, that the Charity Trustees

- have approved the report above; and
- have authorised me to sign it on their behalf

.....


Rev Chris Friend (Minister & Elder)

.....


Rev Caroline Friend (Minister & Elder)

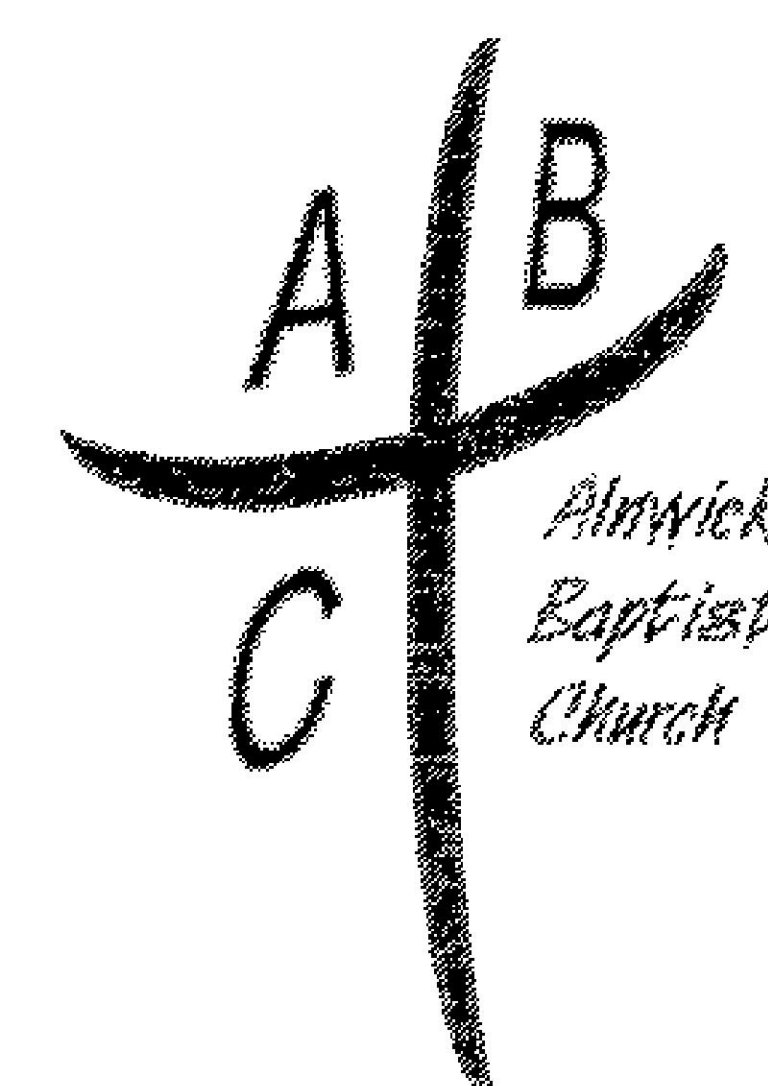
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Mr Chris Hinds (Deacon)

Date 17 July 2021

ALNWICK BAPTIST CHURCH

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021



Receipts and payments account for the year ended 31 March 2021

	<u>Year ended 31 March 2021</u>			<u>Year ended 31 March 2020</u>
	<u>Unrestricted Funds £</u>	<u>Restricted funds £</u>	<u>Total £</u>	<u>Total £</u>
Receipts				
Offerings and donations - Gift Aid	88,849	—	88,849	86,072
Offerings and donations – other	18,881	2,000	20,881	23,346
Tax reclaimed via Gift Aid	24,846	—	24,846	24,839
Interest receivable	227	—	227	1,085
Donations for ministry training costs	—	—	—	5,264
Donations for other organisations	—	790	790	939
Receipts for church events	—	—	—	5,634
	132,803	2,790	135,593	147,179
Payments				
Staff employment costs (Note 2)	77,937	—	77,937	82,720
Deficit payment to Baptist Pension Scheme	—	—	—	40,600
Upkeep of church premises (Note 3)	3,888	—	3,888	5,706
General expenses (Note 4)	20,396	—	20,396	9,105
Equipment and furniture (Note 5)	839	—	839	302
Church events	28	—	28	8,994
CAP Alnwick Debt Centre (Note 6)	3,176	2,000	5,176	5,234
Donations (Note 7)	19,600	790	20,390	36,103
	125,864	2,790	128,654	188,764
Surplus/(deficit) for the financial year	6,939	—	6,939	(41,585)
Bank/deposit balances at start of year	93,089	—	93,089	134,674
Bank/deposit balances at end of year	100,028	—	100,028	93,089

The notes on pages 10 to 12 form part of these financial statements.

ALNWICK BAPTIST CHURCH

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Statement of assets and liabilities as at 31 March 2021

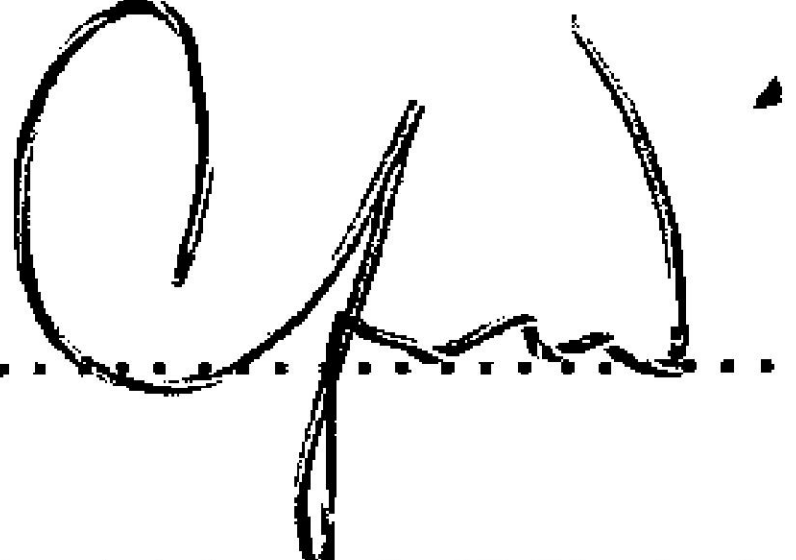
	<u>31 March 2021</u> £	<u>31 March 2020</u> £
Bank/cash balances		
Lloyds Bank	1,933	2,054
Charities Deposit Fund	58,095	51,035
Baptist Union Corporation Loan Fund	40,000	40,000
	<hr/> 100,028	<hr/> 93,089
Other monetary assets		
Debtor - tax reclaimable via Gift Aid (re tax year 2020/21)	<hr/> 22,491	<hr/> 24,846

Fixed assets retained for church use

Alnwick Baptist Church premises, Lisburn Street, Alnwick NE66 1UR
Furniture, fittings and contents of church premises

The notes on pages 10 to 12 form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the Charity Trustees of Alnwick Baptist Church and signed on their behalf by:


.....

Rev Chris Friend (Minister & Elder)


.....

Rev Caroline Friend (Minister & Elder)


.....

Mr Chris Hinds (Deacon)

Date 17 July 2021

ALNWICK BAPTIST CHURCH

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Notes to the financial statements

1 Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis, as permitted by Section 133 of the Charities Act 2011.

General funds are for the furtherance of the normal purposes of Alnwick Baptist Church and are not subject to any restriction of use.

2 Staff employment costs

	Year ended 31 March 2021 £	Year ended 31 March 2020 £
Salaries	58,138	56,214
Manse rent (leaseback on Ministers' residences)	8,604	9,701
Council tax and water rates	2,003	2,103
Employer's NI contributions (net of Employment Allowance)	—	328
Employer's pension contributions	6,481	8,128
Telephone and broadband	1,642	1,256
Travel expenses	583	4,031
Courses and conferences	486	959
	77,937	82,720

Rev Chris Friend (full-time) and Rev Caroline Friend (part-time) were employed by the Church throughout the year as Co-Ministers. The Co-Ministers, who were also Charity Trustees, lived in a house rented from them by the Church.

Mr Neill Parker was employed part-time by the Church throughout the year as Manager of the Alnwick Debt Centre, which is run by the Church in partnership with Christians Against Poverty.

Mrs Sarah Hamer was employed part-time by the Church with effect from 13 July 2020 as Children and Families Worker.

All of the employees are members of personal defined contribution pension plans into which the Church makes an employer contribution equivalent to 10% of salary.

No sums were reimbursed to the Charity Trustees for their work as Charity Trustees (2019-20 none).

3 Upkeep of church premises

	Year ended 31 March 2021 £	Year ended 31 March 2020 £
Gas, electricity and water	1,248	2,512
Repairs, maintenance and cleaning	1,506	2,094
Insurance	1,134	1,100
	3,888	5,706

4 General expenses

	Year ended 31 March 2021 £	Year ended 31 March 2020 £
Teaching materials	1,044	1,000
Photocopying, postage and stationery	1,602	2,280
Website, audio system and IT	1,034	1,472
Safeguarding	559	—
Subscriptions	754	864
Fees/expenses to visiting speakers	225	560
CCLI copyright licence	727	606
Future premises project	11,950	1,389
Other	2,501	934
	20,396	9,105

5 Equipment and furniture

	Year ended 31 March 2021 £	Year ended 31 March 2020 £
Laptop computer, camera and tripod	728	—
Hand towel dispensers	111	—
Lectern	—	255
Flower stand	—	47
	839	302

6 CAP Alnwick Debt Centre

The Church runs the CAP Alnwick debt counselling centre, in conjunction with Christians Against Poverty, a national charity. The employment costs of the CAP Centre Manager are included in the staff employment costs shown in Note 2. The other amounts paid by the Church during the year were as follows:

	Year ended 31 March 2021 £	Year ended 31 March 2020 £
Donation to Christians Against Poverty central costs	4,992	4,992
CAP Alnwick Debt Centre running costs	184	242
	5,176	5,234

7 Donations

The Church supports Christian work in a variety of situations through prayer and financial giving.

	Year ended 31 March 2021 £	Year ended 31 March 2020 £
Baptist Union Home Mission	5,300	5,200
BMS World Mission	5,300	5,200
Baptist Pension Scheme Family Solution	—	10,000
Harvest offering – Operation Agri	—	459
Christmas offering – Community@NE66 (previous year Prison Fellowship)	790	480
Cord Global	500	500
Contagious	3,000	3,000
Mighty Oaks	500	500
Operation Agri	500	500
Tearfund	500	500
Release International	500	500
Good News For Everyone (formerly GideonsUK)	500	500
Lifepath Brinkburn	500	500
The Farming Community Network	500	500
Open Doors	500	500
Newcastle West End Refugee Service	500	500
Community@NE66 (Alnwick Community Centre)	500	1,500
Rural Ministries	500	—
Contribution to ministry training costs	—	5,264
	20,390	36,103

**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINER
to the Trustees of Alnwick Baptist Church ("the Charity")**

I report to the Charity Trustees on my examination of the financial statements of the Charity for the year ended 31 March 2021, which are set out on pages 8 to 12.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Charity's Trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's financial statements carried out under Section 145 of the 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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with Section 130 of the Act; or
- the financial statements do not accord with the accounting records.

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 financial statements to be reached.



Jane Harvey FCA

12th January 2022

Greaves Grindle
Victoria House
Bondgate Within
Alnwick
NE66 1TA