

Trustees Annual Report 2021

The trustees present their Annual Report and financial statements for 2021.

Aims and Purposes of the Charity

As an independent, Bible-believing church, Wem Baptist Church's purposes are (as stated in the Church's Constitution): "(a) the advancement of the Christian faith in accordance with the Church's Basis of Faith, primarily, but not exclusively, in Wem and the surrounding neighbourhood; and (b) such other charitable purposes as shall, in the opinion of the members of the Church in general meeting, further the work of the Church."

As a church, we are committed to spreading the Bible's message concerning Jesus, to develop people's knowledge of him, and to encourage them to worship, trust and serve him. We seek to encourage as many as possible to follow Jesus's example of love and compassion in serving each other and the wider community.

2021 was another highly unusual year because of the Coronavirus pandemic, which continued to impact on services and normal activities. Although Wem Baptist Church tried to fulfil our strategic aims and objectives, many adjustments had to be made. January 1st 2021 found us in our third lockdown. All 'in-person' services were closed and Sunday worship was 'on-line'. On February 28th we began meeting again in the church building. However, there were many statutory restrictions which had to be observed. Social distancing, wearing of face masks and the restriction of singing to people in the music group were the most challenging. Gradually through the year things returned to near normal. As in 2020, financial giving remained strong and through the Grace of God the church never had difficulties in meeting regular financial commitments.

Objectives and Activities

The Trustees have read the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit, and are satisfied that the activities described below clearly demonstrate that the charity is providing a benefit to the public.

In order to fulfil the aims and purposes of the Church as stated above, a variety of activities are provided for both the benefit of church members and for the benefit of members of the public. Our weekly Sunday services, at 10.00 am and 6.00 pm, are central to our church life, and are open to the whole community. They are advertised in local publications, on the

Church's own and other websites, on the Church's Facebook page, and outside the church building.

We seek to encourage attendance by members of the wider community by making these gatherings friendly, informal and joyful occasions. In addition, these services are "streamed" and are accessible to all via the Internet, whilst recordings of them are available on the Church's website. During most Sunday morning services "Junior Church" is run, which is open to all primary school-aged children. There is also a Bible class for those in school years 7,8 and 9.

The Church provides a variety of midweek prayer and Bible study meetings to encourage fellowship and growth in the Christian faith, both on the Church premises and in the homes of some members. Once again, these meetings are open to all and are advertised on the Church's website and in the Church's weekly news sheet. Throughout the pandemic these meetings were held via 'Zoom' when necessary.

Age-appropriate midweek clubs are also provided for children and young people from both "Church" families and from the wider community. While these ceased during the lockdown, they started up again in the summer of 2021 first outside at the town's recreation ground and then with dark, cold nights they moved into the church building. The youth leaders held a particularly successful 'Bonfire night' in the grounds of a local Christian conference centre. Teenagers from a number of local evangelical churches attended this event.

During term-time, a weekly parent and toddler group is also run by the Church. This mainly serves families from the community. Parents, grandparents and child minders very much appreciate the activities, songs and stories organised for the toddlers and the adults enjoy the refreshments and the time to talk and share. Again government rules and advice were followed. The adults were asked to observe social distancing regulations. We believe it is very important for children have plenty of opportunities to mix and play with others of their own age.

On Wem Market day (Thursday) the church welcomes the community for coffee, tea and cakes. This is not a profit making opportunity. It is an opportunity to build links with people who do not attend Sunday worship. It is staffed by a committed and enthusiastic group of church volunteers who are always available to provide a listening ear to those who are lonely or troubled. Unfortunately, because of Covid, during 2021 this service to the community had to be withdrawn. However, members of the Coffee morning team visited many doorsteps and delivered cake as well as checking that regular attendees were getting on well.

Where possible, the Church responds to invitations from local primary and secondary schools, radio stations and other organisations to teach the message of the Bible. These were greatly curtailed in 2021 at the request of the schools. However, the Pastor did continue to lead 'Thought for the Day' at the local secondary school, Thomas Adams, Wem. We are grateful for this link with the community.

From time to time, the Church offers courses to all who are interested in finding out more about the Christian Faith. We also offer occasional courses in personal finance with material supplied by 'Christians against Poverty.'

Individual pastoral and spiritual advice is offered to people living in the church's locality. We conduct marriages and funerals in accordance with the teaching of the Bible. We support missionary and evangelistic work in North Shropshire, nationally and internationally.

For around fifty years Wem Baptist church has organised a Holiday Bible Club. This consists of a week of activities centred on a series of Bible stories. It is held in the early part of August and is attended by 100 to 150 local children from the community. It is greatly appreciated by both adults and children. For a second year this could not be held in the church, so instead a roadshow of events were held in various recreational areas around Wem. These were also greatly appreciated by the residents of the town and were enjoyed by many families who do not normally attend services in the church building. On the Friday of the week, a free barbecue was held on the town 'Rec'. It was very well attended.

The Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance of the church building in Chapel Street, Wem, and the manse in Station Road, Wem. They also have oversight of the legal and financial integrity of the charity. The Church has insurance policies in place covering assets and potential liabilities which could arise and meets its legal requirements in this area.

The Trustees have agreed a number of policies which are in place and reviewed regularly including the Child Protection policy which was reviewed in 2021 and the Health and Safety policy which is reviewed annually. The Trustees have put in place a comprehensive range of employment policies and continue to highlight the importance and relevance of the Data Protection procedures. The Trustees meet four times a year. These meetings are formally recorded and these records are available for inspection by the Charity Commission and the Independent Examiner. In 2021 there were also a number of extraordinary meetings.

Achievements and Performance

The Church does not measure the success of its ministries mainly in numbers, including financial numbers, but in less tangible ways like growth of individuals in their Christian faith and in opportunities to share the Christian gospel with members of the community. Such "success" is difficult to measure, but the Trustees rejoice in another year when the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been shared with the town of Wem. This year we have provided free literature both outside the church building in Chapel Street and near the exit from the CO-OP supermarket. These include Bibles, books and leaflets. These have proved popular and

hundreds of items have been taken. We are encouraged to find that they have not then been dropped in the street and have not contributed to littering.

In normal times attendance at the Sunday services in Wem average around 100 in the mornings and around 40 in the evenings. These numbers have been maintained on-line and although some of the older members have not had internet access we have gained viewers from other parts of the UK and abroad. The Pastor continued to send out a daily 'Thought for the Day'. These include a Bible reading, words of encouragement and prayers. These have proved extremely popular both in Wem as well further afield with subscribers as far away as Florida and Japan. For those who do not have internet access, these 'thoughts' can be listened to on a land line (via a service called Twilio.).

Much of the work of the church was carried out by a large number of volunteers who, amongst other ministries, serve as musicians, Home-group leaders, lay preachers, children's and youth leaders, visitors to the sick and elderly, church maintainers, administrators, and so on. We give thanks to the Lord for their faithful and fruitful efforts. As in the previous few years, in 2021 we had one Pastor, Rev Colin D Jones who led the majority of the services, contacted those in need of pastoral support and chaired the Trustees and the other decision-making meetings. His experience and scholarship was invaluable to the smooth running of the Church. The church's administrator, financial administrator and cleaner were employed on part-time contracts. We are very grateful to them especially as they give extra time voluntarily.

The Church's week-long summer Holiday Bible Club for the children of Wem was replaced by a roving event with a jungle theme, held at the park areas around the town. The children enjoyed Bible stories and Christian teaching at the appropriate level. These events also enabled us to take part in the Government's "Holiday Activities and Food Programme" by providing lunches to those children who normally receive free school dinners.

Wem Baptist Church continues to seek to support those facing financial challenges. The church building is a collection point for the local food bank. The Deacons hold a fund which can be called upon by the church leaders to support those in financial need.

Overseas Missionary work was also supported last year, with continued finance given to a number of organisations. The details of the support given are included in the Treasurer's Report below.

We were not able to allow community groups to use our building in 2021 for infection control reasons. But by conviction Wem Baptist Church is a welcoming group which both encourages the community into our building and seeks to support the town of Wem by getting involved in those events that are compatible with our values and beliefs. The pandemic restrictions made this impossible last year.

2021 concluded with two very successful events. Firstly, an outdoor walk-about Nativity. On a cold Saturday morning before Christmas members of the church dressed as Nativity characters and positioned themselves around the town. Families had to search them out and

obtain special clues from each character. This was well received by the community. Secondly, an outdoor Christmas Carol celebration took place on the Town square next to the supermarket. Despite the cold and the fog, over one hundred and twenty attended in person and many more watched 'on-line'. All was arranged in a Covid safe way with effective marshalling.

Treasurer's Report for the year ending 31st December 2021

Summary of the Year

At the start of 2021 the church had a healthy opening cash position of nearly £60,000. A deficit budget was set taking a prudent view of income and the costs forecast to cover improvements to the manse. The budgeted cash position at the year-end was approximately £24,000.

The ongoing pandemic has impacted the budget and, whilst there is a reduction in cash, this is not as great as was forecast and the church ended 2021 with a cash balance of over £43,000. This was encouraging in the light of some £20,000 being incurred on improvements to the manse. Income was higher than budgeted due to increased offerings and a refund of council tax for the period that the manse was unoccupied. Expenses were generally lower than budgeted largely due to the impact of lockdown on church activities.

Other Causes

The church earmarks approximately 10% of offerings, gift aid and donations to other causes. A total of £8,205 was distributed during 2020 as follows: Operation Mobilisation £4,000, Platform 67 £85, WEC International £4,000 and the Friends of Wem Cemetery £120. In addition, a further £2,909 was generously given by Church members via restricted offerings, including £850 to Tear Fund and £850 to OM for relief work in Afghanistan.

Reserves Policy

The Charity Commission expects the Managing Trustees to decide, publish, implement and monitor their charity's reserves policy so that they can comply with their legal duties.

The Managing Trustees therefore maintain a balance on unrestricted funds of £10,000 to cover emergency situations that may arise from time to time.

Conclusion

The Church enters 2022 with a solid cash balance of £43,000. With the lifting of restrictions many church activities have resumed, and a new Pastor has been appointed. Whilst a deficit

budget has once again been formulated, this is based on a prudent view of income and will not impact on the reserves policy as covered above,

The Managing Trustees are grateful to everyone involved in the management of the church finances and recognise God's continued financial provision to Wem Baptist Church..

Structure, Governance and Management

Wem Baptist Church is a charitable unincorporated association.

The way that the church is governed is set out in the church's constitution that was revised and agreed on 4th March 2019. The members of the church elect elders and deacons to govern, manage and serve the church, and together these act as Managing Trustees for the charity. During 2021, one of the elders was a full-time paid worker (as pastor). Two of the Deacons, (the Financial Administrator and General Administrator) were also employed part-time. On April 30th the financial administrator resigned as a deacon and Trustee while continuing to work as the financial administrator. The church's constitution allows for this, with suitable safeguards for the avoidance of conflicts of interest.

The church is affiliated to the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC), and the Fellowship Property Trust at present acts as Holding Trustee with regard to the church building and the Manse. During 2021 we were informed that the Fellowship Property would not act as holding Trustees going forward and we must seek alternative arrangements. We are, as of December 2021, in the process of transferring our deeds to the Church Growth Trust of The Barn, 1 Manor Farm Barns, Baines Lane, Seaton, Oakham LE15 9HP

Our Pastor and Chair of Trustees, Rev Colin D Jones, was due to retire in April 2019. However, he kindly continued in post at the request of the Elders until a replacement was found. On 15th November 2021, at a special members' meeting, it was decided to call Nathan Burley as our next Pastor. He had visited the church and preached prior to the call and his appointment was welcomed by the church. We all look forward to him taking up his office on March 1st 2022.

Administrative Information

Wem Baptist Church is situated in Chapel Street, Wem, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY4 5ER, and correspondence can be directed there for the attention of the Church Administrator.

Wem Baptist Church's Charity Registration Number is 1149374.

Managing Trustees who have served from 1st January 2021 until 31st December 2021 as follows:

Colin Jones -Chairman

David Rowe -Vice Chairman

Tim Towers (until 7th March 2021)

Jon Berry

Ron Dakin (until Dec. 2021, unable to attend Trustees Meetings since March 2020 due to illness)

Lorna Dakin -Administrator

Lynne Towers (until 7th December 2021)

Paul Towers (until 7th June 2021)

Graham Joynes

Lyn Towers (until 30th April 2021)- Finance Administrator

Ashley Bone

Elizabeth Dakin (from December 2021)

Declaration

The Managing Trustees declare that they have approved the above report.

Signed on behalf of the Managing Trustees (1):



Full Name: Nathan Philip Godfrey Burley

Position: Chairman

Signed on behalf of the Managing Trustees (2):



Full Name: Lorna Ruth Dakin

Position: Trustee & Chair of the Deacons



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Wern Baptist Church

1149374

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

1st January 2021

To

31st December

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Total Offerings	64,232	-	-	64,232	67,033
Gift Aid & Bank Interest	10,690	-	-	10,690	11,419
Total Donations	5,114	-	-	5,114	630
Total Refreshments	-	-	-	-	499
Total General	1,560	-	-	1,560	921
Total Restricted	-	3,709	-	3,709	2,648
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	81,596	3,709	-	85,305	83,149
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	81,596	3,709	-	85,305	83,149
A3 Payments					
Total Ministerial	34,390	-	-	34,390	31,041
Total Manse	24,241	-	-	24,241	4,342
Total Chapel Street	11,213	-	-	11,213	10,047
Total Evangelism	2,304	-	-	2,304	1,402
Total Children & Youth	1,165	-	-	1,165	1,660
Total Other Activities	-	-	-	-	-
Total Refreshments	222	-	-	222	344
Total Restricted Donations	-	3,709	-	3,709	2,598
Total Music/Tech	1,754	-	-	1,754	1,392
Deacon's Gifts	284	-	-	284	450
Total Other Causes	8,205	-	-	8,205	7,850
Total General Expenditure	13,539	-	-	13,539	8,196
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	97,317	3,709	-	101,026	69,322
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	97,317	3,709	-	101,026	69,322
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 15,721	-	-	- 15,721	13,827
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	59,532	-	-	59,532	45,705
Cash funds this year end	43,811	-	-	43,811	59,532

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash at bank	43,811	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	43,811	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))			

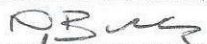
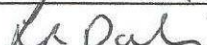
	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Church building	Unrestricted	-	-
	Equipment & Fittings	Unrestricted	-	-
	Musical, video & audio equipment	Unrestricted	-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Nathan Philip Godfrey Burley	23-May-22
	Lorna Ruth Dakin	23-May-22

Independent Examiners report to the trustees of Wem Baptist Church
Charity number 1149374

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Wem Baptist Church ('the Trust') for the year ended 31 December 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent Examiner's statement

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

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

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.



Jane Annette
FCCA MAAT
Beech House, Wentnor, Bishops Castle, Shropshire SY9 5EE