

Wem Baptist Church

Accounts

For The Year Ended 31 December 2023

Wem Baptist Church

Trustees Annual Report 2023

The trustees present their Annual Report and financial statements for 2023

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.

As in 2022, financial giving remained strong and through the Grace of God the church had no 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.

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 5, 6 and 7.

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. One house group has used Zoom to further facilitate attendance for all.

Age-appropriate midweek clubs are also provided for children and young people from both "Church" families and from the wider community. The youth leaders held a particularly successful 'Bonfire night' on one of the member's lands. Teenagers from several 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. We believe it is very important for children to 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.

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. We have provided speakers for '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 are 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, this year we have supported a teacher/ missionary in Kenya.

For around fifty years Wem Baptist church has organised a Holiday Bible Club. In 2023 this

consisted 4 days of activities centred on a series of Bible stories. It is held in the early part of August and is attended by 80-100 local children from the community. It is greatly appreciated by both adults and children. For the last few years, we have linked to the government's "Holiday Activities and Food Programme" to provide activity and food for free school meals and SEN children town. The children enjoyed Bible stories and Christian teaching at the appropriate level. On the Friday of the week, a parents evening with refreshments was held. 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 several policies which are in place and reviewed regularly including the Child Protection Policy and the Health and Safety Policy which are both 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.

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 outside the church building in Chapel Street. This includes 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.

Attendance at the Sunday services in Wem average around 100 in the mornings and around 45 in the evenings. 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. This year our Pastor, Nathan Burley, who led many of the services, contacted those in need of pastoral support and chaired the Trustees and the other decision-making meetings. 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.

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.

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.

Treasurer's Report for the year ended 31st December 2023

Summary of the Year

At the start of 2023 the church had a healthy opening cash position of over £47,000. A summary of the 2023 church finances is as follows:

- Income £115,100 (budget £90,758)
Mainly due to increased offerings, gift aid, restricted donations and a grant to assist with legal costs in relation to the trust.
- Expenditure £96,826 (budget £99,433)
Savings on expenditure were made in several areas including Chapel Street and manse expenses (£6,000). Funds are ring-fenced for potential manse kitchen upgrade.
- Surplus £18,274 (budgeted deficit £8,675).
- Closing bank balance £65,429.

Other Causes

A total of £12,320 was distributed during 2023 as follows and included gifts to Operation Mobilisation, Checkpoint Christian Youth Trust, Teach Beyond, Platform 67 and the Friends of Wem Cemetery. In addition, a further £9,624 was generously given by Church members via restricted offerings, to a variety of Christian charities.

Reserves Policy

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

Conclusion

The Church enters 2024 with a solid cash balance of over £65,000. 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 20th September 2022. 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 2022, one of the elders was a full-time paid worker (as pastor). Three of the Deacons, (the general administrator, financial administrator and cleaner) were also employed part-time. 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), The holding trustee for the manse and the Chapel Street premises is the Church Growth Trust.

Administrative Information

Wem Baptist Church is situated in Chapel Street, Wem, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY4 5ER.

Wem Baptist Church's Charity Registration Number is 1149374.

Managing Trustees who have served in the period 1st January 2023 until 31st December 2023 as follows:

Nathan Burley - Chairman

Jon Berry – Vice Chairman

Robin Townsend (appointed 5th June 2023)

Lorna Dakin - Administrator

Ashley Bone

Elizabeth Dakin

Graham Joynes

John Paul Towers (appointed 4th December 2023)

Lyn Towers – Financial Administrator/Treasurer (appointed 4th December 2023)

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

Chair of the Trustees

Signed on behalf of the Managing Trustees (2): _____



Full Name: Elizabeth Patricia Dakin

Trustee & Chair of the Deacons

**Independent Examiner's Report to the
Management Committee of Wem Baptist Church
on the Accounts for the Year Ended 31 December 2023**

Basis of independent examiner's report

We report on the accounts of Wem Baptist Church for the year ended 31 December 2023.

The Group's officers are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Group's officers consider that an audit is not required for this year and that an independent examination is needed. It is our responsibility to:

- examine the accounts
- to follow the general directions for the conduct of an independent examination
- to state whether particular matters have come to our attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

Our examination was carried out in accordance with general directions for an independent examination. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the committee and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as a committee concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently we do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. which gives us reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements
 - to keep appropriate accounting records; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with applicable financial reporting standards
2. have not been met; or to which, in our opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Community Accounting Services

**Community Accounting Services Ltd
7 Napoleon Drive
Shrewsbury
SY3 5PH**

Date: 20/09/2024

**Wem Baptist Church
Income & Expenditure Accounts
for the Year Ended 31 December 2023**

	Unrestricted Funds 2023 £	Restricted Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
Income				
Offerings	74,270	-	74,270	73,659
Gift Aid & Bank Interest	15,164	1,072	16,236	16,387
Grants	7,926	1,000	8,926	1,390
Donations	1,041	8,872	9,913	10,213
Refreshments	2,589	-	2,589	1,581
Bookstall	132	-	132	158
Church Groups	1,988	-	1,988	1,265
Other Income	1,046	-	1,046	1,398
Total Income	104,156	10,944	115,100	106,051
Expenditure				
Running costs				
Wages	36,289		36,289	33,968
Pension	2,054		2,054	2,741
Travel & relocation expenses	683		683	465
Conference Expenses	1,319		1,319	324
Repairs & Maintenance	5,777		5,777	10,617
Light & heat	5,498		5,498	3,559
Insurance	3,290		3,290	3,008
Rates	4,059		4,059	3,781
Legal & professional	305		305	10,018
Independent examiner	400		400	-
Telephone	1,633		1,633	729
Publicity	1,917		1,917	592
Computer costs & equipment	2134		2,134	3,732
Licences	739		739	689
Bookstall	146		146	192
Evangelism	78		78	920
Children & Youth	2,293		2,293	1,676
Refreshments	1,360		1,360	786
Donations to other causes	12,330	9,624	21,954	19,779
Training	25		25	550
Deacon's gifts	500		500	405
Printing & Stationery	700		700	823
Subscriptions	1,300		1,300	1,000
General expenses	2,373		2,373	2,353
Total Expenses	87,202	9,624	96,826	102,707
Net Incoming Resources Before Transfers	16,954	1,320	18,274	3,344
Transfer Between Funds	-	-	-	-
Net Incoming Resources	16,954	1,320	18,274	3,344
Fund balance brought forward at 1 January 2023	46,541	614	47,155	43,811
Fund Balance Carried Forward at 31 December 2023	63,495	1,934	65,429	47,155

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

**Wem Baptist Church
Statement of Assets
for the Year Ended 31 December 2023**

	Unrestricted Funds 2023 £	Restricted Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Cash at bank	63,495	1,934	65,429

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Nathan Philip Godfrey Burley
Chair of the Trustees



Date 22/09/2024

Elizabeth Patricia Dakin
Trustee & Chair of the Deacons



Date 22/09/2024