



BEACON CHURCH

Registered Charity No. 1150685

Expanding God's Kingdom by loving & serving Jesus, each other & our community

Trustees' Annual Report for 2020

Trustees holding office during the year

Mr D J Carson, Mr D A Leach, ,
Mr J R Pollard (Chairman), Mr P S Standish & Mr G Tither

Bankers: The Co-operative Bank plc, Delf House, Southway, Skelmersdale, Lancashire WN8 6NY

Registered Address: 2 Coralin Way, Bryn, Wigan, Lancashire WN4 0ET

The Beacon Church celebrated its eighth anniversary during 2020, the first Sunday Morning service having been held on 21 October 2012. The church is centred in the town of Ashton-in-Makerfield near Wigan, Lancashire and whenever physical in person Sunday worship has been possible those services have been held at Stubshaw Cross Independent Methodist Church on Bolton Road in the town. From mid-March 2020, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the church made the decision not to hold in person services in the church building for a time but to move to holding virtual meetings online using the Zoom video conferencing platform. Further details can be found later on in this report.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

The full name of the charity is The Beacon Church.

The charity was registered in England on 4 February 2013 with registered number 1150685.

It is an unincorporated association and its governing document is its constitution which was adopted on 3 December 2012 (as amended on 5 July 2015 and 22 August 2018).

Church Leadership

James Lycett has been the church's Associate Pastor since November 2016, having already worked for the church for two years prior to that in a different capacity since November 2014. Having earned his degree in theology at university James spent a number of years in secular employment before feeling called to full time Christian ministry and completing The North West Gospel Partnership's Ministry Training Course before taking up his current role.

In March 2018 the church invited Antony Billington to be its next Senior Pastor starting in September 2018. As a former lecturer at the London School of Theology and later Head of Theology at the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC) Antony has brought with him to the role a wealth of experience in teaching the Word of God.

Together Antony and James cover the majority of the regular teaching ministry of the church along with providing pastoral support for all those attending.

Alongside his role as Senior Pastor it was agreed that Antony would continue to dedicate one day each week to working as a Theology Adviser for LICC.

The Leadership Team continued to operate as Elders and Deacons throughout 2020 with Antony as Senior Pastor and James as Associate Pastor meeting with both groups as appropriate. On 17 March 2020, in light of Government advice relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, all church meetings and events were temporarily suspended but in the time that followed many of the church's various ministries resumed, albeit in some cases in a different form.

The other members of the Leadership Team each have membership of one of these two groups as follows: -

Senior Pastor:	Mr Antony Billington	Associate Pastor:	Mr James Lycett
Elders:	Mr Glyn Tither	Deacons:	Mr Daniel Carson Mr Craig Galloway
			Mr Chris Gaskell Mr Joseph Heyes
			Mr Phillip Standish

Although these groups meet separately to discuss their respective areas of responsibility the Leadership Team as a whole still continues to meet on a regular basis as necessary.

Location

The church is based in the town of Ashton-in-Makerfield near Wigan, Lancashire and during 2020 made use of a number of hired premises for the purposes of the various meetings which were held and the numerous ministries which were in operation as follows:

Building/Venue	Usage/Meeting
Stubshaw Cross Independent Methodist Church	Sunday Morning Service, Kids' Church Sunday Evening Service, Fellowship/Church Meetings Beacon Beebies Youth Club Lighthouse Connect
The Diamond Club, Ashton-in-Makerfield	Coffee Pot (until 17 March 2020)
Queen's Road Methodist Church, Ashton-in-Makerfield	Samaritan's Purse – Operation Christmas Child collection and processing centre. Not used during 2020 due to COVID-19.

The use of Queen's Road Methodist Church, which had been used in previous years as a processing centre for Operation Christmas Child, was discontinued as the organisation moved this function to bigger premises in another location.

Other meetings such as Ignite, Beacon Men ('The Shed'), Beacon Women, MOACA and the house groups were held in people's homes until mid-March when they moved to online meetings.

For greater detail concerning the various meetings and ministries see later on in this report.

Risk Management

The Church's finances are subject to independent examination. The Trustees comply with Charity Commission advice and directives in the running of the church. The Trustees are satisfied that major risks are being assessed and systems put in place for their mitigation. We have re-assessed our financial position in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and are satisfied as to our ability to operate as a going concern. The charity did not seek any Government support which may have been available in response to the pandemic. Financially, the church continues to be well supported by those who attend, both online and in person, and remains able to meet all commitments.

Despite the cessation of weekly cash collections in March, income was not significantly impacted as a number of members who supported the church in that way began to contribute instead by way of monthly standing order.

The church is committed to protecting children and any vulnerable adults we come into contact with. As part of this we have developed a policy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults produced with the support of Thirtyone:eight (formerly the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)). We have Designated Officers and comply with the Code of Practice set out by Thirtyone:eight in matters of confidentiality and safe keeping of records.

We comply with the Equality Act 2010 in relation to those with disabilities and make every effort to be inclusive of anyone, whatever their disability. Access to all of the premises which we hire for our various meetings and other ministries is at ground level and accessible for wheelchairs.

The Trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

Objectives and Activities

Charitable Objects

The charity's principal objective and activity continues to be the promotion of Christianity and the teachings of the Bible. This objective is met through the operation of a church and its associated activities such as Sunday services (both morning and evening), house groups, a Sunday school ('Kids' Church'), missionary trips and support of missionary organisations, community evangelism, weekly clubs and activities for children of all ages and a monthly club for those with disabilities.

Further charitable objects of the church are the relief of sickness and financial hardship and the promotion and preservation of good health and also the advancement of education. One way in which the first is met is through a ministry which the church operates which provides meals to those who have just come out of hospital or are otherwise recuperating from illness and their families, including new parents following the birth of their children.

The church also supports the Fur Clemt café (now known as The Pantry Café) located at Stubshaw Cross Independent Methodist Church in conjunction with other local churches. The café is part of the 'Real Junk Food' movement and involves procuring donations of food from suppliers, which would otherwise be disposed of, to serve in the café on a not for profit basis, in order primarily to help support the poor in the community by providing them with a meal for whatever they feel they are able to afford to pay. The café was forced to close temporarily in March 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic but has reopened in 2021.

Members of the church congregation also previously helped to run a collection and processing centre for Operation Christmas Child via the charity Samaritan's Purse (see below) but this involvement has now come to an end.

The second further charitable object of advancing education is met principally through the provision of a Sunday School ('Kids' Church'), which in 2020 took place during the Sunday morning service (until after 17 March 2020 when it moved online at a different time – see below), but also through the Lighthouse, Youth Club and Ignite groups and the studies which take place during the week in the house groups, including the 'The Shed', Beacon Women and MOACA Bible study groups.

Public Benefit

The church Trustees can confirm that they have given due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission in accordance with Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006. Significant activities that the church undertook during the year that demonstrate public benefit are set out on the pages that follow.

The church seeks at all times to ensure public benefit and accordingly: -

- a. The regular services of the church are open to all members of the public;
- b. There are no restrictions based on geographical location or otherwise;
- c. No charge is made for attendance at any of the services or the other meetings, groups and activities of the church;
- d. Any charges that are made are for goods or services supplied e.g. to purchase literature or refreshments or towards venue admission costs on organised trips, are charged on a non-profit-making basis, often being subsidised by the church to ensure affordability for all.

Significant Activities

The church runs a range of activities for all ages at The Beacon Church. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the resultant temporary closure of the church building, a number of these activities were carried out online from 17 March 2020 onwards.

- Sunday Morning Services

At the beginning of 2020 the Sunday morning service ran from 9:30am to roughly 10:45am every week. Typically, the music group led the congregation in songs appropriate for all ages, announcements regarding the church's activities were shared, the congregation were led in corporate prayer and a portion of the Bible read and expounded upon by the speaker for that day. Prior to March 2020 tea and coffee were served with cake and biscuits before and after the service with the opportunity for people to meet together to talk and encourage one another. Antony Billington and James Lycett are the primary speakers at the morning services.

From Sunday 22 March 2020 onwards the church moved to holding its weekly Sunday morning worship services online. Initially the service was pre-recorded and uploaded to the YouTube online video sharing platform, with a link placed on the church website, so that it was able to be viewed at any time from 10:30am onwards on the Sunday morning. However, from Easter Sunday 12 April 2020 onwards, the services were streamed live using the Zoom video conferencing platform whereby participants could view the service live and participate where invited to do so. A recording of the Zoom meeting was then later uploaded to YouTube and a link published on both the church's website and our Facebook social media page.

Later on in the year use was also made of the 'breakout rooms' function available within the Zoom platform whereby participants could be split into smaller groups to meet together after the meeting to socialise and provide encouragement to one another as they might have done previously following in person services.

The online Zoom meetings, and prior to that the YouTube broadcasts, were similar in format to the church's usual in person meetings with the exception that there was no sung worship. This is because the online platforms did not seem to adequately provide for this and timing differences between different participants' audio connections meant that to sing together whilst also hearing one another was not really feasible. Instead throughout 2020 links were provided alongside the online services to a playlist of specifically chosen songs which were publicly accessible on YouTube for people to use for private worship. Later in the year this changed and there was once again sung worship during the online services with participants singing to the music with their microphones muted whilst the lyrics were shown on screen.

- Sunday Evening Services

Since September 2015 the church has held Sunday evening services running from 7pm to around 8pm. The evening services were primarily aimed at adults with a greater focus on prayer and praise and expounding the teachings of the Bible. The third Sunday evening service of the month has normally been a Breaking of Bread service which, along with the Breaking of Bread element of the morning service which would usually take place on the first Sunday of the month, allowed people the opportunity to break bread together in this way on roughly a fortnightly basis.

However as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic evening services were temporarily suspended from 17 March 2020 onwards. However they later resumed from Sunday 20 September 2020 as in person meetings in the church building following the easing of Government restrictions. Nevertheless these meetings continued to be streamed live using the Zoom video conferencing platform and recorded and uploaded to YouTube for those unable to attend or apprehensive about doing so due to the ongoing pandemic. During the month of November there was a second period of lockdown due to the pandemic during which these meetings took place solely online.

- Kids' Church

'Kids' Church' is the name given to the Sunday school through which the church offers a programme on a Sunday morning catering for children from age 2 upwards. The classes are run by regular volunteers from the congregation and seek to teach the children the truths of the Bible in a fun and interactive way.

After the church moved to online services on a Sunday morning from mid-March the Kids' Church programme also moved online and would take place using the Zoom video conferencing platform between 9:45am and 10:15am prior to the main service. After a little while the younger age group, consisting of children between the ages of 2 and 5, began to have a separate online meeting from the other children at the same time in order to best cater for their needs which are slightly different to those of the older children.

During the Sunday morning church services up until Sunday 15 March 2020 a crèche area was provided for parents of children under the age of 2 to take their children and play along with other babies and toddlers whilst listening to the meeting via live link. This will resume once the church returns to in person services on a Sunday morning.

- House Groups

These groups are held at various times throughout the week and all who attend the church are encouraged wherever possible to attend one. They represent an opportunity to meet with other Christians in a relaxed setting for discussion based upon the teaching which was given in the Sunday morning service and also for prayer and to allow time for those attending to get to know one another better.

House group meetings run on three nights a week: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. leaving Thursday night free in order to accommodate any other meetings within the church.

From 17 March 2020 onwards and for the rest of the year these meetings took place online using the Zoom video conferencing platform as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- MOACA

This is a group where older men from within the church congregation can meet together every week to discuss the Bible in a relaxed setting.

From 17 March 2020 onwards and for the rest of the year these meetings took place online as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Beacon Men (aka 'The Shed')

A men's group which meets once a month or on other occasions either for Bible study or for social events.

From 17 March 2020 onwards and for the rest of the year these meetings were suspended as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Beacon Women

A women's group which meets once a month or on other occasions either for Bible study or for social events.

From 17 March 2020 onwards and for the rest of the year these meetings were suspended as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. However the groups members continued to support each other in a variety of ways during this period and remained in touch constantly via the group chat which they have which is hosted on the WhatsApp platform.

- Beacon Beebies

The toddler group 'Beacon Beebies' has been running since January 2013. Since that time numbers have grown from between 18 and 20 children attending to between 20 and 30 children each week, plus their parents/careers. Those attending this group are regularly invited to other events and activities taking place within The Beacon Church including all age services, carol services, Easter services and holiday clubs for older siblings and their wider family. One way in which this group is used is to get to know people within the local community in a relaxed environment. There is no cost to attend Beebies, although a donations pot is put out by the coffee hatch to cover the cost of the drinks, toast and other resources used.

From 17 March 2020 onwards and for the rest of the year this group's meetings were suspended as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Lighthouse

Lighthouse has been running since September 2018, replacing the previous club which was called Beacon Kids. It has the aim of teaching the children the truths of the Bible and the Christian faith in a relaxed environment with ample opportunity for fun and games along the way.

The club is open to all children in the area, is organised and run wholly by volunteers from the church and is provided free of charge.

From 17 March 2020 onwards and for the rest of the year this group's meetings were suspended as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Youth Club

This is a club for young people of secondary age which again is co-ordinated and organised by regular volunteers from the congregation. A typical week includes games followed by a short talk designed to explain the truths of the Bible and what Christians believe.

From 17 March 2020 onwards and for the rest of the year this group's meetings were suspended as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Ignite

Ignite is a club which is run for young people from the age of 14+ (Year 9+ at school) and which during 2020 met on Friday and Sunday evenings in leaders' homes as well as during the Sunday morning service. The club provides an opportunity to socialise and for those attending to get to know one another better and also a teaching and discussion time through which the truths of the Bible and the Christian faith and their practical application are taught in a way which is most relevant to the issues concerning young people of that age.

From 17 March 2020 onwards and for the rest of the year these meetings took place online using the Zoom video conferencing platform as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Connect

This is a group for those with additional needs and their families or carers which normally meets once a month on a Saturday evening. There is a group of between 20 and 30 with a range of disabilities and the aim is to make sure that all feel welcome and included in the programme.

Over the course of the year there are a range of activities on offer and it is intended that the programme be varied each month. Sometimes the meeting is a games night with suitable activities, there are also craft, musical and photographic evenings.

The aim of the group is to present the Christian message in a way that is understandable for those who might not find church teaching accessible and so wherever possible a speaker is invited who is able to do a short talk for this purpose.

From 17 March 2020 onwards and for the rest of the year this group's meetings were suspended as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- 'Mum's Meals' (Meals for the families of those recuperating from illness or the birth of a child)

This is a ministry whereby a team made up mostly of members of the church congregation prepare and deliver meals to those who are suffering with or are recovering from the effects of illness, or an operation or following the birth of a child, and their families. Amongst the recipients of these meals some have been families who regularly attend the church; however many have been those from outside the church whose need has been identified to the team and in this way the church has been able to show compassion to many who are not themselves Christians as a practical outworking of our Christian faith.

- Samaritan's Purse – Operation Christmas Child

Some of the members of the church congregation support the running of a collection and processing centre for shoe boxes which are then distributed internationally by the charity Samaritan's Purse to disadvantaged children overseas. The shoe boxes are filled with Christmas

gifts which are either donated by members of the congregation or funded by monetary gifts from the church or from individual congregation members.

The church continues to support this initiative but the collection and processing centre has now moved to a bigger premises elsewhere.

- Coffee Pot

Coffee Pot is a drop-in coffee morning that during 2020 ran from 10am to 11:30am every Thursday morning during term time at the Diamond Club. Tea, coffee and other hot and cold drinks as well as toast, tea cakes and crumpets were available for a small charge to cover costs. The group was largely attended by people from the church and pastoral support was available during that time in the form of prayer and discussion for any who wanted it. This ministry ceased from 17 March 2020 onwards.

Volunteers

The charity's different activities are run almost exclusively by volunteers from the church. Almost all of the activities run at The Beacon Church would not be possible without the input of volunteers on a weekly basis.

Staff

During 2020 the church had two staff members, our Associate Pastor James Lycett and Antony Billington, our Senior Pastor.

Financial Review

The church Trustees have been encouraged that the level of giving over this year has remained at a similar level to 2019 despite the impact of the COVID19 pandemic. Overall giving totalled £42,044 which when added to tax of £7,750 reclaimable under the Gift Aid scheme, £294 reclaimable under the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (GASDS) and deposit interest received of £559 gives total income for 2020 of £50,647. Giving to the church under the Gift Aid scheme, excluding special collections for specific purposes, totalled £30,724 before tax reclaims and ordinary offerings (those not made under the Gift Aid scheme) totalled £10,835.

These figures represent a 37% reduction in income compared to 2019. However, despite now funding the salaries of two full time pastors and the financial pressures likely to have been experienced by some of the church's donors during the period as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the church was still able to meet all of its financial commitments for the year and ended the year having incurred only a small deficit of around £3.8k. . Note, however, that giving for 2020 included generous one-off gifts from families within the church totalling £10,000 (2019: £28,000). Excluding these particular gifts there was a decrease in overall giving of around 22%

Giving under the Gift Aid scheme increased by 2.1% in 2020 as compared to 2019.

At 31 December 2020 Trustees' funds stood at £99,766. The Trustees are satisfied that the funds held should be sufficient to meet any immediate contingencies that may arise. The Trustees consider it prudent however to retain a certain level of funds in reserve at all times and that this should be at least sufficient to cover running 6 months' costs i.e. around £35,000 (based on current commitments to staff salaries/stipends).

With regard to the additional reserves which are being held the Trustees will in due course consider the best use of these funds. However at the current time it remains a possibility that the church may seek to purchase premises of its own should the opportunity arise or undertake improvements or alterations to hired, leased or shared premises and this impacts upon the amount of reserves which

may reasonably be required to be held going forward. In particular the church's relationship with Stubshaw Cross Independent Methodist Church is such that it seems only a matter of time until it may be appropriate to spend some of these funds in helping develop their premises for the better use of the church and the advancement of its charitable purposes.

A special collection was taken during the autumn of 2020 raising £135 for Caring for Life's harvest appeal. A special collection was taken at Christmas for AsiaLink when funds of £581 were raised. Payment of this will be made in early 2020.

The church previously committed to donate £3,600 per annum to the children's work carried on by Joe and Sue Heyes which involves, amongst other things, Joe taking regular assemblies at various schools in the locality. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic this work ceased during the year and this support was discontinued following a review.

The Trustees have resolved to accept the accounts of the church for 2020 as a true record and approve their submission to the Charity Commission in due course.

The Trustees consider the financial position to be satisfactory.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law.

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales, the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the charity's constitution require the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently; observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice); make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent and prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the charity's constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD

.....
J R Pollard – Chairman

.....
D J Carson – Treasurer



BEACON CHURCH

Registered Charity No. 1150685

Accounts for the Year Ended 31 December 2020

INCOME		2020	2019
	£	£	£
Balance brought forward at 1 January 2020		103,575	87,668
Offerings - Ordinary	10,835		39,523
Offerings - Gift Aid	30,724		30,100
Tax Reclaimable under Gift Aid Scheme	7,750		7,532
Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (GASDS)	294		1,553
	49,603		78,708
Christmas Fayre	-		985
Special Collections - Ordinary	285		321
Special Collections - Gift Aid	200		-
Bank Interest Received	559	50,647	401
TOTAL AVAILABLE INCOME		154,222	168,083
EXPENDITURE		2020	2019
	£	£	£
Venue Hire & Shared Premises Costs		2,136	4,242
Salary Costs		46,635	44,837
Training Courses		-	110
Insurance		339	339
Equipment		-	2,839
Refreshments		79	562
Kids' Church		173	1,049
Clubs for Children and Youth and for Adults with Additional Needs		253	769
Church Weekend Away		-	1,176
Support for Missionary Work		2,904	6,033
Advertising and Evangelistic Literature & Materials		306	543
Other Sundry Expenditure		1,631	2,008
TOTAL PAYMENTS		54,456	64,507
Balance carried forward at 31 December 2020		99,766	103,575
Financial Position at End of Year		2020	2019
	£	£	£
Debtors / Accrued Income		1,909	11,164
Prepayments / (Accruals)		1,779	(5)
Cash at Bank		13,561	10,458
Cash at Building Society		82,517	81,958
Total Trustees' Funds		99,766	103,575
Total Income for the Year		50,647	80,415
Less: Total Expenditure for the Year		54,456	64,507
Net Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year		(3,809)	15,908

**Independent Examiner's Report to the
Trustees of The Beacon Church**
(Registered Charity No. 1150685)

I report on the accounts of the church for the year ended 31 December 2020.

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts and consider that an audit is not required for this year under Section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act), instead that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under Section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of 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 charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's Statement

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

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Name: Paul Holland

Relevant professional qualification or body: ACA

Address: 19 Gateacre Vale Road, Woolton, Liverpool L25 5NL

Date: