



# BEACON CHURCH

Registered Charity No. 1150685

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

## **Trustees' Annual Report for 2021**

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 ninth anniversary during 2021, 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.

### **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 (LIACC) 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 2021 with Antony as Senior Pastor and James as Associate Pastor meeting with both groups as appropriate. At the start of 2021, in light of Government advice relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, all in person church meetings and events remained temporarily suspended but the ministry of the church continued nonetheless working within the Government's guidance and taking advantage wherever possible of technology which allowed congregation members to meet virtually.

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 2021 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 Compass
Stubshaw Cross Community Centre, Ashton-in-Makerfield	Kids' Church

Other meetings such as Ignite, Beacon Men ('The Shed'), Beacon Women, MOACA and the house groups were held online at the start of the year but later moved to taking place as a combination of online meetings and in person meetings in people's homes.

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 2020, income was not significantly impacted as a number of members who previously gave to the church in that way continued 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. During 2021, all paid workers and volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults received specialist safeguarding training.

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 supported the The Pantry Café located at Stubshaw Cross Independent Methodist Church in conjunction with other local churches. The café was part of the 'Real Junk Food' movement and involved 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. Following its temporary closure from March 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic the café reopened in September 2021 but, due to low numbers using it, sadly closed in December 2021. The work however continues through the work of Ashton Pantry which is based at St Thomas's Church of England church in Ashton-in-Makerfield in which several members of the church congregation continue to be involved.

The second further charitable object of advancing education is met principally through the provision of a Sunday School ('Kids' Church'), which at the start of 2021 was still being run online prior to the Sunday morning service but during the year resumed meeting in person – 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 but resumed meeting in person at different times during 2021.

- Sunday Morning Services

During 2021 the Sunday morning services ran from 10:30am to roughly 11:45am every week. Once in person services resumed, 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. Before and after the service there was an 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.

At the beginning of 2021 the church continued to hold its weekly Sunday morning worship services online. 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.

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.

From 16 April 2021 the online Sunday morning meeting began to be streamed live from the church building with up to 30 people able to attend in person whilst observing social distancing and such other Government guidelines that were in place at that time. From Sunday 25 July 2021 onwards Government restrictions concerning COVID-19 were no longer applicable meaning that more people were able to join the Sunday morning meetings in person from that

point forward until from October 2021 onwards services returned to a similar format to what they were prior to the pandemic with attendance also fairly quickly returning to pre-pandemic levels.

- 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 but they later resumed from Sunday 20 September 2020 as in person meetings in the church building following the easing of Government restrictions and continued throughout most of 2021. Nevertheless, most of 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.

- 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 2020 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.

Kids' Church now, as previously, meets in person during the Sunday morning service.

A crèche area is 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.

- 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.

At the start of the year these meetings were continuing to take place online using the Zoom video conferencing platform as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, later in the year they were once again able to take place in person in the homes of members of the church congregation.

- 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 the start of 2021, and throughout 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.

- Beacon Women

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

Although these meetings were suspended for a time as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the group's members continued to support each other in a variety of ways during that period and remained in touch constantly via the group chat which they have which is hosted on the WhatsApp platform. The group has now resuming meeting in person as it did previously.

- 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 all of 2021 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 all of 2021 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 all of 2021 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.

At the beginning of 2021 these meetings took place online using the Zoom video conferencing platform as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, however this group has now resumed meeting in person.

- 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 all of 2021 this group's meetings were suspended as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- 'Mobile 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.

- Compass

Compass is a group which operates a drop in facility at the church building for asylum seekers in the local area to seek help with various things which, being new to the UK, they might encounter difficulty dealing with on their own e.g. completion of forms etc. Those involved seek to provide help in whatever ways they can whilst forming lasting connections with those who attend.

### 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 2021 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 and 2020, despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall giving totalled £53,681 which when added to tax of £7,461 reclaimable under the Gift Aid scheme and deposit interest received of £165 gives total income for 2021 of £61,307. Giving to the church under the Gift Aid scheme, excluding special collections for specific purposes, totalled £30,030 before tax reclaims and ordinary offerings (those not made under the Gift Aid scheme) totalled £23,601.

These figures represent a 21% increase in income compared to 2020. 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 very small deficit of around £5. Note, however, that giving for 2021 included one-off gifts from families within the church totalling £11,000 (2020: £Nil). Excluding these particular gifts there was no significant increase in overall giving from one year to the next.

Giving under the Gift Aid scheme decreased by 3% in 2021 as compared to 2020.

At 31 December 2021 Trustees' funds stood at £99,761. 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 £30,000 (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.

The church increased its missionary support in 2021, committing to spend around 10% of its regular annual income supporting missionaries, missionary organisations and projects.



Donations were made to the following charitable organisations during the year:

- Asia Link - £2,500
- Welcome Churches - £500
- Operation Christmas Child (OCC) - £500
- Jireh Children's Centre, Uganda - £504
- Caring for Life - £315
- United Beach Missions (UBM) - £500
- Pantry Parcels (formerly Ashton Churches Together (ACT) Foodbank) - £300

The Trustees have resolved to accept the accounts of the church for 2021 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 2021

INCOME		2021	2020
	£	£	£
Balance brought forward at 1 January 2021		99,766	103,575
Ordinary Offerings - Regular	12,601		10,585
- Exceptional	11,000		-
Gift Aid Offerings - Regular	29,799		30,724
- Exceptional	-		-
Tax Reclaimable under Gift Aid Scheme	7,461		7,750
Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (GASDS)	-		294
	60,861		49,353
Special Collections - Ordinary	50		535
Special Collections - Gift Aid	231		200
Bank Interest Received	165	61,307	559
<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE INCOME</b>		<b>161,073</b>	<b>154,222</b>
EXPENDITURE		2021	2020
	£	£	£
Venue Hire & Shared Premises Costs		1,861	2,136
Salary Costs		48,641	46,635
Insurance		350	339
Refreshments		141	79
Kids' Church		486	173
Clubs for Children, Youth and Adults with Additional Needs		379	253
Beacon Women		340	220
Child Protection		1,695	313
Support for Missionary Work		5,119	2,904
Advertising and Evangelistic Literature & Materials		10	306
Fellowship Teaching Materials & Books		510	-
Elders' Gifts		684	-
Other Sundry Expenditure		1,096	1,098
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>		<b>61,312</b>	<b>54,456</b>
Balance carried forward at 31 December 2021		99,761	99,766
Financial Position at End of Year		2021	2020
	£	£	£
Debtors / Accrued Income		7,508	1,909
Prepayments / (Accruals)		(1,423)	1,779
Cash at Bank		10,995	13,561
Cash at Building Society		82,681	82,517
<b>Total Trustees' Funds</b>		<b>99,761</b>	<b>99,766</b>
Total Income for the Year		61,307	50,647
Less: Total Expenditure for the Year		61,312	54,456
<b>Net Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year</b>		<b>(5)</b>	<b>(3,809)</b>

**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 2021.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

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**

I have completed my examination and 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 charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- (2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- (3) the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Name: Julie Davies-Brown

Relevant professional qualification or body: ACA, CTA

Address: 8 Harvest Drive; Whittle-le-Woods; Chorley; PR6 7QL

Date: 27/10/2022