

Bradfield and Rougham Baptist Church

Report and Accounts

31 December 2023

Charity number 1151214

Bradfield and Rougham Baptist Church

Charity Number - 1151214

Trustees' Report for the year ended 31 December 2023

Principal address

Bradfield and Rougham Baptist Church
Kingshall Street
Rougham
Bury St Edmunds
IP30 9LE

Trustees

The trustees who served during the year under review were:

James Martin
David Stannard
Angus Michael Barnard
Glen McLellan
Stuart Ruegg

Structure, governance and management

Bradfield and Rougham Baptist Church is governed under a Constitution adopted on 5th February 2013. During 2023 the church members voted unanimously to operate as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and we await confirmation that our governance has been fully transferred to this framework.

Objects

The principal object of the charity is the advancement of the Christian faith according to Baptist principles and in accordance with the basis of faith as stated in Schedule 1. The charity may also carry out other charitable purposes in the United Kingdom and/or other parts of the world.

Financial review

The charity endeavours to utilise the funds available to the best effect in the advancement of its objects.

Main activities

Bradfield and Rougham Baptist Church is a growing and active Baptist Church in rural Suffolk. We meet for Christian worship every Sunday and have a range of activities for young and old throughout the week, including prayer meetings, home groups, ladies' and men's meetings, fellowship lunches and youth activities from age 4 upwards.

Achievements and performance

At the close of 2022 and feeling like the effects of COVID-19 were well and truly behind us we found ourselves back in full swing on Sunday mornings having to conduct two identical services at 9.00am and 11.00 am in order to accommodate the ever-increasing numbers that we had seen prior to the pandemic. Whilst making space for such numbers was and is seen as a real blessing to us as a church, it does nonetheless present a number of challenges for the wider church family and those of us in leadership.

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We were thankful that the church family accepted the challenge head on and have continued to serve enthusiastically week after week for over a year now. This work has included our gifted and talented musicians turning up very early on a Sunday morning to practice and prepare ahead of the morning service along with the gifted people who run our sound and audio desk. We've seen volunteers turning up ahead of time to prepare the various children's groups that run during our morning services ensuring that everyone who passes through our church doors, from the youngest to the oldest feel accommodated and welcome and able to hear the good news of Jesus as revealed to us in the Bible. Other volunteers take up vital work being a welcoming face at the doors of the church, ensuring that newcomers are put at ease as they enter an unfamiliar building and making sure that no one is made to feel like an outsider. We are also hugely grateful for other volunteers who make sure tea and coffee is in plentiful supply after the morning services allowing a comfortable and informal atmosphere for people to connect, catch up on life's ups and downs, to pray with one another, to cry with one another, to share in each other's joys and sorrows and to reflect upon the goodness of God as revealed through the preached words of that morning's service.

The introduction of additional staff members in the previous year has proved to be essential in enabling us to cope with the ever-increasing numbers choosing to make BRBC their home church and in addition to moving to two services we have seen the numbers attending a mid-week Community Group swell resulting in the need to find more church members who are willing to open up their homes and lead new groups. The groups serve to be smaller, geographically based gatherings of church attendees where they can study the Bible, pray and get to know one another more intimately than might be possible on a busy Sunday morning. These groups have proven to be vital for people facing personal challenges of various kinds, not only in being a place to share difficulties and struggles but also a place where prayer can be offered, meals can be shared and other needs identified and met. We are grateful that in the last year our Pastor in Training, Joe Grimwood was able to increase his working hours enabling him to devote time preparing the studies and resources for these vital midweek Bible studies. This increase in staff and the overall enthusiasm of the many volunteers in the church made for an overdue opportunity for the lead Pastor to take a 2-month sabbatical. This allowed him time to rest, and reflect on the past years in ministry as well as refocus, and recharge in readiness for the years ahead. It was also an opportunity for others within the church family to take on responsibilities that they otherwise might not have taken on and it was an opportunity to prove to ourselves that the church does not depend entirely on one person. Over the course of the year, we have enjoyed teaching series from the books of Ephesians, Titus, 1 Peter and the Psalms as well as taking a closer look at the life of Jacob and over the Christmas season a series called 'The Forgotten Christmas' bringing our attention to some of the less spoken about characters from the incarnation narrative. Our Sunday evenings have been devoted to equipping the members of BRBC to be engaged more practically with our mission statement of 'Loving Jesus together and helping others to do the same'. This has been achieved by a teaching series titled 'Everyday conversations about Jesus', we've had a 'Big Questions' series considering some of the most commonly asked questions and how the bible answers them. We've also had evenings devoted to understanding better life struggles such as Depression and Anxiety.

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As well as our regular weekly and monthly church activities catering to all age groups, this past year we have been excited to host our first Easter fun morning at our church premises as well as deliver daffodils and a short Easter message to every house in the surrounding villages of Bradfield and Rougham reminding people in our local community of the love of Jesus in giving his life as a sacrifice for sin. In the summer we were able to conduct an open-air church service called Church in The Park that was an opportunity to unite the entire church family together again at one service as well as be a witness to the local community that there is a vibrant and active church family on their doorstep. The event had the desired effect and drew attention from a few people who lived locally and now attend BRBC on a regular basis realising the lifechanging hope and joy found in having a personal relationship with Jesus. Later in the year on the same night as Halloween we hosted our first Light Party for children and families wishing to celebrate the goodness and light represented in the life of Jesus. This proved to be a success, with families grateful for the opportunity to attend something safe and fun for their children who might otherwise miss out on the activities most commonly associated with Halloween.

As a result of these and other events in the life of our church we have seen people desiring to understand more about the Christian faith and in response we have been privileged to run a Hope Explored and 2 Christianity Explored courses to meet that need. Alongside these events there have been numerous opportunities for men and women to engage with one another at regular men's and ladies' events. These have included ladies craft and coffee events; weekly ladies' bible studies and men's breakfasts every few months.

The matter of church growth continues to be a matter of significant attention and focus for the church Elders and staff team as we find ourselves in the privileged position that, despite moving to two services, our numbers have continued to swell meaning that our current church premises is struggling to accommodate all who wish to attend. As a result of this, the trustees have sought the members approval to move our Sunday mornings to a local school with a large auditorium big enough to accommodate everyone back into one morning service. This move is intended to alleviate the resourcing burden being carried by staff and volunteers due to the 'doubling up' of services. The change will also enable the church attendees to feel like one church family again and return to a feeling of togetherness and unity that is so vital in the life of a church. Lastly, the move will allow the trustees and members time and space to decipher God's intention for the church in the future in line with our Vision document and mission statement.

At the close of another financial year, we are pleased to report that church finances remain healthy and there has been no need to draw on reserves despite increasing demands of a growing church as well as seizing upon opportunities to give financial support to other charitable causes for the sake of the gospel both locally and abroad. Most notably in 2023 was the opportunity to give a financial donation to a mission partner in Italy to help establish a safe house for trafficked women rescued from the sex-trade and we are grateful to God that this house is now up and running and providing a place of safety and security to vulnerable young women.

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Charity Number - 1151214

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Looking back over so much blessing numerically and financially we give thanks to God for his bountiful provision. We step into 2024 with excitement and prayerful expectancy unsure of exactly where God will lead us but with assurance found in the book of Hebrews chapter 10 verse 23 "Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful".

This report was approved by the trustees on

David Stannard
Trustee

Stuart Ruegg
Trustee

**Bradfield and Rougham Baptist Church
Independent Examiner's Report
for the year ended 31 December 2023**

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Bradfield and Rougham Baptist Church

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Bradfield and Rougham Baptist Church for the year ended 31 December 2023.

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 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 which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

Matthew Aldous FMAAT
The Laurel Partnership Ltd
16 Broad Street
EYE
Suffolk

Bradfield and Rougham Baptist Church
Receipts and Payments Account
for the year ended 31 December 2023

	2023				2022
	£				£
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Designated	Total	Total
Receipts					
Offerings and General income	210,922			210,922	166,606
Gift aid tax reclaimed	20,138			20,138	25,529
Sundry income	10,275			10,275	9,230
Interest	1,075			1,075	109
Mission offerings		607		607	2,775
Educational grant		-		-	60,000
Total receipts	242,410	607	-	243,017	264,249
Payments					
Mission donations		607	33,316	33,923	21,816
Educational grant		4,129		4,129	3,442
Church Activity Expenses	49,334			49,334	30,311
Church Administration expenses	31,361			31,361	19,149
Church Utilities and maintenance	10,118			10,118	10,026
Manse	23,971			23,971	17,039
Pastors and Ministry	79,293			79,293	55,018
	194,077	4,736	33,316	232,129	156,801
Assets and investment purchases etc.					
Equipment and fixtures	1,449			1,449	6,253
	1,449	-	-	1,449	6,253
Total payments	195,526	4,736	33,316	233,578	163,054
Net Receipts	46,884	(4,129)	(33,316)	9,439	101,195

Bradfield and Rougham Baptist Church
Statement of assets and liabilities
as at 31 December 2023

	2023			2022
	£			£
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
Cash funds				
Current a/c	126,144	-	126,144	117,841
Deposit a/c	114,018	-	114,018	112,942
Cash in hand	332	-	332	272
	<u>240,494</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>240,494</u>	<u>231,055</u>
Other current assets				
Gift aid tax to be reclaimed	4,749	-	4,749	5,187
	<u>4,749</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,749</u>	<u>5,187</u>
Fixed Asset (insurance valuations)				
Church premises	970,647	-	970,647	970,647
Fixtures and fittings	67,791	-	67,791	67,791
Manse	292,788	-	292,788	292,788
	<u>1,331,226</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,331,226</u>	<u>1,331,226</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>1,576,469</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,576,469</u>	<u>1,567,468</u>
Movement of Funds	Brought forward	Net receipts	Transfer from general fund	Carried forward
General	174,236	46,884	(44,448)	176,672
Mission	261	(33,316)	44,448	11,393
Educational grant	56,558	(4,129)	-	52,429
	<u>231,055</u>	<u>9,439</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>240,494</u>