

# **East Durham Methodist Circuit Annual Report 2020.**

Registered Charity, number 1161445

Your current contact is an: individual Professional/Charity Advisor: No

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Houghton Le Spring Methodist Church, Mautland Street. HOUGHTON LE SPRING

Tyne & Wear United Kingdom DH4 4BH

**Financial statements** The Trustees submit their annual report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31st August 2019. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) in preparing the annual report "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" issued in 2005 and in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the Charity.

**Preamble:** The Methodist Church is said to have been created after John Wesley's conversion on 24th May 1738, it is a Free Church. The East Durham Circuit came into being on 1st September 2009 at the merger of the former Seaham, Hetton and Houghton Circuits.

**The calling of The Methodist Church is:**

**Worship,** to Increase awareness of God's Presence and celebrate God's love.

**Learning and caring,** to help people to grow and learn as Christians.

**Service,** to be a good neighbour to people in need and challenge injustice.

**Evangelism,** we make more followers of Jesus Christ.

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

The Charity's treasurers of the Circuit Fund are the lay Circuit Stewards, of the Managing Trustees listed above all are lay people excepting the 3 Ministerial staff all of whom are employed by The Methodist Church. Circuit Meetings are held 4 times a year and include representatives of all

the Societies [Local Churches] in the Circuit. The Superintendent Minister (who supervises the work of the other Ministers in the Circuit) reports to this meeting as do the Circuit Stewards.

The governing body of the Circuit is the annual conference of The Methodist Church. The Methodist Church Act 1976 gives the authority under which The Methodist Church Acts. The constitution practice and discipline of The Methodist Church together with The Deed of Union (Act of 1929 adopted 1932) govern the activities of the Circuit.

In general The Methodist Church is excepted from the need to register as a charity by the combined effects of Section 46(4) (A) of The Charities Act 1993 and Paragraph 4(2) (C) of the Charities (exception from registration) Regulations 1996 as amended by Statutory Instrument 2014 No 242. The Circuit, however, is a separate Registered Charity, number 1161445, in England and Wales. The Trustees who have served during the year and since the year-end are set out on page 1. The treasurers (Circuit Stewards) are appointed annually by the Circuit Meeting and the Managing Trustees are appointed either by (a) the Societies of which they are members (b) the Preachers' Meeting (c) by being ex-officio {Ministers in good standing or holding a District Office or duly appointed Lay Workers}. In practice, up to five Circuit Stewards are appointed who serve, generally, for a minimum of 3 years and a maximum of 6.

**The principal address of the Circuit's auditors.**

Robert Miller & Co Chartered Accountant

43a Front Street, Cleadon Village, Sunderland SR7 7PG

**The principal address of the Circuit's Bankers.**

Barclays Bank

**The principal address of the Circuit's Solicitor.**

Sintons LLP Associate

The Cube, Barrack Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 6DB

The Treasurer is responsible for the detailed examination of the Financial Statements and for recommending their adoption by the Circuit Meeting, they do this in consultation with the Circuit Treasurers Meeting.

The Circuit is one of 12 in the Newcastle District and has 8 Local Churches [10 premises]. They are contactable via the principal address of the Circuit. Funds are transferred to the Circuit on a quarterly basis to meet the commitments to the District and the upkeep of the Circuit.

**Statement of Trustees' responsibilities** Charity Law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its financial

activities for that period together with its assets and liabilities at the end of the period, and adequately distinguish any material special trust or other restricted fund of the Charity. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees are required to:

Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.

Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.

State whether the policies adopted are in accordance with the appropriate SORP on Accounting and Reporting by Charities and the Accounting regulations and with applicable Accounting Standards, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements and prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

Objectives and activities The Circuit is constituted to advance the effective deployment of the resources of ministry, which include people, property, and finance, as they relate to the Methodist Churches in the Circuit, the District and Connexion. The Constitution and Enumeration of Circuits is set out year by year in the Stations appointed by the Conference. The public benefit can be clearly demonstrated by the Trustees as they have fulfilled the calling of the Methodist Church in maintaining the witness of the church throughout the area which the Circuit serves in parts of Sunderland and County Durham.

## **Report of the Circuit Stewards and Managing Trustees for the year ended 31st August, 2020.**

Constitution In accordance with S.O. 510 the Constitution of the meeting is:-

Superintendent Minister	...	Rev. A. Waite
Circuit Staff	... ..	Rev. S. Hill, Rev. S. Wigham
Circuit Stewards	... ..	Mrs. J. Shotton, Miss M. McBeth,
Circuit Treasurer	... ..	Mr. J. T. Brereton
Meeting Secretary	... ..	Mr R Grant
Local Preachers' Secretary	... ..	Mr. P. Walsham
Circuit Administrator	... ..	Mrs. H. Brereton
Four Local Preachers	... ..	Mrs. S. Gates, Mrs. M. Simpson, Ms. L. Dowell. Vacancy
Property Secretary	... ..	Mrs. A. Riding
MWiB Representative	... ..	Mrs. J. Tasker
Education & Youth Secretary	... ..	Mr. G. Walton
Houghton	... ..	Treasurer Miss H. Ure
	... ..	Steward Mrs. S. Pritchard
	... ..	Reps. Mrs. J. Monaghan, Mrs. A. McLeod, S. Pritchard (Safeguarding)
Trinity	... ..	Treasurer Mrs. P. Milburn
	... ..	Steward Mr. J. Giles

		Reps.	Mr. B. Walton, Mrs. S. Walton
Middle Herrington		Reps.	Mr C. Orr
Seaham	...	Treasurer	Mrs. D. Carr
		Steward	Miss M. McBeth
		Reps.	Mr. R. Hurst, Mr. W. Cole
St. Paul's	...	Treasurer	Mrs. A. Boyes
		Steward	Mr. E. Lee
		Rep.	Vacancy
Hetton	...	... Treasurer	Miss K. Pearson
		Steward	Mrs. A. Williams
		Reps.	Miss V. Atkinson, Mrs. J. Clough
Sunniside	...	Treasurer	Mr. R. Hartburn
		Steward	Mr. K. Dowell
		Reps.	Mr. W. Hartburn, Mr. K. Shotton
St. John's		Treasurer	Mrs. B. Pigford
		Steward	Mrs. K. Dobson
		Reps.	Mrs. M. Wakefield, Mrs. A. Harding

### **The Circuit.**

The year started off well with Circuit Growth Plan developing well. The Cell Project was being joined by new people to existing groups and a couple of new groups starting. Plan were being developed to employ a Family Worker and funding set aside from our General account that is formed from the assessments levied on the churches, Circuit Advance Fund and a Grant from the District. As that was all coming together the pandemic hit so it was thought best to hold back until we know what the position is in the Circuit coming out of lockdown.

We are called to love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ and to share that love as we serve others." We continue where we can, to encourage each church in their individual endeavours to conform to the Connexional statements in 'Our Calling' mentioned earlier in this report. At the end of our church year, we are very thankful to the generosity of the members of the churches to meet their financial commitment to the Circuit.

In July we said goodbye to the Rev Steven Hill who retired from Circuit Ministry. Unfortunately, we were not able to say an official farewell but gifts were given from the collection made from our churches. Extensive work was then done to the Seaham Manse in preparation to us welcoming our new minister and her family from South Africa in August.

## **Hetton Charity Commissioners Report 2020**

**Sunday worship** – Our numbers average 35-40 each Sunday morning but we no longer have an evening service. During Covid and lockdowns the church has

been closed but we have had online services for our members or printed services for those who don't have access to the internet. Church opened for worship on December 6<sup>th</sup> with 15 present.

The following activities occurred before lockdown and as yet none have resumed.

**SitnbFit** – This group continues to meet on a Monday afternoon and continues to have new members. It is greatly enjoyed by everyone both for the exercise and the socialising afterwards. Not all are church goers so is a great mission opportunity.

**Tuesday toddler group** – This is still a popular group and has reached maximum numbers

**Tuesday friendship group** – This group has decided to disband their regular Tuesday meetings but meet for Lent course.

**Wednesday chat 10am-noon** – This is a new initiative aimed at the lonely and their carers. It started in May last year and although there is a good group of volunteers it was slow to get off the ground. Those who do come along are regular visitors (6) and appreciate the group. We play board games, card games, do jigsaws, read or just chat. This is still a very popular group with the same group of people attending.

**7.30 Group** – This group meets fortnightly on a Friday with an average attendance of 15. We have a variety of speakers and demonstrations and from time to time have an open evening when we think the men will be interested in the talk.

**Coffee morning** – This still remains a popular Saturday morning event. It draws people from across the community. Proceeds go to church funds or charities

**Lettings** - Our premises are used on a Wednesday evening by a parent drama group and on a Thursday evening by CASA a children's drama group. Both groups give performances for their families and our church members.

We often hold at least one annual concert in the church. Our last concert was performed by Durham County Youth Choir and Prince Bishops Brass Ensemble.

Since like all churches we need money for upkeep we hold regular fund-raising events – these could include afternoon teas, a beetle drive, Christmas fairs,

demonstrations, sales of goods from outside agencies and many other events. We had an auction of talents just before lockdown.

We also have a working men's team who do a lot of DIY in the building.

It goes without saying that all of this has gone on before lockdown but during lockdown our pastoral visitors have kept in regular touch with our members.

## **Houghton-Le-Spring**

Steward's Report: There is a need for new stewards to serving our Church, having reduced to 3 on the team. We are exploring Vestry Stewards to help plug the gap. The stewards are responsible for Sunday morning worship and all weekday services where a steward's presence is beneficial. Several stewards are involved in fund-raising events, and also help with the preparation and serving of food at social events. It is thanks to the support of others that these events continue to run successfully. It is the stewards' responsibility to ensure that the church is ready for worship and to liaise with the preacher, before and during their visit. They arrange readers, when requested, and contact the organist with hymn choices. In order to try and help things go as smoothly as possible within the life of the church, we meet with our minister, Rev. Alf, to plan any special events or deal with any problems or queries that arise. This year was the 40<sup>th</sup> year of Houghton Methodist Church, with coming together of two separate congregation. Due to Covid 19 it was decided to abandon plans, postponing them for 2021. Worship stopped in March and opened again in June under government guidelines.

Tuesday morning services are still a very much appreciated. All those who come along to hear what our speakers have to say, go home uplifted by the message given. Each speaker brings a fresh approach to this simple informal service. The numbers have remained constant, an average of 30 people come to worship.

Monday Crafts Workshop is very friendly group. Crafts include cardmaking, knitting, crochet, tapestry, beadwork, patchwork - to name but a few! We feel the fellowship and talk-time are very important to the ladies who join us.

Women's Fellowship continued to meet weekly until March, on Wednesday afternoons, usually in our church Meeting Room, where we welcome speakers who come to us with a variety of both secular and religious topics, always as part of an act of worship. Each week we begin with a cup of tea around 1.30pm when we can share our news and concerns in fellowship with one another and close about 2.50pm. At the end of our year we give a donation from our offerings to the church. From our carol

service and AGM meetings we give our offerings to the church charities. Otherwise from the last meeting of each month we give our offerings to Methodist Women in Britain (MWiB), for which some members continue to save five pence coins.

The Monday Club is an extremely flexible group which tries to incorporate those who are still in employment or retired, whatever age!! So we try to have a very varied programme. There are usually 10 to 15 who meet together. Needless to say, because the programme is so varied, we do not always meet in the Church building. Part of the ethos is to include others, thus we do help various charities as well Pancake Tuesday which is not only fun but raises funds for "All We Can". We also help with serving refreshments when required. I believe I can truthfully say we work well together, enjoy a laugh, and enjoy fellowship.

In the Junior Church Report there is approximately 10 children attending on a regular basis. We have 5 leaders working on a rota basis. This would be particularly helpful to integrate the older crèche children into our Junior Church groups.

The "New Beginnings Parent and Toddler Group" was started in 2001 as a result of the "Lift-Off 200" Stewardship campaign. We continue to meet on Friday afternoons 1.30-3pm during school term time. Currently there are 11 children on our register. In December we held our annual Christmas party, where the children enjoyed a party tea and received a card and gift each. We continue to be supported by a good group of parents/grandparents who recommend our group to others.

East Rainton Fellowship is now fully integrated Class of Houghton Methodist Church, the partnership is going well. The management group has met twice in the year to plan events and strategy for our mission, this reports to the Church Council at Houghton. We have had further building issues but continue to overcome them. It was decided that while we are restricted by Covid 19 rules we would meet fortnightly when allowed to be open we would meet as our Cell Group and follow Cell material set by the Circuit. Our numbers remain small. We also have begun to make the building available for outside lettings. We hope to have community groups but also look to offer the church as a Day Retreat Venue as it is set in a lovely village. That work has been halted for the moment as there has appeared the need to replace the floor which has begun to warp due to dampness.

## **Middle Herrington Methodist Church**

**Annual Report for Charity Commissioners September 2019 - August 2020.**

## **Use of Premises**

In addition to the main Sunday service of worship, the premises were well used by a variety of church and community groups as follows:

Monday - Prayer Shawl Knitting Group (fortnightly)

- Crochet and knitting class (weekly)

- Alcoholics Anonymous (weekly)

Tuesday - Toddlers, Sugarcraft, (weekly)

Wednesday - Needlecraft and coffee mornings.

Thursday - WI Committee (monthly). Herrington Heritage (quarterly)

Friday - Alcoholics Anonymous (weekly)

With the refurbished school room we had hoped to build on the community use of the building but that was halted by Covid 19. We know that the groups that do use the premises are keen to return. With the loss of community lettings, we have lost 75% of income but the generous donations from the small congregation have enabled us to continue. We were the first chapel to open for worship on a Sunday.

Membership has reduced to 7 members with the transfer out of 2 members and losses through death. In the light of that, we now operate under the Church Council of Houghton Methodist Church and order our church life with a management team.

## **Charity Donations**

As well as donations to Methodist funds, monthly coffee mornings raised money for Action for Children, Christian Aid, and St Benedict's Hospice.

The Church supports the work of the **Fairtrade Foundation** and

**Traidcraft** and is a collection point for **County Durham Foodbank**.

More information can be found at:

[www.middleherringtonmethodistchurch.org](http://www.middleherringtonmethodistchurch.org)

## **Sunniside**

Church membership continues at 13 during this year, the age range continues to be between 63 to 86. The Community Roll remains at 7. Services of worship were held each week until Covid 19 hit and we had to close under lockdown rules. The Church Council met and agreed to open for worship again then decided to meet just for special services for Church Anniversary, Carol Service, Ladies Fellowship Anniversary. The Ladies Fellowship continued to meet on a Tuesday afternoon from early September till mid-February with guest speakers from within the circuit and beyond. The funds raised by the Ladies Fellowship are donated to Church Funds. Men's Fellowship membership now stands at 8, Speakers came from the circuit and beyond. Funds raised by the group are mainly donated to church funds. Men's Fellowship as all the other groups closed with the pandemic but looks forward to starting again when something like normality returns. The Lunch Club is held on church premises each Tuesday, on behalf of "Age UK". It has an average attendance of 11. It was decided not to open the Lunch Club due to the age and health of the



volunteers. Sadly we have recorded some deaths of our patrons over this year. The premises are also used as a polling Station for Local and Parliamentary Elections.

## **Seaham Methodist Church**

**Church Membership** reduced to 26 with the death of 2 and transfer out of 2 members, The age range is 50 to 90.

**The Community Roll** has grown with new contacts from the growth of the weekday groups. Worship services take place each Sunday afternoon with an average attendance of 12 followed by tea which all members remain for. This obviously ceased with onset of the pandemic and inevitable lockdowns.

**Sit and keep fit:** New members have joined the group, The group meets each Monday Morning for gentle exercising whilst sitting, led by an instructor and is suitable for all ages and abilities to help improve mobility and mental well-being. It is hoped that this group will start up again in 2021.

**Toddlers:** The group meets each Tuesday morning during school term time. Membership now stands at 20 with a waiting list.

**Rock Solid:** This is held each Wednesday evening. The youth group for 7-11yr olds has a membership of 12, and two regular enthusiastic adult volunteers supported by occasional helpers

**Coffee Mornings:** Held each second Saturday of the month featuring a Bake Sale with food goods donated by the congregation. The morning continues to be well attended by the public and generates a regular income for Church funds.

**Occasional Activities:** Agape, Church Anniversary Social afternoon and Christmas Tea, draw together the Church community. The Carol Service and the very popular "Carols into Christmas" held on Christmas Eve generate our largest attendances as do Funerals, Weddings and Baptisms.

The Church is also used weekly on Thursdays and Fridays by Slimming World.

## **St John's Fence Houses.**

Sunday Worship has continued to meet on the afternoon, because of age range of the congregation. We have lost some more members through deaths. The busy weekday programme was continuing until Covid 19 brought about lockdown. The Wednesday night's Children's Club, Toddlers group, the Circuit Fusion Group, monthly Coffee Mornings, lunches as part of the Commemoration of church life, Harvest, Christmas, and Anniversaries, Cake & Company.

## **St Paul's Murton.**

The move to afternoon services continues to have a positive effect on the life of the church. The Hall Shop and Coffee Morning on a Friday continued providing a service to the community. Offering clothes and Bric-a-brac to the general public all at a very reasonable price and fellowship. 'The Venue' which is a play scheme for Parents and Children, has grown again through the year with good numbers attending each week. The families have helped to run the event and show a concern for the church. We have a faithful group of families. The 7.30 Club has had a variety of speakers at its meetings, At Christmas and Harvest special services were held in the church. Many of the ladies who come are not members of the church. During this year we have started a Cell Group in line with Circuit policy. The successful film afternoons with a tea have given another opportunity to fellowship. Social events have also been held to celebrate national Apple Day. St Paul's is a valued member of Murton Churches Together through that a part of the Food Bank. Sadly all the above work came to a halt with onset of the pandemic. Worship did manage to reopen but it was not thought safe to resume our outreach to the community.

## **Trinity.**

With the introduction of technology, a more relevant worship service has been achieved. Slimming World continues at strength, Fatfield Operatic Society enjoy the building, Ward Councillors Surgery also use the building. We are incredibly grateful that God continues to answer our prayers and trust that we will continue to go from strength to strength. The Ministers Surgery has continued this year, it was planned to develop this into a listening post. An idea that came out of one of the Cell Groups. Saturday Coffee Morning, this continues to be a well-supported group with good fellowship shared. It is a space for anyone to join to have a chat and make friends. The Venue is a group for Parents with Children, it operates from 10am to 12noon each Saturday in the Hall. The ages of the children have been from 3 to 6 years and whilst numbers fluctuate there is good support. All the above was working well before Covid 19 hit and we had to stop contact with people not in family bubbles.

## **EAST DURHAM METHODIST CIRCUIT Receipts & Payments Account 1st September 2019 to 31st August, 2020**

RECEIPTS:-

£

Balance B/F	173.15
Assessments	120856.24
Bank Loyalty Rewards	21.24
Prayer Manuals	253.30
EDF Energy	856.39
Circuit Holiday	1500.00
Other	358.05

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£124018.37  
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**PAYMENTS:-**

Stipends and Allowances	79002.40
Office Expenses	450.00
Ministerial Expenses	
2621.38	
Bank Charges	136.16
Telephones	988.85
District Assessment	24516.00
Manse Property Account	7025.42
Printing & Stationery	179.45
Hymns Ancient & Modern	143.00
Norwich Books	124.50
Audit	576.00
Other	300.86
Circuit Holiday	2952.00
Roots	453.25
Supernumeraries	287.50

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119756.77  
4261.60

**BALANCE AT BANK 31st AUGUST, 2020**

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£124018.37  
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Robert Miller & Co  
Chartered Accountants

**EAST DURHAM METHODIST CIRCUIT  
Receipts and Payments Account for Manse Property**

**to 31st August, 2020**

**INCOME:-**

	<b>£</b>
Balance b/f	10.92
From Circuit Account	7025.42
From CAF	30000.00
Bank Loyalty Rewards	6.70
	=====
Total Income	37043.04

**PAYMENTS**

Insurance		970.48
Newbottle		
Repairs and Renewals	135.00	
Water Rates	222.00	
Council Tax	1522.14	
	-----	1879.14
-		
Seaham		
Repairs and Renewals	23700.39	
Water Rates		451,99
Council Tax	1470.83	
	-----	25623.21
		-----
TOTAL PAYMENTS		28472.83
Bank Charges		66.10
To Reserves		8376.24
BANK 31st August 2020		127.87
		-----
		£37043.04

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Robert Miller & Co  
Chartered Accountants