

East Durham Methodist Circuit Annual Report 2022-23

The East Durham methodist circuit is made up of 9 Methodist Churches, grouped under 3 church councils in order to streamline our governance and support our smaller congregations.

During the year 2022-23 our Circuit churches continued working to build up our presence and outreach in the local communities. As a Methodist Circuit our key aims can be expressed through the four categories of the Methodist Church's "Our Calling" framework which are: Worship, Learning and Caring, Serving and Evangelism.

As such we exist to:

- Enable individuals and communities to participate in, and encounter God through acts of worship
- Encourage people to explore the Christian life and faith, and grow in knowledge and understanding of God
- Serve the needs of our local communities and demonstrate the love of God in practical ways
- Share the Christian faith in word and deed

A Brief Financial Review of the Year

We have in general achieved our financial targets for the year.

Income

All churches have been able to maintain their assessments

We have a large number of letting arrangements with community groups working in our buildings. This helps maintain the income for the individual churches and provides a range of services for the local communities.

Expenditure

Salaries and stipends were increased in line with the Methodist Church policy and the living wage.

Other expenditure included stipends/salaries, manse maintenance, travel costs etc.

Plans for 2023-24

Our financial plans for the coming year were prepared on the basis that we would be maintaining Circuit ministerial staff of one Superintendent, and one full time Presbyterian. We also have a part-time Circuit Administrator.

Basis of Preparation and Legal Framework

The charities annual report and accounts for the year ended 31st August 2023 have been prepared in accordance with the "Charities Act 2011" and the "Charities Statement of Recommended Practice 2015" as applicable to the "Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 102".

Details

Full Name of Charity –East Durham Methodist Circuit

Main Contact Address – Rev Jenny Porterpryde, 9 Gressingham Close, Barley Meadows, Cramlington. NE236AD

The members of the East Durham Circuit Meeting are the Charity Trustees, membership being made up of our circuit office holders, ministers and representatives appointed by the local churches.

Circuit Ministers.

Rev Alf Waite. (Circuit Superintendent)

Rev Dawn Brown

Mr John Brereton acted as the treasurer overseeing the day-to-day financial management and accounting for the circuit during the year.

Independent Examiner

Investments and Bank Accounts

Aims and Organisation

Charity objective is to act as a resource provider within Houghton-le-Spring, Hetton-le-Hole, Seaham and the surrounding smaller towns and villages. The purposes of the Methodist Church are, and shall be deemed to have been since the date of union, the advancement of:

- The Christian faith in accordance with the doctrinal standards and discipline of the Methodist Church.
- Any charitable purpose for the time being of any Connexional, District, Circuit, local or other organisations of the Methodist Church.
- Any charitable purpose for the time being of any society or institution subsidiary or ancillary to the Methodist Church.

Charitable objectives are delivered through the provision of activities and services, which include:

- The organisation and resourcing of regular public acts of worship open to members of the church and non-members alike.
- Conducting baptisms, wedding and funerals on behalf of the Methodist Church.
- The teaching of Christianity through sermons, courses and small groups.
- The resourcing of pastoral work including visiting the sick and bereaved.
- Provision of community space and support.
- Promotion of Christianity through the staging of events and services.

Public Benefit

We confirm that the trustees have had regard to the Charity Commissions guidance on public benefit.

Structure and Management

The governing document for the circuit is the Deed of Union (1932) and the Methodist Church Act (1976).

Detailed governance arrangements are outlined within the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church by order of the annual conference (CPD). Day to day management of the circuit is undertaken by the Circuit Leadership Team along with the Local Preachers Meeting and the Circuit Finance and Property (part of CLT) and the Circuit Policy Committee (past of CLT).

Trustee Training

A range of guidance produced by Methodist Connexion to support the effective running of the circuit – specifically the leaflet “The Role of a Trustee in the Methodist Church” is given to all new Circuit Meeting members as induction to their role as Trustees.

Related Parties

The Circuit is part of the Newcastle Upon Tyne Methodist District and is also accountable to the Methodist Conference.

The following Methodist Churches are linked to the Circuit:

Houghton -le-Spring

Hetton -le-Hole

Trinity Shiney Row

East Rainton

Middle Herrington

St John's Fencehouses

St Paul's Murton

Risk Management

Any major risks identified will be recorded by the Circuit Leadership Team (none have been identified) and professional advice will be taken if required.

Risk assessments are carried out for church buildings and for events organised by the Circuit.

Income and expenditure are monitored in total and compared with the approved annual budget on a half yearly basis to detect trends as part of the risk management process to avoid unforeseen calls on reserves.

Safeguarding

Every person has value and dignity which comes directly from the creation of people in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this potential as fulfilled by God's recreation of us in Christ. Among other things this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

Methodist Connexional practice outlines commitment to the following principles:

- The care and nurture and respectful pastoral ministry with all children, young people and adults.
- The safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable.
- The establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where this is informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse.
- We will carefully select and train all those with any responsibility within the church in line with the Safer Recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records, disclosures and registration with the relevant vetting and barring schemes.
- We will respond without delay to every complaint made which suggests that an adult child or young person may have been harmed, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.

- We will seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse developing with them an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.
- We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in position of trust.
- We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- In all these principles we will follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice.

The East Durham Methodist Circuit commits itself to ensuring the implementation of Connexional Safeguarding Policy, government legislation, guidance and safe practice in the circuit and in the churches.

The East Durham Methodist Church commits itself to the provision of support, advice and training for lay and ordained people that will ensure people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable.

Activities and Achievements

Through the letting of our buildings, we facilitate a wide range of community services and projects. These include groups such as Recovery College, Sit and be Fit, Houghton Old People's Enterprise, Scouts, Voicability, and others. The churches themselves offer weekly worship. Study groups, a Table Talk' event in a local Weatherspoons, mid week services , charity coffee mornings, The Venue (a parent and child group) Concerts, and Fairs.

Reserves Policy

The reserves policy for the circuit is to hold a minimum sum of equivalent to 4 months average expenditure. This should be sufficient to meet any unforeseen item of major expenditure on manses and/or be able to continue in the short term funding planned activities in the event of any inability to raise the full circuit assessment from churches.

The Circuit Funds Document is attached.

EAST DURHAM METHODIST CIRCUIT
Receipts & Payments Account 1st September, 2022 to 31st August, 2023

RECEIPTS:-	£
Balance B/F	3474.64
Assessments	110799.08
Bank Loyalty Rewards	15.47
TMCP	8000.00
From Manse Account	1220.00
EDF Energy	1030.08
Repayment from BT	813.09
Other	65.00

	£125417.36
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PAYMENTS:-	
Stipends & Allowances	77529.76
Ministerial & Office Expenses	3370.91
Bank Charges	181.55
Telephones	2854.58
District Assessment	26616.00
Manse Property Account	7549.54
Printing & Stationery	483.84
Sintons	538.00
Gradons	1200.00
Audit	564.00
Hymns A & E	143.00
Grace Wine	63.93
Concept-Copier	433.77
Quinquennial	1800.00
Other	211.28
Magnet	366.75
Supernumeraries	242.70
Office	528.93

	£124678.54

BALANCE AT BANK 31 st AUGUST, 2023	738.82

	£125417.36
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Robt Miller & Co

Name of Circuit EAST DURHAM No 20/19

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 (other than that disclosed below*) which give me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the 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 this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

I have/have not* obtained independent verification of all investments with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes or held in other trusts, bank balances and funds at the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church which are individually in excess of £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) at the balance sheet date.

Robert Miller & Co.

Signature of independent examiner

Name of independent examiner STEVEN FLETCHER

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner A.C.A.

Name of firm (where appropriate) ROBT MILLER & CO.

Address 43A FRONT STREET, CLEADON VILLAGE

..... SUNDERLAND Post Code SR6 7PG

Date 7.12.2023

* delete or circle as appropriate

Form reviewed

May-23