

2024-2025 Lancaster Methodist Church
Annual Report for The Charity Commission

Lancaster Methodist Church (LMC) is a church with two sites: Scotforth Road and The Cornerstone on Sulyard Street. Our Minister is Rev Linda Catlow.

Sunday morning worship takes place at LMC Scotforth Road and has an average attendance of 70 people. We are a church of all ages: over 90 years old down to under one year old. We hold a hybrid Service so that those who are unable to attend in person can still join us on Zoom – this is much appreciated. Our Sunday evening worship is held at the Cornerstone. The average attendance is 12 and again a wide range of ages. This is a more informal and interactive service, regularly welcoming reflections and contributions from the congregation. We also hold a midweek evening service on Zoom called Reflect in the City and a monthly lunchtime Holy Communion at the Cornerstone.

We are registered with the Inclusive Church Network. To reflect our inclusivity we are registered for both same sex and mixed marriage. We also hold a monthly afternoon LGBTQ+ Sunday at the Cornerstone. This started in August 2024 and is an ecumenical led service which has been welcomed by the LGBTQ+ community and their allies. It is a safe place where all are welcome and openly share in discussion, prayer and Holy Communion. We have an average attendance of 15 people.

The church runs a number of activities on both our sites during the week.

We have a toddler group called Little Pebbles which is run by a lay employee. In July 2025 we appointed a new leader therefore when the School Term began, the day moved from Thursday to Tuesday morning at Scotforth Road and continues to be popular with the local community. For our children and youth we run a Sunday Junior Church and also a monthly Youth Fellowship. There are a number of groups where people are nurtured and faith conversations take place: Monday Meeting Point attended by older members of our congregation; an evening fortnightly Housegroup.

This year our Mission Plan was to focus on Pastoral Care. Our new adventure was starting up BASE Groups: Belong, Accept, Support, Enable. Three groups started up in April 2025. Each has two facilitators who are there to coordinate the meetings. The aim is to provide spaces where friendships can grow as we share, laugh and perhaps occasionally cry together. BASE Groups are offered as places for both compassion and celebration. We have also set up a Pastoral Team who organises visits to those who are struggling through illness, bereavement or a difficulty in life.

We believe in reaching out to offer help to our community. On both our sites we run weekly Warm Spaces for those looking for a safe place to keep warm in a friendly, comfortable environment. Free refreshments are available as this activity is funded by Lancashire County Council. This year we opened our Cornerstone Café on a Tuesday for lunches, with a snazzy name of 'Chewsday'! It is run by volunteers and attracts a variety of customers who come for light bites.

At the Cornerstone our full-time Chaplain's work continues to grow: caring for those who are bereaved by offering a counselling service and support café; working with those who have addictions; leading spiritual groups for those with or without faith. There is also a team of volunteers who assist the Chaplain with the various groups. This year the Church Council made the decision to employ a part time Cornerstone Centre Manager. They began work in August 2025. We still have volunteer Receptionists to be 'front of house', a welcoming friendly face as people enter the Cornerstone. The Management Team ensure the Cornerstone is open for special events like Lancaster Music Festival, when we are a Busk Stop; Light up Lancaster; Fairtrade Fair; Lancaster Pride.

We value our community partners who either lease office space at The Cornerstone or use our premises for community activities. At Scotforth Road these range from choirs or bands holding regular rehearsals to fitness and well-being groups like Pilates.

At the Cornerstone, our key long-term partners (licensed hirers) are Lancaster District Community and Voluntary Solutions, Lancashire Youth Challenge and RAIS Lancaster (Refugee Advocacy, Information and Support). Other 'partner' organisations include those who provide food: Global Village Café - Wednesday lunch and using our kitchen to prepare food; Lancaster Men's Hub - Friday lunch; Tara Centre - Friday evening drop-in and food for Refugees and Asylum Seekers. Other partner groups who provide a community service include The Making Place - craft café, Let's Be Friends - support for street homeless people, Smoke Free Lancashire and Lancaster Larder - food club.

Lancaster Methodist Church continues to have a global perspective and a heart for justice. The Justice, Peace and Environment Group have continued to raise awareness of campaigns and also identify appropriate charities for our fundraising activities. We have a Foodbank Collection Point which folks support from church and community. We have an annual collection of toys and food at Christmas supporting the City Council's organised distribution to those in need.


We already are an Eco-Church and have a Silver Award. In 2025 we had Solar Panels fitted to our roof and this is already making a difference our energy costs but, most importantly to the environment. We continue to look at how we can become a net-zero church by 2030, as encouraged by the Methodist Church in Britain (MWiB).

This year our finances have remained in a healthy position and we are able to continue our Reserve policy of retaining six months' typical expenditure. At present the church employs the full-time Cornerstone Chaplain, the part-time Cornerstone Centre Manager, the part-time LMC Bookings Officer, the part-time Little Pebbles leader. The external funding for our Chaplain ended in November 2024 but the Church Council (Trustees) agreed this is a priority and are able to fund the position for another year. We are therefore now seeking funding for both the Chaplain and Cornerstone Centre Manager so that these positions can continue to care for the Cornerstone and all those who use the building.

Lancaster Methodist Church continues to seek God's will in all we do and to reflect the love of Jesus Christ to all people.

Rev Linda J Catlow

Superintendent Methodist Minister/Chair of Trustees of Lancaster Methodist Church:

Signature: 

Date: 04/04/2025

THE METHODIST CHURCH
STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS

Lancaster Methodist Church

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 August 2025

North Lancashire	Circuit	Circuit no.	0125
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Registered Charity - Charity Registration number

1170840

If not a registered charity His Majesty's Revenue and
Customs Gift Aid number

(The HMRC number is equivalent to a registered charity number in terms of evidence of charitable status and may be used to give to donors or grant funders wishing to see evidence of the organisation's charitable status. Methodist charities in England and Wales that are not registered charities are excepted from registration under Statutory Instrument 2014 No.242)

Minister:

Revd Linda J Catlow

Church Stewards:

Paul Bowden	
Lesley Brookbanks	
Andy Lund	
Alison Love	
Joseph Hicks	

Treasurer:

Dr Ian Love

SECTION A		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals this year		Totals last year
		£	£	£		£
a1	RECEIPTS	Note				
a2	Offerings and Tax recovered		43,387		43,387	43,460
a3	Bank and CFB interest and Investment income		6,400		6,400	6,759
a4	Lettings		69,591		69,591	64,072
a5	Other receipts		7,336	7,110	14,446	33,573
a6	TOTAL RECEIPTS		126,714	7,110	133,824 (a7)	147,864

SECTION B						
b1	PAYMENTS					
b2	Circuit Assessment or Share		40,000		40,000	37,800
b3	Donations		320		320	270
b4	Repairs and Maintenance		17,835		17,835	18,691
b5	Utilities (Insurances, water charges, heating & lighting)		19,836		19,836	20,345
b6						
b7	Other payments		66,952	20,383	87,335	80,983
b8	TOTAL PAYMENTS		144,943	20,383	165,326 (b9)	158,089

SECTION C						
c1	NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR	(a6-b8)	(18,229)	(13,273)	(31,502)	(10,225)
c2	Total funds brought forward from last year		206,230	21,038	227,268 (c6)	237,417
c3	Sub total	(c1+c2)	188,001	7,765	195,766	227,192
c4	Transfers and adjustments		(78)		(78) (c7)	76
c5	TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR	(c3+c4)	187,923	7,765	195,688 (c8)	227,268 (c6)

SECTION D						
FOR INFORMATION ONLY: MONEY RECEIVED AND PASSED ON TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS						
d	(these amounts are not to be included in total receipts/payments figures above)			£		£
d1	Balance brought forward from last year			(7)		(3)
d2	Offerings/Gifts - received for external organisations			4,427		4,562
d3	Offerings/Gifts - passed to external organisations			4,422		4,566
d4	BALANCE STILL TO BE PAID (d1+d2-d3)			(2)		(7)

SUMMARY OF CHURCH ACCOUNTS AND INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS REPORTING TO THE CHURCH COUNCIL**SECTION E****Please follow the Guidance Notes to complete this page**

Summary of the Church accounts for the year ended 31 August 2025 and Internal Organisations reporting to the Church Council/Church Meeting. Note that the funds of an Internal Organisation would normally be Restricted funds unless it could be clearly shown that they could be used for any Methodist purpose. This section must be completed to arrive at the gross income and expenditure totals of the Church. If gross income exceeds the Accruals threshold, then the Accruals method of accounting AND A DIFFERENT FORM must be used to report the accounts (see Methodist website). Please refer to the guidance notes regarding transfers between the District and connected District Organisations.

INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS		Receipts	Payments	Net Receipts/ Payments	Adjustments	Opening balances	Closing balances
e1							
e2							
e3							
e4							
e5							
e6							
e7							
e8	Sub total of Internal Organisations funds					(e11)	(e12)
e9	Church accounts (totals brought forward from page 2 - totals column)	133,824 (a7)	165,326 (b9)	(31,502)	(78) (c7)	227,268 (c6)	195,688 (c8)
e10	TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH	133,824	165,326	(31,502)	(78)	227,268 (x)	195,688 (y)
Continue on a separate sheet if necessary and bring the totals forward		TOTAL RECEIPTS	TOTAL PAYMENTS				

SECTION F**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES****CHURCH - CASH FUNDS HELD at 31 August 2025**

		OPENING BALANCES	CLOSING BALANCES
f1	Cash in hand	383	317
f2	Bank Current Account	79,578	62,663
f3	Bank Deposit Account		
f4	Central Finance Board	48,506	47,083
f5	Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes	98,801	85,625
f6	Other funds		
f7	SUB TOTAL - Church accounts	227,268 (c6)	195,688 (c8)
f8	Total funds held by Internal Organisations (the closing balance total from above) (e12)	(e11)	(e12)
f9	TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH	227,268 (x)	195,688 (y)

SECTION G**OTHER ASSETS and LIABILITIES**

		At 1 September 2024	At 31 August 2025
g1	Investments (include Endowments)		
g2	Land & Buildings (see notes re Insurance value)	6,069,961	6,217,571
g3	Other Assets		
g4	Loan(s) - show amount outstanding at year end		
g5	Other Liabilities		

(please refer to Note 1)

f4 Include only Funds held at the Central Finance Board

f5 Include only Funds held at Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes

g1 Include any other investments (not the cash element of TMCP trusts accounts this is included in line f5)

Name of Church Lancaster Methodist No...012522

Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these Receipt and Payment based accounts for the year to 31 August 2025 have been prepared from the records of the Church and that they include all funds under the control of the Church trustees.

Signature of treasurer Ian Love Date... 20/12/2025

Name and address of treasurer Dr Ian Love.....

10 Johnson Close, Lancaster..... Post Code LA1 5EU

Presentation to the Church trustees

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2025 were presented to the meeting of the Church trustees held on 14 Oct 2025

Signature of the Chair of the meeting Linda J Catlow

Name of the Chair of the meeting Rev Linda J Catlow..... Date 17/12/2025

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

Lancaster Methodist Church

Charity Number 1170840.

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Lancaster Methodist Church for the year ended 31 August 2025 set out on pages 1. to 3. As the Church's trustees, 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 Church's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and, in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

* delete or circle as appropriate

Name of Church Lancaster Methodist Church..... No...012522

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.

Signature of independent examiner 

Name of independent examiner PETER BOWKER

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner

Name of firm (where appropriate)

Address 23 MOWBRAY DRIVE, BURTON, CARNFORTH

..... Post Code LA6 1NF

Date 16/03/26

* delete or circle as appropriate

Name of Church ...Lancaster Methodist Church..... No...211622

Notes to the Accounts

Note 1:

The Church buildings are entered at their insured value, as is standard Methodist practice. However, they are not realisable by the local church (by sale or mortgage, for example) and so the church does not have the right to dispose of the buildings, or to gain from their disposal.

The two properties for which we are responsible enable the charity to carry out its objectives, and to generate income by hiring facilities to outside bodies. TMCP (Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes) is the custodian trustee.

Name of ChurchLancaster Methodist Church..... No...012522

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Signature of independent examiner 

Name of independent examiner PETER BOWKER

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner

Name of firm (where appropriate)

Address 23 MOWBRAY DRIVE, BURTON, CARNFORTH

..... Post Code LA6 1NF

Date 16/03/26

* delete or circle as appropriate