

St. Stephen's Church
(Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion)
High Street, Middleton, Manchester, M24 6DX.
Registered Charity Number 1171467

Trustees Annual Report to 30th June 2021

Until 3rd February 2017 St. Stephen's Church was a constituent part of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion charity, reference 232674. On the 3rd February 2017 the church was separately registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), reference 1171467. This report including financial statements covers the year from 1st July 2020 to 30th June 2021, the third full year of the charity.

Aims and Objectives

The objects of the CIO for the public benefit are to advance the Christian faith, in accordance with the statement of beliefs, in Middleton, Manchester and in such other parts of the United Kingdom or the world as the charity trustees may from time to time think fit.

The CIO is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of the worshipping community at St. Stephen's. When planning our activities for the year we have considered the Commission's guidance on public benefit. In particular we try to enable people to live out their faith as part of the community through: -

- Worship and prayer
- Teaching and development of their knowledge and trust in Jesus
- Provision of pastoral support
- Missionary and outreach work
- Working with children

To facilitate this work we maintain the fabric of the church buildings.

Achievements and Performance

Ministry

Mr Mark Robinson has continued in his role as part-time pastor of the church.

Sunday Worship

Extensive work was carried out in June 2020 to make the church Covid-secure and Sunday morning socially distanced worship services commenced on Sunday 5th July 2020, and we have continued to meet every Sunday, except for the period of the second lockdown between 5th November 2020 and 2nd December 2020 when the church was closed to public worship again. Not all felt it safe to return. We still had our Sunday afternoon zoom fellowship meeting to allow those who didn't attend church in person to join in and also reduce the time we were physically together in the building. As not all local churches were open for public worship services our congregations during this period were larger than usual.

We held our November 2020 Remembrance Sunday service on-line, and held on-line services each week during the second lockdown.

On 8th December 2020 we managed to have our Annual General Meeting in the church. We also held our annual Carol service in church. Services during this period were different as communal singing was not allowed,

From August 2021 we have been back to normal with singing in church and opening up for refreshments. Our children's activities re-opened on 17th September.

We have been blessed in so far as no members of the church were badly affected by the virus. However during this year two of our members were called home, and the health of a number of our older members has deteriorated.

We have welcomed two new members during this period.

Numbers attending services have slightly increased during the year, but have reduced to previous levels as local churches have re-opened.

Mid-week Meetings

After the 15th March 2020 all church-based activities had to stop. Our mid-week prayer and bible study meetings continued remotely using "zoom". All other mid-week activities were discontinued. In September 2021 a number of mid-week activities have re-opened. The Afternoon Fellowship meeting now meets once a month. This is a teaching and worship meeting led by both outside speakers and members of the church. There is a weekly prayer and bible study meeting again led by church members. The weekly Good News Club for children aged 4 to 11 has restarted with between up to 12 children regularly attending. This is a session of bible teaching, games and craft activities, generally led by members of the church fellowship. The Baby and Toddler group has also restarted meeting weekly for pre-school children together with their parents and carers. We have to date been unable to re-start the monthly free community lunch

Ecumenical and Local Mission

The church fellowship is very aware of the need to maintain and improve links to the local community, both within the geographical area of the church and the wider church community in Middleton. During the lockdown period these activities have been severely limited. However, members of the congregation continue to be involved in Street pastors, assisting in vaccination centres and assisting homeless centres. The church continues to support the Middleton Central Food Bank. In March the church was open for private prayer as part of the Middleton World Day of Prayer activities.

The church fellowship has a policy of making the church hall available for as much use as possible. The main reason for this is for the church to be seen as being used as part of the community, but it also raises some income for the church. During the year the hall continued to be used as a polling station, and a local church group, Grace Fellowship Manchester has used the premises on Sunday afternoons when Covid restrictions allowed. Middleton Brass Band and Middleton Music Society had to close during lockdown, but these have both been able to re-open.

External Mission

The fellowship continues to support the wider mission of the body of Christ. The church tithes all voluntary giving, which is used for the support of external Christian charitable work. The main recipients were the Sierra Leone Mission, the Missionary arm of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion and the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion Mission Fund.

Additional gifts were made to Tear Fund, Evangelical Alliance, Middleton Food Bank and UCB.

Volunteers

The church fellowship cannot function without the assistance of volunteers. As we are a small fellowship virtually all members contribute in some way to the running of the church in a voluntary capacity.

Financial Review

Total receipts on unrestricted funds were £18,799.13, after £1,864.35 was transferred into the Tithe account. Restricted funds of £2,970.27 were received, including the transfer from unrestricted funds, the remainder being predominantly for church organisations and donations in memory. Freewill offerings were higher this year due to increased gift aid contributions and an increase in cash offerings from a higher attendance at worship services. Rental income was reduced due to the closure of the church to external bodies during lockdown. Overall there was an increase in unrestricted income this year of £3,125.23.

There was an increase in expenditure during the year. The main reason for this was the increased expenditure on repairs to the building.

The net result for the year was an excess of unrestricted payments over receipts of £826.74, with an additional £3,764.51 of gift aid tax refunds outstanding at the year end. The unrestricted balance at the year-end was £73,196.06. Of this £40,000 has been designated for the support of paid ministry and £27,000 for the provision of disabled toilet facilities and necessary repairs to the church.

At the year end there was £489.08 held as restricted funds for church organisations, £3,531.62 in the Tithe fund and £4,544.31 of donations and legacies held for specific purposes.

Reserves Policy

It is the church policy to maintain an unrestricted balance of six months unrestricted expenditure or £6,000 whichever is greater to cover emergency situations that may arise from time to time. The balance of £6,196.06 is close to the target.

Administrative information

The church is situated at High Street, Middleton, Manchester M24 6DX, and is a member of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion.

The church is a registered CIO since 3rd February 2017.

The Trustees that have served during the year are:-

Mr Graham Squibbs Chair
Mrs Margaret Dixon
Mrs Marrie Haworth
Miss Alison Wood.

Statements

During the year there have been no serious incidents or loss of funds that would pose a serious risk to the Charities beneficiaries, resources or reputation.

Declaration

I declare that this is a true report and in my capacity of Chair of Trustees I am authorised to sign it on behalf of the Trustees.

Name: Graham A. Squibbs

Signature: 

Date: 07th December 2021

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2021

	<u>2021</u>		<u>2020</u>
	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total
	£	£	£
RECEIPTS			
Offerings		15240.13	15240.13
Private Donations	630.00		630.00
Collections for Outside Bodies	295.92		295.92
Tax Refund on Gift Aid	0.00	2611.15	2611.15
Miscellaneous Receipts	0.00		0.00
Interest on Investments	0.00	792.20	792.20
Legacies	0.00		0.00
Room Hire	0.00	2020.00	2020.00
Afternoon Fellowship	0.00		0.00
Flower Fund	180.00		180.00
Community Lunch	0.00		0.00
Baby and Toddler	0.00		0.00
Tithes etc Transferred to Restricted	1864.35	-1864.35	0.00
Restricted Transferred to General	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	2970.27	18799.13	21769.40

PAYMENTS

Ministerial Expenditure		9500.00	9500.00
Manse Expenses		3064.50	3064.50
Speaker's Expenses		225.00	225.00
Organ & Piano Tuning		126.00	126.00
Annual Fees		122.00	122.00
Repairs, Decoration & Renewals		2280.19	2280.19
Gas & Electricity		1887.41	1887.41
Insurance		1314.56	1314.56
Printing, Stationery & Music		40.00	40.00
Church Water Rates		305.72	305.72
Senior Conference Expenses		0.00	0.00
Sunday School / Youth Work		0.00	0.00
Donations (Including Payments)	1230.00	0.00	1230.00
Benevolent Fund Payments		31.00	31.00
Miscellaneous Expenses		0.00	0.00
Outreach		0.00	0.00
Afternoon Fellowship	0.00		0.00
Flower Fund	235.00		235.00
Community Lunch	0.00		0.00
Baby and Toddler	44.04		44.04
Total	1509.04	18896.38	20405.42

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AT 30TH JUNE 2021

	<u>2021</u>		<u>2020</u>
	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total
	£	£	£
Investment	0.00	46621.34	46621.34
Cash at Bank.	8075.93	22622.09	30698.02
Cash on Hand			
Church	0.00	188.12	188.12
Afternoon Fellowship	102.37		102.37
Community Lunch	106.71		106.71
Flower Fund	260.00		260.00
Baby and Toddler	20.00		20.00
Creditors			
Afternoon Fellowship	0		0.00
Income Tax Recoverable	0	3764.51	3764.51
Total	8565.01	73196.06	81761.07

Statements

During the year there have been no serious incidents or loss of funds that would pose a serious risk to the Charities beneficiaries, resources or reputation.

Declaration

I declare that this is a true report and in my capacity of Chair of Trustees I am authorised to sign it on behalf of the Trustees.

Name: Graham A. Squibbs

Signature:

Date: 07th December 2021