

Hatfield Road Methodist Church, St Albans
Serving Christ and the Local Community



Annual Report 2024-2025

*Presented to the Annual General Church Meeting of Sunday 16th March 2025
[Paper 6]*

Revision R1 Issued 27th February 2025

This report has been compiled and edited by Peter Wallace, Church Council Secretary. Thank you to all who have contributed to this report and to the life of this church.

Any details of web links may be found at the end of the report using 'end note' links^{i, ii, iii...} like this ..

If you would like a hardcopy or large print of this Annual Report, please contact the Minister or one of the Church Stewards

Front Cover Watercolour Illustration of the Church by Maureen Carveley (~2012)

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Introduction

Our Calling

The Methodist Church, Hatfield Road, St Albans is part of the St Albans and Welwyn Methodist Circuit in the Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Essex District of the Methodist Church in Britain

The Calling of The Methodist Church in Britain is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission. It does this through:

WORSHIP

By increasing awareness of God's presence and celebrating God's love

LEARNING & CARING

By helping people grow and learn as Christians, through mutual support and care

SERVICE

By being a good neighbour to people in need and challenging injustice

EVANGELISM

By making more followers of Jesus Christ

The calling of Hatfield Road Methodist Church, as agreed by its Church Council, includes the commitment to:

'Serve Christ and the Local Community'

Our Obligations as a Registered Charity

Each Methodist Church is a charity as part of the Methodist Connexion administered by the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCPⁱ). This local church is also registered directly with the Charity Commissionⁱⁱ as 'The Methodist Church, Hatfield Road, St Albans (1173147)'.

As a registered charity, our annual report must explain what its charitable purposes are and what it has done during the year to carry out those purposesⁱⁱⁱ and also contain the year's accounts for the charity, which must be submitted to the Charity Commission no later than 10 months after the end of their financial year (31st August for Methodist Churches). These charitable purposes are summarized within each annual Statement of Financial Accounts.

All Church Council members must be eligible and willing to become Trustees.

Our Presbyterian's Message

Rev J Daniel Yovan, Minister with Pastoral Charge

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour who has delivered us from sin and death. God has called us all to be co-workers in his kingdom to give witness to this saving grace. I thank God every day for the opportunity he has given me to work with you to that end. When we rely upon God, he gives us grace to fulfil the calling he placed upon our lives. I am ever so grateful for all the support I receive through your prayers and commitment.

Connexional/District/Circuit matters

We now have a new circuit administrator, Autumn Leong. Thanks to Chris for all the hard work he put into the Circuit in the past years.

In October, we took eight children from our circuit to attend 3Generate 2024 in Birmingham. As a follow up, we met after school at Ludwick Way 7th February 2025 which district discipleship enabler, Angela Brydon, also attended. This after-school event was open to young people from all the churches in the Circuit. This is going to be a quarterly gathering of our young people for some fellowship, fun and faith. The next gathering will be 2nd May 2025 at Stevenage bowling centre.

I have now visited all the churches in the circuit to lead worship on Sundays.

Future of the St Albans Methodist Churches – Hatfield Road and Marlborough Road

We are trying our best to work together as St Alban churches. To explore the potential mission opportunities and ways of working together, both churches should have open conversations. Please continue to pray for both churches that the Spirit of God will show us the way forward. During my sabbatical, I am also planning to spend time in prayer and reflection to think about the future of the St Alban churches.

Ecumenical in St Albans

City centre clergy meet every other month for a prayer and breakfast. It is a time of sharing and fellowship.

I am still a voluntary chaplain at the Cathedral once a month (some months I am unable to be there). Meeting all sorts of people there, brings me joy and it is a great opportunity to serve the people of all nations.

Pastoral

I am thankful to all the pastoral visitors who look after all those who are in our list. I am doing my best to visit all those who are in need of a visit. Please let me know if you know someone need a visit or home communion. Now Denise is taking communion to those who are house bound and supporting Maggie in the services at care homes.



Fellowship at HRMC

I am grateful and thank God for all our friends at Hatfield Road working tirelessly to keep the activities going. Stewards, pastoral visitors, volunteers at the café and Friday day care are passionately promoting the love of Jesus in their own capacity. I am seeing a few new people coming to the various services and this is the work of God. We do need to find a way to strengthen the connections we have with the families (can we employ a family worker?). I feel that we do need to seriously pray and plan about improving the work we already do around families.

Schools work with STEP

I am volunteering with STEPiv (The St Albans and Harpenden Christian Education Project), the organisation working with the secondary school children and taking lunch clubs. I am going to Verulam school once a week whenever I am available. Having conversations around God and life with the children who come from various background is humbling. Sometimes it seems impossible to answer their questions.

Sabbatical

I will be on sabbatical between the 21st April and 21st July 2025. I have booked a nine day course on spiritual conversation with the Jesuit centre in London. I am also planning to attend the Alpha leadership conference in the beginning of May.

Friends,

Let us keep praying and obeying the call that God placed upon our lives. We do not need to be 'successful', but faithful. God will bless our faithful service and bring many to his kingdom.

Amen.

Church Stewards' Report - Tomáš Cvrček (Senior Steward)

Tomáš Cvrček
16/3/2025

Overview

In the time since our last Annual General Meeting, our church celebrated its 130th anniversary. Inclement weather prevented us from commemorating this occasion with an outdoor service but the anniversary was, nonetheless, marked by a dedicated service on 9th June 2024. Among other notable events was the celebration of unior Mission for All (JMA) in September, the International Meal Evening and the baptism of little James Woodhead in October and a full programme of Advent festivities during December 2024. We also tried to draw the community to the Gospel through the screening of The Chosen series in June 2024 but, due to a low response, further screenings were cancelled. Apart from these events, our regular worship proceeded along the established monthly pattern, starting with a Create & Celebrate service on the first Sunday of each month, followed by two Sundays with Sunday Club, including a third Sunday with Holy Communion, and an All-Age Worship on the fourth Sunday.

Our work and need for more recruits

This is probably in my last report as Senior Steward, as my term in this role is coming to an end. The steward team has operated over the course of the last year in the same composition as in the previous year, consisting of me, Ruth Wallace, Anne Wall and Noelene Browning. Since our last AGCM, we were able to expand the ranks of Sunday Assistants, which group now consists of Sally Newton, Napoleon Yorke-Andrews, Angela Spriggs, Jan Kitchin and Sue Davey, with Evangeline Selvarajan assisting on the

first Sundays of each month with the Holy Communion services at 9am. I am most grateful for the dedication of all members, as it has been key to our being able to cover all the stewarding duties across the year. In general, I consider the operation of the steward team efficient and without any major problems. Throughout the year, I have not encountered any major issues with filling our rota, which is quite remarkable, given that two members of the steward team occasionally leave the country for extended periods of time. We have been able to cover not only the regular Sunday services but also services for Christian holidays such as Christingle and the Carol service. We called on emeriti stewards for help in the case of the Midnight Service on Christmas Eve. We also continue to work with stewards from Marlborough Road Methodist Church, with whom we have joint meetings every other month.

In terms of the coordination and planning of services, important changes took place in our approach to the IT side of things. New members have stepped up to take over tasks that had previously been done single-handedly by Chris Hancock, such as the creation of PowerPoint slides and projection. This includes Magda Cvrckova, Joanna Rose, Peter Wallace, Eric Bridgstock and myself. Chris continues to operate our church's YouTube channel, ensuring that livestreaming of our service proceeds smoothly. To improve the day-to-day coordination of all church events, the presbyter and stewards have also decided on a trial to harness the power of the "WhatsApp Communities" feature (see below).

The steward team also took leadership in undertaking the Risk Assessment in 2024. The assessment has been concluded and the steward team has since been discussing how to mitigate some of the risks that the report identified. This includes the structural risks inherent in the imbalanced age structure of church membership, to which our mission activities will hopefully provide a remedy in the future (see the relevant part of the report below). Stewards also remain active in the continuing work of reviewing all church policies. In this regard, the Church Council was presented with an updated version of the HRMC Statement of Purpose and Vision and now also with the Register of Meetings and their Purpose. Policy review is a standard item of the steward agenda and will continue in future, so as to ensure that our church policies are up to date.

Everyone on the steward team continues to think of ways in which we could expand our numbers. This concern was already raised in my report last year. Since then, Napoleon Yorke-Andrews has agreed to put forward his name for the Steward position, which I wholeheartedly welcome. Two other church members are still considering their candidacy for stewardship.

Mission conversations

Our church has engaged in a series of mission conversations over the course of the past year – mostly led by Deacon Nigel Perrott. In their wake, a few new activities have started or are under way. One arose from the suggestion raised by Nigel to make our premises, which are used by many outsiders, more visibly places of Christian witness for example through decorations in the Large Hall. More specifically, our church has been challenged to adorn the back wall as well the side alcoves of the Large Hall with artwork carrying Christian symbolism, so that the building itself can be enlisted in the service of the Gospel beyond the preaching during our regular events. The church stewards have discussed the plan and issued a call to the congregation for contributions, the result of which is a proposal put before the Church Council of 11th February 2025 to complete the project, God willing, by the end of March 2025.

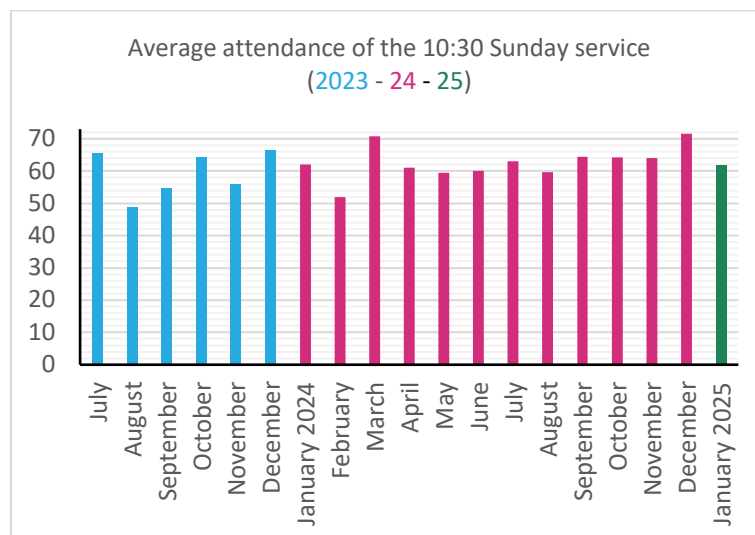
Another mission-related activity is the recently commenced Saturday Family Time, spearheaded by myself. The idea is to have a monthly or bimonthly event that would allow school-age children (age 7-14) to engage in exciting activities with their parents on church premises, making use either of the Small Hall or the Large Hall. The activities should ideally be of such nature that the school age children in our

church would be excited to invite their school friends who would then bring along their parents. As a first trial – and a proof-of-concept event – we held an air-hockey tournament in the Small Hall on 18th January. We had 11 children participating and I am pleased to report that all the school-age boys in our church brought along at least one friend who is not part of a family that regularly attends the church (although not all such outsiders brought parents along). As our next events in the series, I hope to organize a Remote-Controlled Car Race, a Soft-Tennis Parent-Child Doubles, a Treasure Hunt on church premises, A Kahoot! Quiz Night and some others. Ideally, the event will be an opportunity for church members to invite outsiders to enjoy the fellowship of our church.

Organizationally, the mission conversation has also spurred a call for better coordination of our mission activities, given that they make take place through several different channels – through the steward team, by the initiative of the minister, through the Social and Outreach committee, the Sunday Club and so on. This is probably something that needs to be done effectively by the senior steward rather than through a separate, newly created and appointed officer of the church. The steward team has considered a technological solution to this issue in the form of a WhatsApp community – a feature that allows individual committees and working groups to have their own private platforms for internal information sharing and consultation, while also allowing for an umbrella structure for coordination across all the mission-related structures and bodies. Ideally, the WhatsApp community would include church members who are on the steward team, the Social & Outreach Committee, those dealing with lettings and Sunday Club and perhaps others as needed.

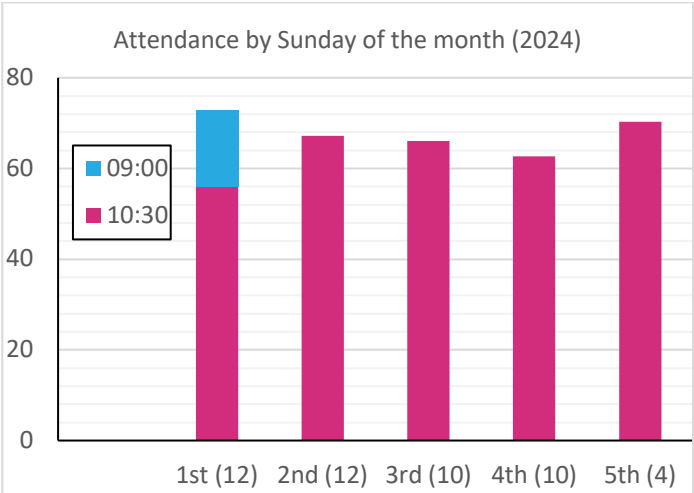
Attendance at services

As part of my responsibility for the organizational aspect of our church services, I hereby share some information on attendance on Sundays:



Attendance has fluctuated between a minimum of 45 (18th February 2024) and maximum of 96 (31st March 2024 – Easter Sunday); the number of children and youth falling between 5 and 13.

The first Sunday of the month, with two services on offer, is the best-attended Sunday on average, as can be seen from the following graph (note that we have data for 3rd and 4th Sunday in only 10 of the 12 months; there were only four months last year with a fifth Sunday):



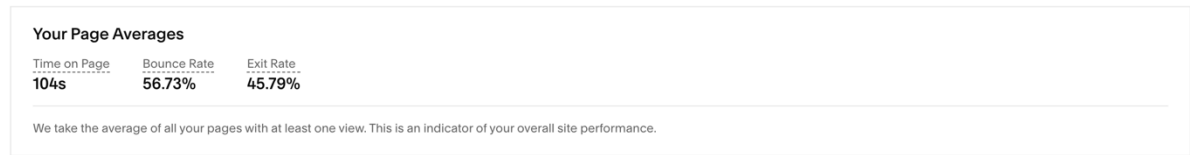
Impact of New Church Website

The church website has been recently reconstructed and has worked in its new format and structure since about the beginning of September. It is slowly settling into a workable and functional routine. Recordings of our Sunday services are regularly posted on it. The front page also carried up-to-date information about upcoming events and photographs of recent activities in our church. Any visitor to the website would be able to see that the website is regularly maintained and that the church behind it is a lively and active church. We have also recently updated all the church-related emails, together with appropriate forwarding setup to responsible office holders (e.g. seniorsteward@hatfieldroadmethodist.org.uk , lettings@hatfieldroadmethodist.org.uk etc.). The next step in our church’s electronic communication strategy is a better integration of the website with our social media accounts, especially Facebook and X.

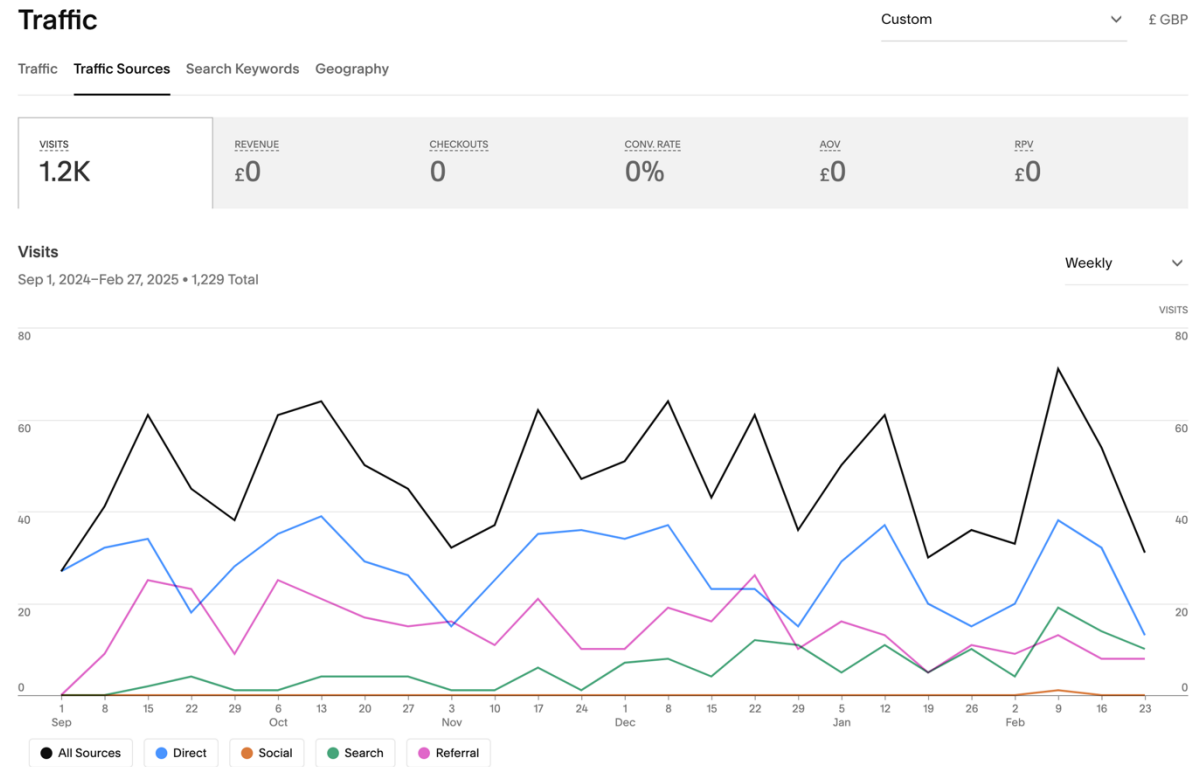
The graphs below contain some information about the website traffic since its effective launch in September 2024. First, we see that the church website is receiving between 40 and 60 visits per week on average, of which about 57% do not click beyond the front page.



The second graph shows that, beyond the front page, the next most visited page is the Worship page, which carries the YouTube recording of our most recent worship as well as information about our regular worship scheduling.



The third graph here below, showing Traffic Sources, indicate that we still need to improve on the searchability of our church website: not very many visitors come to the page by Googling us, although the “search” data show a mildly increasing trend over time; more visitors reach our website from links to placed elsewhere, e.g. in church emails, through a direct browser bookmark etc.



Ours thanks to all who contribute to the life of the church

I am grateful for the contributions of all who are in positions of responsibility in the church, which includes not only the stewards but also the finance team, the sounds & projection team, the catering & refreshments team, the music group and everybody else.

May we all continue to faithfully answer God's call to service in whatever role we are needed.

Church Council

The Church Council is responsible for the affairs of our church and usually meets three times a year. Members, who may normally serve for up to 6 years, are appointed automatically because of their role, such as Ministers and Church Stewards, or elected each year as representatives of the Annual General Church Meeting (AGCM), or appointed by the Council itself to ensure that all areas of the church's life are adequately represented.

Church Council meetings are open to any church member although only Church Council members may vote. Non-Council members may speak with the permission of the meeting and the prior knowledge of the Minister with Pastoral Charge or Church Council Secretary. Meetings are publicized in church notices and papers about the meetings can be found on the notice board opposite the kitchen and on the church website.

Since the last AGCM in May 2024 the Church Council has met three times for routine business on 26th June 2024, 16th October 2024, and 11th February 2025. The next meeting is planned for 25th June 2025.

The Church Council of 28th February 2023 confirmed the church would support the following specific charities, to be reviewed after two to three years:

Local **The Living Room^v** which works locally to support people through addiction

National **Alzheimer's Society^{vi}** which works national to support people with Alzheimer's

International **Christian Aid^{vii}** which internationally seeks to alleviate poverty through direct support and structural change.

Our Stewardship of Money and Property

Church Treasurer's Report – Eric Bridgstock

As of September 2024, our annual Circuit Assessment is up from £52,800 to £58,500 (+11%). Offerings for the first quarter (Sep to Nov) are down £1,500 year on year, so it will be appropriate to encourage increased giving. That said, our reserves remain substantial, bolstered by deposit account interest of over £600 per month.

Our CollecTin card machine was deployed at the end of January 2024, and has proved popular, since handling over £5,000 in connection with Sunday offering, Café, Babies & Toddlers, and especially during events in aid of charities.

The insurance claim for the break-in was handled very efficiently by Methodist Insurance. We had to pay the excess of £500, but the residual claim for damaged items (£1,377) was settled quickly and fully. The premium for the current year increased by a modest 2.6% (£70).

Funding for the Small Hall refurbishment was made possible through Circuit and District grants, reserves, and a very generous response from the congregation.

Maggie Dodd has requested a switch to half-time from February 2025 as we approach the final year of her five-year contract as Anna Chaplain to allow her to continue part-time for two more years. The Management Group have approved this request and both the Connexion and District have agreed to reschedule their grant support across the longer term. The Anna Chaplaincy project continues in good financial health.

Our financial responsibility for Cornerstone has operated well – no issues. Funding is provided to HRMC by the Circuit, and we use it to reimburse their expenses and fund projects/resources.

Energy costs remain a significant expenditure, but much the same as a year ago.

Since the 2024 AGM, over £2,800 has been raised for charities.

- World Mission: £216 (Easter Offering) and £340 (JMA)
- Cowan family Uganda project: £194 (Tony Moody's talk)
- Christian Aid: £410 (Collection) and £233 (Hunger Lunch)
- Chosen Charities: £246 (Afternoon Tea), £416 (International Meal), £230 (Quorum Concert)
- All We Can: £596 (Harvest and Christmas post and services)

A detailed review of income and expenditure against budget, for the first three months of Methodist Year 2024-25, is presented separately.

The 2023-24 Accounts are with the Independent Examiner, John Robinson. John has undertaken this since 2018 and, as is good practice, has suggested that someone else should be engaged. John Scott has agreed to take on the role for the 2024-25 accounts, now he is no longer a member of this church.

Statement of Financial Accounts (SoFA) for Year Ending 31st August 2024

See separate paper 7. The SoFA has been independently examined, reviewed and signed off by all necessary parties (treasurer, presbyter and independent examiner John Robinson). It will be submitted to the Charity Commissioners with this Annual Report and as part of our annual return to the Connexion.

Review of Current Year Ending 31st August 2025 – First Quarter September to November 2024

See overleaf.

Hatfield Road Methodist Church Annual Report 2024-2025 [AGCM16Mar25 Paper 6]

HATFIELD ROAD METHODIST CHURCH - FINANCE SUMMARY, Q1 Sept 2024 - Nov 2024						
2023/24 ACTUALS Full Year						
2024/25 BUDGET agreed by CC on 16 Oct 2024						
2024/25 ACTUALS Q1						
	ACTUALS 2023-24 1/9/23 - 31/8/24	BUDGET 2024-25 1/9/24 - 31/8/25	ACTUALS Q1 2024-25 1/9/24 - 30/11/24	Proportion of budget	Comment	
RECEIPTS						
Collections	£68,272	£65,000	£14,495	22%	Down £1,500 on Q1 last year	
Gift Aid	£12,651	£12,000	£0	0%	GA expected in May	
Interest & Endowment Income	£9,379	£8,000	£1,970	25%	Continuing to benefit from over 4.7% interest on deposit account	
Lettings	£6,791	£7,000	£922	13%	£1,192 in same quarter a year ago	
Donations for Church	£27,701	£2,000	£5,200	260%	Anonymous one-off £5000	
Sunday Coffee	£546	£500	£79	16%		
Café	£1,062	£1,000	£317	32%		
Babies & Toddlers (Net of costs)	£1,410	£1,500	£537	36%		
Home Mission	£696	£700	£4	1%	Refers to Holiday@Home	
Sundry	£1,534	£1,000	£39	4%		
Cornerstone	£5,154	£5,000	£0	0%		
Lay Workers	£29,649	£25,000	£761	3%	Grants due in Q3	
TOTAL	£164,845	£128,700	£24,324	19%		
	£130,042	£98,700	£23,563	24%	if Anna & Cornerstone excluded	
PAYMENTS						
Circuit Assessment	£53,275	£58,500	£14,625	25%		
Repairs & Renewals	£65,586	£40,000	£9,023	23%	incl final Small Hall payment (powered door and flooring delta); all lights now low energy	
Gas	£6,786	£7,000	£696	10%		
Electricity	£2,054	£2,500	£459	18%		
Water Rates	£323	£380	£72	19%		
Insurance	£2,695	£2,800	£2,765	99%	Annual premium paid	
Cleaning & supplies	£486	£500	£110	22%		
Staff costs (not Lay Workers)	£1,287	£1,200	£322	27%		
Licences and Subscriptions	£815	£1,000	£196	20%	new website	
Biffa Waste Disposal	£503	£2,000	£236	12%		
Youth/Sunday Club	£593	£500	£135	27%		
Stationery/copying (net)	£461	£500	£199	40%		
Bible notes (net)	£13	£0	£66			
Organists & Music	£0	£100	£0	0%		
Donations	£0	£1,000	£0	0%		
Benevolence Fund	£30	£250		0%		
Equipment & Furniture	£1,341	£3,000	£176	6%		
Sundry	£483	£1,000	£263	26%		
Catering	£505	£500	£0	0%		
Evangelism & Outreach	£747	£1,000	£417	42%		
Cornerstone	£4,322	£4,000	£271	7%		
Lay Workers	£35,598	£35,000	£8,981	26%		
TOTAL	£177,903	£162,730	£39,012	24%		
	£137,983	£123,730	£29,760	24%	if Anna & Cornerstone excluded	
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	-£153,579	-£34,030	-£14,689	43%		
	-£114,420	-£25,030	-£6,198	25%	if Anna & Cornerstone excluded	

Table 1 Income & expenditure against budget, Quarter 1, 2024-25, 01Sep25-30Nov25

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Supporting Notes for Table 1:

- Income from collections is down, year on year
- We continue to benefit from large reserves and high interest rates on deposit account
- Income from Café and Babies & Toddlers is better than budget
- Lettings appear down, but budget was increased from £5k to £7k. The rates were revised and took effect for new lettings from 1st April 2024, with existing regular user groups paying more since 1st September 2024
- Energy costs on track to remain within budget (Q2 will be the test)
- Small Hall refurbishment mostly in 2023-24. Just the powered door (£3,180) and some Architect and Building Inspection fees (expect circa £4,000) in 2024)
- Lay Worker project (Anna Chaplaincy): Running close to budget. We have yet to make use of the allocated reserves.
- Monthly expenditure (excluding Lay Worker and Cornerstone) has averaged £9,920 over the period, amounting to £94 per member per month (106 members)
- The bank balances held at 30th November 2024 were £167,625. This includes £38,131 Restricted (Bequests and Gifts), £61,985 ring-fenced for the Anna Chaplaincy, and £560 for Cornerstone.
- The Church's reserves policy is to hold a sum equal to 6 months' expenditure, which was £68,991 in Methodist Year 2023-24
- Charity collections:
 - World Mission (JMA) £254
 - Church's Chosen Charities (International Meal & Quorum Concert) £646)
 - All We Can (Harvest & Christmas) £596[Note: £589 collected for a Gambian charity from 2015-16 World Missions collection remains unresolved.]

Property – Eric Bridgstock (Chair of Finance & Property Group)

Buildings

Small Hall Refurbishment

Refurbishment was undertaken between May and September. Snags with the fire bell and powered door were resolved during October. The room is equipped with tables and chairs, and the kitchenette drawers are full of cutlery, crockery, etc. It is providing a space for our young people (air-hockey and football tables). Al Anon held their Christmas party there in December.

The damp in the boundary wall remains an issue, and addressing it will need the cooperation of the landlord of No 2 Glenferrie Road. In August, we arranged repair of the fence between our two properties, with the expectation that goodwill will be forthcoming.

Smaller Jobs

Items damaged during the break-in during April have been repaired or replaced. The desk is yet to be assembled, pending its likely role in the Vestry.

The WiFi in the Sanctuary has been boosted and is now permanently on (not just when the A/V system is being used).

Incandescent and fluorescent lighting in the corridors, Vestry, Upper Room, and back lobby have been replaced by low energy units.

Both sets of kitchen taps have been replaced, as have the WC seats.

Infestations of carpet moths have been dealt with.

Waste and Recycling

During a webinar, BIFFA explained legislation changes that will mean we will have four bins from March 2027:

- general waste
- food waste
- card, paper, metal & plastic
- glass

Legal Matter

We have had various exchanges with our neighbour at 135A, including a meeting in December. To help resolve the issue (lack of clarity in the Land Registry regarding ownership of the northern end of the boundary) some new drawings/sketches are being prepared, which will facilitate engaging TMCP - Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes – who are ultimately responsible for all Methodist property.

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Finally, as always, grateful thanks to those who:

- undertake the cleaning of our church premises
- tend the gardens
- maintain and repair the buildings and fixtures

Cornerstone Project - Deacon Nigel Perrott

[Deacon Nigel Perrott is currently off on sabbatical until 1st April 2025. This is Nigel's report to Church Council from September 2024].



We are now starting our third year here at Cornerstone and the time has really flown by. Over the last two years we have seen families come and go. It is very apparent the private rental sector here is ever changing, and with such high rents, it often leads to people moving to cheaper areas.

We continue to build friendships and our little illustration shows some of the names of those who we are in most contact with.

Our after school club is certainly our most successful group and we aim to start another day soon. Our year sixes will be moving up to seniors next September and over the next ten months we will be doing some transition work with them. Our links with Young Life International are going well and they will be assisting with this group. We have also forged links with St John's in Hatfield where a number of activities are taking place for young people.

I also thought the church council may like to know how our funding is being spent (see table below). There is a fund of £5,000 available from the Circuit each year and I have included a breakdown of what we spent in the last year. You will note that our two largest amounts are spent on food and our summer trips. I would like to thank the members of Hatfield Road for their generosity this year, it enabled us to take 27 people from the estate to Lego Land on the hottest day of the year! We were also able to invite a local farm to bring some animals along to the garden for a farm day - pictures available in the foyer! These events are not only fun but also an opportunity to share precious time with families, so thank you again.

Sharing life with people can be quite demanding as so many people live very challenging lives. This summer we have had to help with family breakdown, mental health, money problems, and a neighbour's cat who is being overfed by a stranger. These things are time consuming and at times quite overwhelming. It is also an honour to be there for people in those very challenging times. I began my appointment here by seeing Cornerstone as a house of hope and Jane and I strive to see this happen.

The big question that now has to be asked is quite simple, "What next"?

The project here at Cornerstone has been through a number of changes over the last fifteen years, and I do have to ask some difficult questions if the project is going to continue for another ten years.

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It is very clear that there is a need on the estate, spiritually and practically. How we tackle this not only all depends on the commitment of Jane and I but the whole church. I value the support we receive, not just financially but also the prayer.

I see the last two years as a time of discovery, a time to see the need, to build the friendships and more importantly to gain the trust of those we befriend. To sit with someone and hear their worries and concerns is deeply humbling, and at the same time requires a great deal of trust and understanding. I continually pray that God will breakthrough into these situations and those around us can see Jesus for themselves. We have built a great deal of trust with a number of people, and being asked to bless a home or conduct a wedding blessing to people who are unchurched is amazing and I thank God for those opportunities.

I said in a previous report that we needed to start afresh, so much that had taken place in the past had been lost and we needed to look at this home as a blank sheet. The Apostle Paul, reminds us that we cannot dwell on the past but move forward (Philippians 3:12-14):

"Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, 14 I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus."

So now it is now time to change gear, and strive to bring those names above, and more, into a new community. One to one relationships are wonderful, but bringing those names all together in one place can be very difficult!

Around the Methodist connexion there are similar community projects working on housing estates, however, Cornerstone is the only project that uses the manse as a base. It is very unusual for a project of this nature to be managed by only one couple, especially when one of them is not employed! Imagine what could have been achieved if there were a team of people living on the estate. Sharing the relationships, creating new ideas and praying together.

It is not possible to really understand a community if you do not live there, this is often known as "parachute ministry" At some point soon, I will elaborate more on this, but at this stage I am just giving an overview of my thoughts.

I firmly believe that Cornerstone has the potential to be a fantastic and growing community, but this will depend on a number of factors that I will go into this autumn.

At the end of October Jane and I are meeting Trey Hall who is the Director for Evangelism and Growth in the Methodist Church. We are going to discuss how the Connexional Team may be able to assist with the work here at Cornerstone. Trey has planted a number of community projects and has a wealth of experience to share and is keen to offer some help.

I will report back to the Church Council following this meeting, but in the meantime I continue to strive forward and look for glimpses of God glory here on The Salisbury Village.

Finally, as you will know, I am taking a sabbatical from 1st January until the 31st March 2025.

Given what I have said in my report you may be wondering how this time out will work. I will be away for four weeks in January and on my return will be at "home". There will be no formal groups, but Young Life will continue to use the community room. It is not possible to hide away and people will no doubt pop in for a cup of tea from time to time. The friendships we have built around us cannot stop and neither would either of us want it to! So basically, I will be removed from all church duties and remain an informal presence. We are both very happy with this and know that my time out of circuit will still be a blessing and a time of refreshment.

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Use of Cornerstone Funds (Year Ending 31st August 2024)

Description	Amount (£)	Totals (£)
General		
Food for general activities	479.04	
Buffet Food for Vice Presidents' visit	54.76	
Parties including food and gifts	108.45	
Books & Resources (Try praying/Bible Studies ECT)	69.09	
Stationery & Printing	162.35	
Craft Supplies	107.89	
Replacement Toys & Games	122.55	
Cleaning Sundries	15.21	
Heat & Light –Community Room	100.00	
Soft Play Equipment	468.00	
New Outside Play Area	294.79	
School Chaplain Uniforms	152.00	2,134.13
Trips and events		
Halloween Event	17.24	
Sunday Lunch at Farm Pub	100.50	
Lego Land	1384.00	
Performing Pets farm experience at Cornerstone	450.00	
Holiday Club entry for some Cornerstone Kids	45.00	1,996.74
Total Payments		4,130.87
Less donations received	924.00	
Net Expenses (Total Payments less Donations)		3,206.87

Thank you all again for your continued support

Nigel Perrott



Anna Chaplaincy Management Group - Louise Mullins

The members of the committee are Rev. Daniel Yovan (chair), Catherine Meredith and Andrew Johnstone (MRMC) and Denise Willingham, Joanna Rose and Louise Mullins (line manager) (HRMC). Our last meeting was held on 21st January 2025.

Maggie is now coming to the end of her fourth year in her role and whilst fulfilling her own Anna Chaplain (AC) role, continues as AC coordinator for the AC and Anna Friends (AF) team. Succession planning, including the handover of some care home responsibilities, has begun. This was required with the 5-year plan/contract. It has now been agreed that Maggie will reduce her hours from 1st February 2025 to 17.5 hours per week (0.5 Whole Time Equivalent). This now means that the final year's funding will be spread over two years rather than one. This will enable Maggie to extend her time in her role whilst offering support and guidance, modelling the role to those who are gradually taking over AC responsibilities.

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Finally, all those who have contributed financially, prayerfully or by volunteering can be reassured that Maggie and her team have and will continue to make a difference to the lives of many in our community. We are grateful to God for the way in which her spiritual, creative and pastoral gifts have been allowed to shape the project here in St Albans and further afield.

Anna Chaplaincy Lead Maggie Dodd

The past year has seen Anna Chaplaincy grow locally and take shape. Looking back over the year there have been some positive and notable events.

One of the highlights of last summer was the **Artists & Residents art project** which involved students from Samuel Ryder Academy, and members of the Friday Day Care group, The Orchard Nursing and Care Home and Sharing Stories group at St Luke's church, collaborating on an exhibition of portraits. It was a lovely way for the children to get to know local older people and I was able to talk about the project at the Mayor's Reception at Sopwell House in June. The school also held an after-school exhibition of the portraits in their library which some members of Friday Day Care and Sharing Stories attended.

In August, HRMC and MPMC hosted the wonderful **Holiday@Home**, which was a great success as ever, huge thanks to Denise and Idy for organising the event, and the fantastic volunteers from both churches who prepared amazing food, entertained guests with music, crafts, conversation and contributed to such a warm-hearted gathering.

Since our last AGCM I published the 4th Seniors' Guide to events, groups and services in churches across St Albans. I secured sponsorship for the back page of the booklet which reduced the overheads of production a huge amount, I am preparing to update the latest version now, which will be distributed to the usual church, community and healthcare contacts. I am constantly encouraged by the reach of the booklet, speaking to a lady only last week who had accessed a church social group which supports both her and her husband who is living with Dementia.

In early 2024 we started the **Chance to Chat** community outreach at Morrisons and will celebrate a year's anniversary in early March with a visit from the Mayor. The group which offers a warm welcome to anyone who wants to stop for a coffee, has a rota of helpers from five different churches and is now an established group, with regular guests who join us, the staff at the supermarket have got to know us and it feels like we are a friendly presence in the cafe. Do pop by if you're ever in the supermarket on a Monday morning (9.30am until 11.30am).

In the past year I have continued to lead **regular services at seven care homes and two retirement flat complexes**, leading the monthly **Wednesday Worship service with craft activity** at HRMC which is a highlight of my month, and helped re-launch **CAMEO** at The Salvation Army with lunch and a range of speakers and activities which has given the group a new lease of life.

2024 was a time of expansion locally for Anna Chaplaincy as we welcomed Hilary as Anna Chaplain in Harpenden (June 2024) and Kate as Anna Chaplain in Hatfield (September 2024), with two more Anna Chaplains hoping to be commissioned in the next couple of months. Caroline, who is training to be an Anna Chaplain in Welwyn shadowed me for a couple of weeks during the summer, which included helping me at one of the Older People's Community Events at Greenwood Park Community Centre. Peter Curtis has continued to work with me at most of the care homes where I lead services, and in February 2025 will take over from me at two local care homes. Ruth, my other Anna Chaplain colleague in St Albans, will lead at a further two care homes, freeing up some of my time for coordinating chaplaincy locally.

Towards the end of 2024 I launched the annual **Sending Love to Care Homes** project, with our gift theme being sheep - I am incredibly grateful to so many people spending time and effort creating gifts

for care home residents and we had enough woolly friends to give each care home resident in St Albans a token of love. The little sheep all had wonderful characters and were really appreciated. The project always enables me to make contact with churches, care homes, craft groups and children's groups, which is such a great blessing, this year I spoke to 2nd St Albans Beavers about the project and my role as Anna Chaplain and we even had the local Memory Cafe at St Mary's make sheep for us with their guests and carers.

I've been fortunate to have been invited to speak at various events this past year. In June, I represented the National Anna Chaplaincy Network in Westminster at the **Empowering Communities** event run by The Pilgrims Friend Society, speaking to a room of representatives from various charities that support older people, I returned in November for the follow up meeting to look at how the Government might engage with us to form policy around the needs of older people. I also attended the regular **Stronger Together** networking Zooms run by Communities First. Peter Curtis is attending as Anna Chaplaincy rep to the local **FACE interfaith** meetings, and we had a stand at the second **St Albans Community Showcase** in the Cathedral in October. This is in addition to the three **OPALS** roadshows we've had a stand at, where Peter, Caroline and I spent time talking to local people and older people's groups about Anna Chaplaincy. I continue to write regularly for the Herts Advertiser and feel that after nearly 4 years Anna Chaplaincy is very much embedded in local church and secular networks, which is great.

As I approach the beginning of my fifth year in the role, I am mindful of succession planning and how the chaplaincy needs to evolve to become more sustainable long-term. After discussion with my Management Group, I have asked to reduce my working hours by half to 17.5 per week, from 35, allowing for a tapering of the work I do, and some flexibility at home. After checking with the grant funders, this new arrangement commenced in February 2025.

The cut in hours has coincided with a handover of the majority of the care home services which Anna Chaplaincy colleagues have now taken on. The coming months will see me concentrate on growing the city-wide secular and church connections I have built up over the past few years, supporting the local Anna Chaplains, galvanising and growing that group while exploring how the chaplaincy can be sustained once the funding has run out. The reduced working hours should mean the role can continue until early 2027.

Thank you to everyone at HRMC who continue to support what I do, out in the community, working with other churches, in care settings, and within our church community - wherever God takes me. I am incredibly grateful for your kindness and prayers. Do get in touch if you would like me to visit, or have any ideas or feedback on my role, I always like to hear from you.

Holiday@Home - Denise Willingham

For four days last August 2024, guests were welcomed at Hatfield Road and Marlborough Road Methodists Churches to our annual Holiday@Home. Forty folk from the local community attended, as well as from the churches. This was made possible by the assistance of thirty helpers from HRMC, MRMC and St Peter's Church. Guests were entertained each day by games, quizzes, craft activities and plenty of lively conversation. Musical entertainment and opportunities for community singing were provided by Katie's Jumping Fleas Ukelele Band and HRMC's Music Group. Delicious home cooked lunches and cakes added to the enjoyment of the week.

This popular annual event is made possible by all the many helpers and great fun was had by all, visitors and volunteers alike. A quote from one guest sums up the week: "I felt as if I had had a whole week's holiday away".

Pastoral Secretary – Jackie Vivian

The Pastoral care of all of our members and adherents is so important. There are 14 Pastoral Visitors and 4 House Group Leaders and, between them, they delivered over 100 envelopes to them all in the run-up to Christmas. The envelopes for members included their membership card, new directory and for everyone a list of services over Christmas, Daniel's Pastoral letter and a Christmas message card.

We had a meeting on the 18th November 2024 led by Daniel where those present were able to share any concerns or updates which they had about their Pastoral members. It was good to welcome back Gina Woodhead who had taken a back seat over the past year. We talked about members and adherents whom we had not seen for some time in Church and were encouraged to see what we could do by making further contact.

At the meeting we also remembered those who died since we had last met namely Princess Glasford who died on 21st July 2024 and the Rev Colin Rowe on 30th July 2024.

[Post-meeting note: We give thanks for the life of Kiru Alagaratnum who died 31st January 2025.]

We welcomed Arpit Jais into membership in November and now look forward to Janet Holt joining us in February.

I am very grateful for all the support I have received from many members of the Church family.

There were 112 members as of 31st December 2024.

Prayer Ministry – Roy Vivian

Since the beginning of November 2024, four members of the Prayer Team have remained in the Sanctuary at the end of the 10.30 Communion Service on the third Sunday of the month to pray with any members of the congregation who have come forward. We hope that other Church members will come forward to allow us to extend prayer coverage to all Sunday mornings, as before the Covid pandemic.

The weekly publication of the Prayer Diary, overseen by Peggy Liffen, has continued to be included in Sunday's Notices. In this way all the people and families who are listed can be remembered in our prayers during the following week.

For many years, Ros Hancock has led a prayer group for the needs of our Church. The meetings take place on Tuesday mornings (via WhatsApp) and are supported by members of Ros's house group and a few other Church members. Please contact Ros if you would like to join.

The early morning prayer meeting originally introduced in 2009 by Graham Smith and Chris Hancock continues to function. Chris leads each session at Church between 7.00am and 8.00am on Tuesdays.

The weekly Circuit Prayer Meeting which our Superintendent, the Rev. David Jebb introduced in 2023, continues to take place at 9.00am on Saturday mornings via Zoom.

The Prayer Tree circulates urgent prayer requests and updates by email to a team of 30 volunteers. The knowledge that many people are offering prayers provides comfort and support to those who have requested them. Please contact Roy Vivian if you would like to join.

Music Group – Leader, Joanna Rose

The Music Group meets to rehearse at church each Thursday evening at 8pm, preparing to support worship on Sunday mornings and at the monthly Praise & Worship evening service. The group enjoys making music together, singing and playing a variety of instruments. We sometimes select or recommend hymns for the preacher, and we like to spend time in our rehearsals looking out and learning new hymns or tunes that we will then introduce to the congregation in Sunday services. For special events such as the Christmas carol service, Harvest, or Easter we often put out an invitation for additional singers or players to join us. We continue to add to our library of recorded hymns which was started during the Covid lockdown – we now have over 260 hymns performed by the Music Group available for use from our website.

We welcome new members of any age from secondary school upwards. If you enjoy singing, or can play an instrument and would be interested in joining us for special events or on a regular basis, please speak to Joanna Rose. If you are a competent pianist and would be interested in playing the piano or organ for any services (monthly 9am, weekly 10:30 or monthly 7pm services), again please contact Joanna.

I would like to say a big thank you to all the members of the Music Group for their dedication in providing such wonderful support to the worship every week.

Cradle Roll (Baptismal Roll) – *Position Vacant*

The Cradle Roll is a register of all the children who have been welcomed into the church through Baptism or a Service of Thanksgiving. Their names are proudly displayed in the Children's corner. The children remain on the Cradle Roll until they are three years old when they are promoted into the Sunday Club. There has been one new infant baptism since our last AGCM of 19th May 2024. Rev Daniel Yovan baptised James Alfred John Woodhead on 13th October 2024. There are now two children on the Cradle Roll (those under three years of age) – Peony Rose Hall Smallthorne and James Alfred John Woodhead. Each child receives a card from the church on the anniversary of their baptism.

Sunday Club Caroline Tough, Sunday Club Coordinator

We continue to have two Sunday Club groups at Hatfield Road - one for children aged 4 – 11 meeting in the Wesley Room and one for young people aged 11 -18 meeting in the Upper Room. Both groups have grown in number over the past year and are supported by a dedicated team of leaders and helpers. The younger group follow themed teaching and at the moment are working through the Jesus says “ I am the light of the world, good shepherd, true vine etc “series. Before that we worked through the stories of the many miracles Jesus performed. The older group does not follow a structured theme but Tomas is inspired to lead what is relevant for each particular week.

Sunday Club meets on the second and third Sunday of each month. In their groups the children and young people are encouraged to develop their faith through reading the Bible, craft activities, games and quizzes as well as more in- depth discussion. They often include refreshments!

There are plenty of ways for the children and young people to be involved on the other Sundays with Create and Celebrate services on the 1st Sunday having activities suitable for all ages and the 4th Sunday being an All- Age Worship service which encourages children and young people to be actively involved in the service. At all times there is a table at the back of the church which has a variety of books, colouring, jigsaws and puzzles suitable for very young children available for them to play happily (and usually quietly!) during a service. There are also story bags available for slightly older children to go and collect and bring back to their seats containing a Bible story and items to go with the story.

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The children and young people are valued members of our church family and we encourage them to read or lead parts of the service whenever we can. We can all learn so much from each other.

We had a wonderful nativity service at the beginning of December which was part of the Create & Celebrate service and many children, young people and adults took part, dressing up to represent the various key characters of the Christmas story. Many families maintain their link with the church at Christmas and it was lovely to welcome back families we have not seen for a while.

A new venture, Saturday Family Time, started on the 18th January and proved very popular with those who attended. It is for children aged 7-14 to attend with their parents to enjoy fun activities together. We hope that this is something that the children feel they can invite their friends to come along to.

Sunday Club is grateful for all the prayer support offered to the leaders and helpers and for the children and young people. We feel we have been especially blessed this year and, if we continue to grow, we may need to recruit some additional assistance. Praise God!

Create & Celebrate – Ros Hancock

Our Create & Celebrate service continues to be held on the first Sunday of every month. The first hour in the hall 10.00-11.00 focuses on crafts and other activities, with a link to the theme for the day including: treasure hunts; quizzes; wordsearches; discussions; and games – all accompanied by refreshments. At 11.00 we move into the church for a short 30 minute celebration service when all the activities are admired, brought together and explained within their context of the story that week.

Junior Mission for All (JMA) – Gurmeet Chauhan (Hannah), JMA Lead

JMA (Junior Mission for All) is a network of children, supported by adults, who support and learn about the mission of the church all over the world. The JMA promise is to 'Learn, pray and serve with the worldwide church of Jesus Christ'. 20% of money raised is allocated to the Methodist Mission in Britain Fund and 80% to the Methodist World Mission Fund.

At HRMC, following the handover of Treasurer to our Youth and JMA Leader in September 2024, we have opted in to encourage all church members to become JMA collectors. This has been running successfully with 11+ committed collectors and still growing in numbers.

There has been a successful increase from 4 members that were committed collectors in 2023-2024.

Summary of progress and recent fundraising events:

Events	Funds Raised
10 th September 2023 Barbecue	£ 524.49 (including gift aid)
29 th September 2024 Bring and Share lunch at the church	£ 355.17
JMA Collections	
1 st September 2023 to 31 st August 2024	£ 396.32
1 st – 12 th January 2025	£ 85.43
Grand Total	£1,361.41

We are grateful for the assistance of Jacob Masih Daniel as JMA Voluntary Treasurer.

Safeguarding – Joanna Rose, Church Safeguarding Officer

The Methodist Church takes safeguarding very seriously, and we follow the rules of 'safer recruitment', ensuring that all those working with children, young people or vulnerable adults within Hatfield Road Methodist Church are subject to appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. All these people, and others in position of responsibility are also required to undertake the Methodist Church's Creating Safer Spaces training every four years, with preachers and leaders trained to an advanced level. All those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church should be able to identify signs of various types of abuse, know how to react, and who to inform of any concerns they may have.

We do all we can to create a safe space for everyone within Hatfield Road Methodist Church and for those with whom we have contact virtually, either online or by phone. If you ever have any concerns about something you see or hear in relation to children, young people or vulnerable adults at the church, however small that may be, you can speak in confidence to me, our Minister, or the circuit safeguarding officer. Full contact details can be found on the church noticeboard.

Warm Welcome Café – Christine Ford, Coordinator

The Warm Welcome café first started in the spring of 2012, when it was known as the Aldersgate Café. We are open every Tuesday morning from 9 a.m. until 11.30 a.m. serving tea, coffee and home-made cakes. There is no charge but donations are very welcome (cash or card).

Our loyal customers, both from the local community and our own church family, attend regularly, along with occasional visitors and passers-by.

The Café continues to be run by a group of dedicated volunteers who work in various roles, setting up, serving, clearing up and making delicious cakes. Thank you all, the café could not run without your help. If you feel you can join the team please speak to Christine or any of our volunteers.

We are continuing to discuss and pray about how the Café can move forward, especially considering the Mission of our Church.

We value your prayers and support. Please come along and enjoy your Café.

Babies and Toddlers – Chris Hancock

Chris Hancock has now taken on lead responsibility for Babies and Toddlers. Louise Bourton (from Shenley Methodist Church) continues to act as a co-leader.

Wednesday morning sessions continue to be well attended and are valued by parents and carers. We average around 30 children each week. Alongside the toys and books, we continue to provide a craft activity each week - we are grateful to Margaret Quinn and Mary Gotts who continue to prepare these activities for the children. To close the session, we share story time and singing which is always great fun.

Needless to say we are extremely grateful to the many folk who help set up, serve tea and coffee, assist during the session, and clear and clean up afterwards.

Unfortunately, Joe Quinn is currently not able to help with setting up and clearing away. So, I am now setting up on Tuesday along with Amanda. It would be brilliant if anyone feels that they can spare an occasional Tuesday from 2:00pm for around an hour for set up, or for a shorter period from 11.00 at the end of the Wednesday session to put away. The children and adults help clear up at 11:00 before the singing, so it is only packing away back into the cupboards on Wednesdays! Please contact Chris if you are able to help.

Day Care Group – Sue Davey, Leader

This is a wonderful social and lunch group which will have been running for 37 years in June 2025. It is set up to remove barriers that might otherwise deter vulnerable and frail elderly folk from leaving their homes, by providing transport, accessible space and practical care and support, so that they can enjoy some hot food, warm fellowship and fun. Visitors come from within our church and the wider local community. We have close links with St Paul's church and the Fleetville Community Centre and are grateful for the volunteers and practical and financial support they provide.

At the present time, we welcome ten elderly ladies most weeks but could raise this to twelve. There are eight regular helpers who come most weeks, and another very willing lady who shares the job of transporting our visitors week by week. Fleetville School delivers main course meals to us each week, and volunteers from the Group and the church provide desserts.

We entertain our visitors each week with quizzes, music from David Amos and our own Music Group, painting and craft activities, flower arranging and playing board games. We usually enjoy a Christmas lunch at a local restaurant, and a canalboat trip each summer.

We would like to offer church members the opportunity to support Day Care by providing occasional desserts, organising an activity from time to time, or just chatting with our visitors. If you feel you can help in any way, please contact me – we would welcome your support for our really friendly group that means so much to us.

Creativity in Fellowship - Maggie Dodd

Our friendly group meets 10.30-12.00 on the second and fourth Fridays of the month in the Wesley Room. We each bring along a craft or creative project, typically ranging from watercolours to collage and pastels. This past year we've tackled scenic painting, flowers and portraits. We enjoy a cup of tea and a good catch up together. There are usually about four of us, and would be very happy to welcome more to our group so do come along, or contact Maggie (07462 586773) to find out more.

Church Walks – Denise Willingham, Eric Bridgstock

As reported last year, Saturday morning church walks no longer have the interest and support to make the planning and checking of routes worthwhile. Several members organise their own walks with friends on days that suit, and that is a good thing.

We hinted that there could be different styles of walk, including around parts of London. Since then, Lianne Weidmann has qualified as an official City of London Walking tour guide, and would be delighted to take church groups into London, and particularly likes leading family friendly tours (but can do others). She can cover the Guildhall art gallery and the Roman amphitheatre. Watch out for announcements in the Notices.

If you have any thoughts or suggestions regarding walks, please contact one of us.

House Groups – Johanna Mason, Coordinator

There are currently four House Groups (HG) with a maximum of 28 members of whom a few cannot attend regularly. Tony Moody, Peter Wallace, Ros Hancock and myself lead a HG fortnightly, offering a choice of either day or evening meetings with breaks for school holidays.

Tony leads a HG via Zoom (courtesy of Evangeline) on a Monday evening with 6 regular participants continuing an extensive study of Isaiah. During Advent a study called 'Forgiving and Forgetting' was followed, resuming the Lifebuilder book on Isaiah at the beginning of 2025. These studies have been well received. In the summer the HG gathered for their annual Garden Party at Tony's together with 'other halves', Lesley, Benson and Marcia.

Following a hip replacement towards the end of 2024, Tony has been unable to regularly hold HG and has only recently been able to attend church. Unfortunately, HG will not be able to meet again this year until Evangeline returns from her holiday in Sri Lanka later in February. Despite the many set-backs, the HG is in good spirits and enjoying meeting when possible.

Peter leads and hosts a HG on a Wednesday evening with a varying number of between 6-9 members. Following an Emmaus Course the HG is now studying 'Finding God in the Psalms: Sing, Pray, Live' by Tom Wright.

Ros leads HG on a Friday morning at the home of Sarah Cox with between 4 and 5 regular participants. Members are able to join the group via Zoom if they are away and unable to attend. 'Learning from the Life of Jesus' is the current study material, suspended over Advent to enjoy the study 'Forgiving and Forgetting'. Over Lent the HG will probably study the Circuit Lent Course as mentioned above in Peter's Report.

My HG meets at my house on a Thursday morning with 8 regular members. Zoom meetings are possible for those who cannot attend. Occasionally when I cannot host or transport is a problem, the group gathers at Church rather than miss a meeting.

In tandem with Tony's HG we have been thoroughly enjoying the Lifebuilder Isaiah studies, taking a break over Advent to study 'Forgiving and Forgetting'. We have now resumed Isaiah which should take us up to Lent. In December our HG had a Christmas 'party' with festive food and a very special cake for Sheila's birthday.

Along with Peter, Ros and probably Tony, our group will most likely join the Circuit Lent Course in our individual House Groups. Lent is from 5th March to 17th April. However, our fortnightly groups will be starting the Circuit Lent Course 'Hope in Hard Places' prepared by the charity 'Embrace the Middle East', from week beginning 27th January 2025.

Last year I emailed MRMCM to invite participation in our House Groups but I have not had any interest shown. When possible, details re HG appear in The Notices. Information is also available on the Church Notice Board in the Foyer.

Social & Outreach Events (SOE) – Joanna Rose, Coordinator

This Group has now reformed with several new members and has met to plan a series of events, which may be held in the coming months. It is not the role of the Group to organise the events, but to produce a schedule of recommended events which we feel people from the church, the circuit, or the community will enjoy, and to support others within the congregation to bring them to reality.

If you have any ideas for events, or would be willing to organize or help run an event, please do let Joanna know.

Single Friendly Churches Initiative – Angela Spriggs

The Church continues to work towards Single Friendly Church registration. It is carrying out an Audit of its activities. The group has started regular Sunday lunches at the church and is expanding to other activities such as board games afternoons. It continues to raise its profile and looks out for opportunities for improve the experience of those who are single in the church.

Church Council Members

Current Membership 11th February 2025

Position	Name	Date appointed
Circuit Ministers	Reverend David Jebb (Superintendent) ^{viii}	Sep 2022
	Reverend J Daniel Yovan (Minister in Pastoral Charge) ^{ix}	Sep 2023
	Deacon Nigel Perrott ^x	Sep 2022
Layworker (observer)	Maggie Dodd, Anna Chaplaincy Lead	Nov 2021
Church Stewards ^{xi*} (up to six)	Tomáš Cvrček (Senior Church Steward)	May 2018
	Noelene Browning	Oct 2019
	Anne Wall	May 2023
	Ruth Wallace	Jun 2023
	[Vacancy x 2]	
Church Treasurer ^{xii}	Eric Bridgstock	Jun 2018
Pastoral Committee ^{xiii}	Jackie Vivian	Sep 2023
Church Council Secretary ^{xiv}	Peter Wallace	Jun 2023
One Circuit Steward on behalf of the Circuit Stewards ^{xv}	Pretty Nkiwane [Oxlease]	Sep 2024
Members elected by the Annual General Church Meeting ^{xvi} (Not less than six representatives nor more than fifteen elected) annually by General Church Meeting	Ros Hancock [Elected by ballot]	May 2015
	James Appiah	Jun 2021
	Angela Spriggs (Single-Friendly Churches	May 2024
	Denise Willingham (Extended Communion)	May 2024

Additional Members appointed by Church Council^{xvii}:

Sunday Club and Youth Superintendent	Caroline Tough	Sep 2022
Property & Finance Committee	Eric Bridgstock (Chair of Meeting)	Jun 2019
Mission Secretaries Action Group (Mission in Britain / World Missions / JMA / Christian Aid / Justice & Peace)	[Vacancy]	
Worship Consultation Convenor	Peter Wallace	Sep 2015
Safeguarding Officer	Joanna Rose	May 2009
Other appointed by Church Council	Freda Gray [Catering, Property, Cleaning]	Aug 2017
	Val Parker (lettings)	Jun 2019

Elected to Circuit Meeting ^{xviii} (up to five)	Church Steward [Ex Officio]: Tomáš Cvrček	Sep 2022
	Church Treasurer [Ex Officio]: Eric Bridgstock	Sep 2015
	Joanna Rose	Sep 2017
	Ros Hancock	Sep 2022
	Denise Willingham	Sep 2022

End Notes

ⁱ <https://www.tmcg.org.uk/>

ⁱⁱ <https://my-charity-account.charitycommission.gov.uk/>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://howcharitieswork.com/transparency-and-accountability/annual-reports/#:~:text=A%20charity's%20annual%20report%20must,assessment%20of%20what%20they%20achieved>

^{iv} <https://www.stepschoolswork.org.uk/>

^v <https://www.livingroomherts.org/>

^{vi} <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/>

^{vii} <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/>

^{viii} Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church (CPD), Volume 2, Standing Order (SO) 610 (1) (i)
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/26649/conf-2022-cpd-vol-2.pdf>

^{ix} CPD Vol 2 SO 610 (1) (i)

^x CPD Vol 2 SO 610 (1) (iv)

^{xi} CPD Vol 2 SO 610 (1) (vi)

^{xii} CPD Vol 2 SO 610 (1) (vii)

^{xiii} CPD Vol 2 SO 610 (1) (viii)

^{xiv} CPD Vol 2 SO 610 (1) (ix)

^{xv} CPD Vol 2 SO 610 (1) (xii)

^{xvi} CPD Vol 2 SO 610 (1) (x)

^{xvii} Up to 15 additional persons appointed by the Church Council to ensure that all areas of the church's life are adequately represented and in particular that, wherever possible, young people are included in its membership
SO 610 (1) (xi) as follows: 5 & 6

^{xviii} (Ex Officio Officers) SO 510 (1) (vii) (plus 3 others) SO 510 (1) (viii)

THE METHODIST CHURCH
STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS

HATFIELD ROAD METHODIST

Church

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 August 2024

St Albans & Welwyn

Circuit

Circuit no.

13

Registered Charity - Charity Registration number

1173147

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:

Rev Daniel Yovan

Church Stewards:

Tomas Cvrcek

Ruth Wallace

Noelene Browning

Anne Wall

Treasurer:

Eric Bridgstock

SECTION A		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
		£	£	£	£
a1	RECEIPTS	Note			
a2	Offerings and Tax recovered		77,923	3,000	80,923
a3	Bank and CFB interest and Investment income		9,426		9,426
a4	Lettings		6,791		6,791
a5	Other receipts		33,728	34,803	68,531
a6	TOTAL RECEIPTS		127,868	37,803	165,671 (a7)
SECTION B					
b1	PAYMENTS				
b2	Circuit Assessment or Share		53,275		53,275
b3	Donations				
b4	Repairs and Maintenance		65,586		65,586
b5	Utilities (Insurances, water charges, heating & lighting)		12,361		12,361
b6					
b7	Other payments		7,552	39,920	47,472
b8	TOTAL PAYMENTS		138,774	39,920	178,694 (b9)
SECTION C					
c1	NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR (a6-b8)	(10,906)	(2,117)	(13,023)	14,399
c2	Total funds brought forward from last year	50,071	153,136	203,207 (c6)	188,994
c3	Sub total (c1+c2)	39,165	151,019	190,184	203,393
c4	Transfers and adjustments				(c7)
c5	TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR (c3+c4)	39,165	151,019	190,184 (c8)	203,207 (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			589	589
d2	Offerings/Gifts - received for external organisations			4,760	4,531
d3	Offerings/Gifts - passed to external organisations			4,760	4,531
d4	BALANCE STILL TO BE PAID (d1+d2-d3)			589	589

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 2024 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)	165,671 (a7)	178,694 (b9)	(13,023)	28 (c7)	203,207 (c6)	190,212 (c8)
e10	TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH	165,671	178,694	(13,023)	28	203,207 (x)	190,212 (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 2024**

		OPENING BALANCES	CLOSING BALANCES
f1	Cash in hand		
f2	Bank Current Account	16,071	29,293
f3	Bank Deposit Account		
f4	Central Finance Board	187,358	161,113
f5	Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes	367	395
f6	Other funds		
f7	SUB TOTAL - Church accounts	203,796 (c6)	190,801 (c8)
f8	Total funds held by Internal Organisations (the closing balance total from above) (e12)	(e11)	(e12)
f9	TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH	203,796 (x)	190,801 (y)

SECTION G**OTHER ASSETS and LIABILITIES**

	At 1 September 2023	At 31 August 2024
g1	Investments (include Endowments)	
g2	Land & Buildings (see notes re Insurance value)	3,357,964
g3	Other Assets	125,923
g4	Loan(s) - show amount outstanding at year end	
g5	Other Liabilities	

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 **HATFIELD ROAD METHODIST CHURCH** No. **34/13**

Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these Receipt and Payment based accounts for the year to 31 August 2024 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  Date **11/2/2025**

Name and address of Treasurer **ERIC BRIDGSTOCK**

..... 16 Evans Grove, St Albans, Herts Post Code **AL4 9PJ**

Presentation to the Church trustees

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2024 were/will be* presented to the meeting of the Church trustees held on

Signature of the Chair of the meeting 

Name of the Chair of the meeting **Rev Daniel Yovan** Date **11/02/2025**

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the Hatfield Road Methodist Church

Charity Number 1173147

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the **Hatfield Road Methodist Church** for the year ended 31 **August 2024** set out on **pages 2 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 **HATFIELD ROAD METHODIST CHURCH** No ... **34/13**

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 **JOHN ROBINSON**

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

Name of firm (where appropriate)

Address **Cedarwood, 5 Harmer Dell, Digswell, Welwyn**

..... Post Code ... **AL6 0BE**

Date **12/2/25**

* delete or circle as appropriate

THE METHODIST CHURCH
STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS

HATFIELD ROAD METHODIST

Church

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 August 2024

St Albans & Welwyn

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Treasurer:

Eric Bridgstock

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Name of the Chair of the meeting **Rev Daniel Yovan**..... Date **11/02/2025**

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* delete or circle as appropriate

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Independent Examiner's Statement

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Signature of independent examiner 

Name of independent examiner **JOHN ROBINSON**

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

Name of firm (where appropriate)

Address **Cedarwood, 5 Harmer Dell, Digswell, Welwyn**

..... Post Code ... **AL6 0BE**

Date **12/2/25**

* delete or circle as appropriate