



# Unity Methodist Church

Registered Charity 1173520

## TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST 2025

### STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Unity Methodist Church (UMC) is based in Sandbach, Cheshire. It formally came into being in September 2020 and was formed with the merging of three Methodist Churches, Sandbach, Wheelock and Sandbach Heath Methodist Churches.

UMC is part of Cheshire South Methodist Circuit and is an active member of Churches Together in Sandbach.

UMC has responsibility for two sites – the chapel and Wesley Centre in Sandbach and the New Horizons chapel building and the Hancock Hall in Wheelock. A number of our older church members have died in the past year but we also have had new people join us, so membership continues to be around 110. At the beginning of August 2025, we have begun the project to refurbish and redevelop the Hancock Hall in the rear-half of the New Horizons site, by having a new heating system installed. This will eventually provide a modern and welcoming space for church and community activities in Wheelock, but particularly to be the centre for UMC's work with children, young people and their families.

All our buildings at Wesley Avenue and at New Horizons are used by the church or hired out for a wide range of community activities and organisations throughout the week.

Trustees 2024/25:

Jayne Bunn  
Karen Foster  
Cynthia Kelly  
Alan Pimlott  
Elizabeth Trinder

Ellen Cieka  
Robert Glassonbury  
Carolyn Lawrance  
Pauline Sherwin

Timothy Cooke  
Brian Hanna  
Katy Lowe  
Pamela Smith

Nilda Eyre  
Ann Horsfield  
Stephen Parker-Aiken  
Norma Stolworthy

### OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Our weekly prayer group continues to meet both in person and on Zoom and we had a Lent group, on the theme of "Prayer" which met in person and on Zoom. In June, all members were encouraged to participate in the Methodist Church's Bible Month, reading the Gospel of John, and the small fellowship group has been meeting to continue the study of this Gospel.



We continue to worship weekly at the Wesley Avenue site in Sandbach, with a monthly “Breakfast Church” for young families at our New Horizons site in Wheelock and an All-Age service four times a year at New Horizons, where we welcome children and families from Scouting and Guiding groups who meet on the premises. We also continue to hold a monthly Contemporary Worship Service.

Our Saturday Coffee Mornings continue to be appreciated by those living alone and by members from the local Dementia Friendly Sandbach group. In addition, Unity provides a monthly community hot lunch meal at its Wheelock site, which is well received with a variety of other social events provided during the year. From September 2025, we will be receiving some support from a Lay Mission Pastor, newly employed by the Methodist Circuit, to work with older and isolated adults in the Alsager and Sandbach area.

Our two toddler group sessions, Stepping Stones, continue to thrive, under the supervision of our Circuit Children and Family Workers. In the autumn term of 2024, we welcomed the local primary school to New Horizons for their Harvest celebration and their Christmas carol services, while their school hall was being refurbished. At Christmas and Easter, we also hosted “Hope Journeys” for children from the same local Primary School, explaining the Christmas and Easter stories through drama/role play. We ran a Holiday Club for primary-age children over four days in August 2025, on the theme of Rescuers. This also included a visit from the local RSPCA.

Unity continues to serve the local community through its partnership with other churches in Churches Together in Sandbach. Together we have held an outdoor carol service in the centre of town, provided a Christmas Day lunch for those who would otherwise be on their own, and had a “Christians together” presence at the Sandbach Pride Festival in September.

The Foodbank, based in the Wesley Centre Sandbach, continues to operate and provides vital support for local families in need of emergency help. It remains an internal organization of Unity but with support from members of other local churches. The Community Food Pantry is also based in The Wesley Centre, and is continuing to support local households to cope with the cost of living by offering food and toiletries at substantially reduced rates. This is an internal organisation of Unity Methodist Church and is run by volunteers from Churches Together and from the local community. It has been a vital source of support to many in the area including a warm space for a chat over a cup of coffee and prayer support when requested. In 2024-2025 the Pantry has also been building links with other agencies who can offer support to pantry members, including Mentell, a mental-health charity for men, Motherwell, charity supporting women and girls, and Citizens’ Advice.

Unity also aims to be informed about the needs of the wider world, encouraging its members to pray and work for peace and justice and continuing to support the work of Christian Aid and the Methodist development and aid agency, “All We Can”.

## **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

### **FINANCE REPORT**

The method of accounting used is that of Receipts and Payments and the Methodist Standard Form of Accounts, which is attached to this report, summarises the Receipts and Payments for the year ending **31 August 2025**.

Church Receipts were **£171,435** and Payments amounted to **£167,235**, leaving a surplus of **£4,200**, which is much better than the original forecast of a shortfall in excess of £7K. This is because we have received a generous donation of £10,000 from a member and £1,610 of the Circuit grant has not yet been spent.



During the summer break, work was started on Phase 1 of the refurbishment and redevelopment of the Hancock Hall. We received a grant of **£39,158** from the Circuit's Sandbach Heath sale proceeds and so far **£37,548** of this has been paid out.

Regular giving is slightly down this year although the total of voluntary giving is higher because of one-off donations. Even with these, the Total Offerings and Tax Recovered is £9K less than the Circuit Assessment figure of **£62,215**.

Apart from the Assessment and the Hancock Hall costs, the biggest payments this year have been **£3K** on a lift repair, over **£3K** on legal costs incurred in renewing the lease for the Pre-School and **£4K** on architect and quantity surveyor costs for New Horizons' development plans. Over the past two years LED lights have been fitted throughout the Wesley Centre. In both years we have received two gift-aided donations of **£2K** to cover the total cost of **£4K**.

The good news is that our electricity costs have fallen by **£4K**.

Volunteers work hard to look after the premises and to organise fundraising events and it is thanks to their efforts that income from Lettings rose to **£54K** and Fundraising Events raised **£18K**.

#### RESERVES

A draft Budget for 2025/26 has been prepared and the forecasted figure for expenditure is **£123,000**. It is our policy to hold 50% of anticipated expenditure in our reserves, which we are able to do this year. At 31 August 2025 the General Fund was **£76,266**.

#### THE FUTURE

In 2025-26 Circuit Assessment is not expected to rise but some utility costs are likely to continue at a high level. The forecast shows that there could be a surplus of around £6,500 at the end of the financial year.

## DECLARATIONS

The trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' report above. Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signature 

Full name Carolyn Lawrance

Position Chair

Date 22.10.25



THE METHODIST CHURCH  
STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS

UNITY METHODIST CHURCH

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 August 2025

Cheshire South Methodist Circuit	Circuit no.	11/8
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Registered Charity - Charity Registration number

1173520

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 Carolyn Lawrance

CHURCH STEWARDS:

Nilda Eyre	Cynthia Kelly
Ann Horsfield	Pauline Sherwin

TREASURER:

Ann Horsfield



SECTION A			Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
			£	£	£	£
a1	<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>Note</b>				
a2	Offerings and Tax recovered	1	52,287.01	✓	52,287.01	43,848
a3	Bank and CFB interest and Investment income		2,865.07	✓	2,865.07	2,977
a4	Lettings	2	53,878.51	✓	53,878.51	45,489
a5	Other receipts	3	21,583.68	✓ 1,443	23,026.51	38,239
	Grants		39,158.00	✓	39,158.00	
	Wesley Guild			220	220.00	353
a6	<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>		<b>169,772.27</b>	<b>1,663</b>	<b>171,435.10</b>	<b>130,905</b>

SECTION B						
b1	<b>PAYMENTS</b>					
b2	Circuit Assessment or Share		61,215.00	✓	61,215.00	56,681
b3	Donations	4	3,240.00	✓ 1,750	4,990.00	3,825
b4	Repairs and Maintenance	5	22,719.17	✓	22,719.17	27,616
b5	Utilities (Insurances, water charges, heating & lighting)	6	29,160.65	✓	29,160.65	34,179
b6	Wesley Guild, Foodbank			200	200.00	20
	New Horizons' Project Phase 1		37,548.00	✓	37,548.00	
b7	Other payments	7	11,402.19	✓	11,402.19	10,296
b8	<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>		<b>165,285.01</b>	<b>1,950</b>	<b>167,235.01</b>	<b>132,617</b>

SECTION C						
c1	<b>NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>(a6-b8)</b>	4,487.26	✓ (287)	4,200.09	(1,712)
c2	Total funds brought forward from last year		71,645.76	✓ 3,464	75,109.56	76,822
c3	<b>Sub total</b>	<b>(c1+c2)</b>	76,133.02	3,177	79,309.65	75,110
c4	Transfers and adjustments		145.00	(145)		
c5	<b>TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR</b>	<b>(c3+c4)</b>	<b>76,278.02</b>	<b>3,032</b>	<b>79,309.65</b>	<b>75,110</b>

SECTION D					
d	<b>FOR INFORMATION ONLY: MONEY RECEIVED AND PASSED ON TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS</b>				
	<b>(these amounts are not to be included in total receipts/payments figures)</b>				
			£		£
d1	Balance brought forward from last year				
d2	Offerings/Gifts - received for external organisations		2,436.93		3,297
d3	Offerings/Gifts - passed to external organisations		2,436.93		3,297
d4	<b>BALANCE STILL TO BE PAID</b>	<b>(d1+d2-d3)</b>			



# UNITY METHODIST CHURCH

## 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 Sandbach Foodbank	13,872 ✓	9,761 ✓	4,111 ✓		9,488 ✓	13,598 ✓
e2 Lifeline Debt Advice	2,668 ✓	2,974 ✓	(306) ✓		313 ✓	7 ✓
e3 The Pantry @ Sandbach Hub	53,696 ✓	41,061 ✓	12,635 ✓		5,587 ✓	18,222 ✓
e4						
e5						
e6						
e7						
e8 Sub total of Internal Organisations funds	70,236	53,796	16,439		15,388 e11)	31,828 (e12)
e9 Church accounts (totals brought forward from page 2 - totals column)	171,435 (a7)	167,235 (b9)	4,200	(c7)	75,110 (c6)	79,310 (c8)
e10 TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH	241,671	221,031	20,640		90,498 (x)	111,137 (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	4	
f2 Bank Current Account	4,592 ✓	8,886 ✓
f3 Bank Deposit Account		
f4 Central Finance Board	70,514 ✓	70,424 ✓
f5 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes		
f6 Other funds		
f7 SUB TOTAL - Church accounts	75,110 (c6)	79,310 (c8)
f8 Total funds held by Internal Organisations (the closing balance total from above) (e12)	15,388 (e11)	31,828 (e12)
f9 TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH	90,498 (x)	111,137 (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)	9,323,232	9,677,590
g3 Other Assets - Insurance Value of Contents	207,434	215,318
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

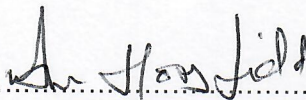
g1 Include any other investments (not the cash element of TMCP trusts accounts this is included in line f5)



Name of Church **UNITY METHODIST, SANDBACH** No 11/8

## 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 .....  ..... Date 28/9/25

Name and address of treasurer: **ANN HORSFIELD**

**31 Fields Drive, Sandbach, Cheshire, CW11 1YB**

### Presentation to the Church trustees

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2025 ~~were~~/will be\* presented to the meeting of the Church trustees held on 22.10.25

Signature of the Chair of the meeting .....  .....

Name of the Chair of the meeting: **REV CAROLYN LAWRENCE** Date 21.10.25

## Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

### UNITY METHODIST CHURCH

Charity Number: 11/8

### Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the **UNITY METHODIST CHURCH** for the year ended 31 August 2025 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: **UNITY METHODIST CHURCH, SANDBACH** No: **11/8**

### Independent Examiner's Statement

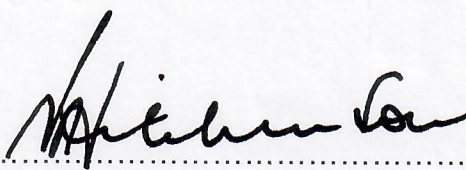
I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below\*) which give me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- 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 FRANK HITCHINSON**

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner .....

Name of firm (where appropriate) .....

Address : **11 Cooksmere Lane, Sandbach, Cheshire, CW11 1BQ**

Date ..... **15/10/2025** .....

\* delete or circle as appropriate



# UNITY METHODIST CHURCH

## Notes to the Standard Form of Accounts - 31 August 2025

Page 2

### RECEIPTS

Note 1

#### Offerings and Tax Recovered

	2024-25	2023-24
Loose cash collections	£4,078.76	£4,714.61
Weekly envelopes	£3,391.00	£5,950.58
Standing orders	£24,327.00	£21,472.00
Regular donations	£349.00	£355.00
One-off donations	£12,317.78	£3,561.50
Tax refund on gift-aided donations	£7,823.47	£7,793.92
	<b>£52,287.01</b>	<b>£43,847.61</b>

Note 2

#### Lettings

Hire of UMC buildings	£38,549.01	£32,255.18
Lettings for birthday parties	£2,655.50	N/A
Donations for use of premises	£4,280.00	£4,634.00
Lease of Hancock Hall for Pre-School Group	£7,500.00	£7,000.00
Pre-School additional fuel costs	£894.00	£1,600.00
	<b>£53,878.51</b>	<b>£45,489.18</b>

*\* Includes donations from Uniformed Organisations, The Pantry and Foodbank*

Note 3

#### Other Receipts

Fundraising Events (gross proceeds)	£18,244.29	£18,168.55
Church Activities/Groups	£2,679.39	£3,739.64
Funeral fees etc	£660.00	£277.00
Refunds from Circuit and Connexion	£0.00	£14,834.44
Legacies (2)	£0.00	£0.00
Sunday refreshment donations (Charity Fund)	£1,442.83	£1,219.09
	<b>£23,026.51</b>	<b>£38,238.72</b>

### PAYMENTS

Note 4

#### Donations from Church Funds

Donations to Connexional Funds	£2,100.00	£1,690.00
Donations to Methodist Charities	£600.00	£1,270.00
Other donations	£540.00	£265.00
Donations to Methodist Charities (Restricted funds)	£1,600.00	£150.00
Other donations (Restricted funds)	£150.00	£450.00
	<b>£4,990.00</b>	<b>£3,825.00</b>

Note 5

#### Repairs and Maintenance

Wages and associated costs	£8,133.45	£7,474.80
Premises repairs and maintenance	£8,451.85	£17,769.02
Lift, Fire equipment, PAT costs etc	£5,407.31	£1,552.87
Cleaning equipment and materials	£726.56	£819.77
	<b>£22,719.17</b>	<b>£27,616.46</b>



		2024-25	2023-24
Note 6	<b>Utilities</b>		
	Gas	£12,906.98	£12,070.11
	Electricity	£7,031.55	£11,013.14
	Water	£2,314.49	£1,946.51
	Insurance	£6,907.63	£9,149.19
		<b>£29,160.65</b>	<b>£34,178.95</b>
Note 7	<b>Other Payments</b>		
	Office costs, including Broadband	£659.43	£690.35
	Premises licences	£457.06	£371.30
	Copyright licences	£742.69	£1,115.33
	Other licences	£0.00	£35.00
	Young People and Family Work	£189.30	£364.03
	Cost of Fundraising	£1,259.01	£1,553.22
	Lease legal costs	£3,443.40	
	New Horizons - Pre-development costs	£4,140.00	£5,848.00
	Miscellaneous expenses	£511.30	£318.38
		<b>£11,402.19</b>	<b>£10,295.61</b>
Line c4	Transfer and adjustments - £145 from Wesley Guild to General Fund 2024/25		

## FUND BALANCES AT 31 AUGUST 2025

		2024-25	2023-24
	General Fund ( <i>Unrestricted</i> )	£76,266.02	£67,493.76
	New Horizons Development ( <i>Designated</i> )	£12.00	£4,152.00
	Charity Fund ( <i>Restricted</i> )	£727.51	£1,034.68
	Wesley Guild ( <i>Restricted</i> )	£55.12	£180.12
	Wheelock Projects (from Yoxall Trust) ( <i>Restricted</i> )	£2,249.00	£2,249.00
Page 2 line c5, Page 3 lines e9 and f7	<b>Total UMC funds</b>	<b>£79,309.65</b>	<b>£75,109.56</b>
	<i>Internal Organisations' Funds:</i>		
	Sandbach Foodbank	£13,598.39	£9,487.89
	Lifeline Debt Advice	£6.91	£312.72
	The Pantry @ Sandbach Hub	£18,222.22	£5,587.47
	<b>Total IO funds</b>	<b>£31,827.52</b>	<b>£15,388.08</b>
Page 3 Lines e10 and f9	<b>Total Funds held by UMC at 31 August</b>	<b>£111,137.17</b>	<b>£90,497.64</b>

## INSURANCE VALUES at 1 SEPTEMBER 2025

	Buildings	Contents
Wesley Avenue Church	£3,028,838	£97,890
Wesley Centre	£2,810,025	£57,582
Wheelock Church - New Horizons	£2,948,377	£58,384
Wheelock - Hancock Hall	£890,350	£1,462
Page 3 Lines g2 and g3	<b>£9,677,590</b>	<b>£215,318</b>