

## Trustees Annual Report 2024

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This report provides a small sampling of the activities that MEC has been involved in through the year. However, it will never fully capture all that God has done for us as a church and through us to reach others.

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As we have done over the past few years, in 2024 we held our summer residential for young people at the Gaines Manor Christian Activity Centre in Whitbourne. Youth and young adults at MEC participated in a 4-day residential with fun, food, worship and teaching organised by our Youth Ministry leaders with a lot of help and preparation from the young people themselves. Many of our gifted young people took part in organising activities, leading session, teaching, cooking and washing up. Thank you to all the amazing children and young people who are a part of our church family. We are very grateful to God for you and for the leaders who support you.

### *Hope Football*

Soon after taking on his new role, in February 2024, Roy started Hope Football. With help from a few students from Regents Theological College, the group provided football coaching, friendship and Christian input to young people from school years 7-9. The group has been grown over the year with several young people going on to join MEC's Thursday youth group.

### *Small Groups*

Fellowship, Bible study, encouragement and support within the congregation at MEC happens most often in small group settings. In 2024 there were several midweek small groups, running in homes, at a café, or in the church building or online. The groups are very diverse in composition and format, but similar in their desire to learn together and to love and support others in the group. We are grateful to those who have led groups and to all who attend these groups. We encourage those who are not involved in a group to give it a try.

### *Weeks of Prayer*

Prayer is a vital and regular part of our practice as a church. However, from time to time we also recognise the need for more intense and dedicated times of prayer. In May 2024 MEC held another week of focused prayer to seek God's guidance for the church.

### *Community Focus*

MEC has continued to serve the local community in different ways through 2024. Activities have included groups organised by the church as well as use of the building by external organisations to host community related activities. Some areas where MEC has been active in 2024 are highlighted below.

**Rainbow Club** team - a warm, welcoming environment for children, parents, grandparents and carers, and the team continue to receive more requests for places in the group than they can cater for.

**Coffee and Chat** - a weekly afternoon session for older members of the community to meet, talk or knit over refreshments. The afternoon ends with a short epilogue and prayer.

**Art Group** – an opportunity for people within the local community, who have an interest in art to meet and discuss art related subjects or to practice their art related interests.

**Welcome Space** – Since 2022 the Welcome Space team provided a place for people to gather once a week, initially as a warm space during the height of the cost-of-living crisis, but latterly, through the warmer periods of the year, providing refreshments, friendship, conversation, prayer and a clothes bank. In May 2024, the team decided to close the space having served over 70 guests from the area over a period of 18 months.

**Polling Station** – The MEC building served as a local polling station for the parliamentary elections held in May 2024.

### *Support for local missions*

As part of our aim to serve the local community, the congregation at MEC has support Christian organisations involved in the local community, but through financial giving and volunteering time. These have included Christians Against Poverty, The Lyttelton Well, and The Malvern Hills Foodbank.

### *Support for missions abroad*

IN 2024 MEC continued our support for missions and individuals working in several different countries in Europe, Africa, India and Tasmania.

For several years MEC has supported the **Teams4U** initiative, packing and wrapping Christmas shoeboxes with presents for children from disadvantaged backgrounds in different places in Eastern Europe. An amazing 90 shoeboxes were filled in church and collected from church in December and taken to the Evesham warehouse to be checked and loaded onto lorries to be delivered to children in Moldova.

### Finance

The treasury team at MEC has continued to administer the church's finances faithfully through 2024. Through those who have diligently and generously given to God's work at MEC, as shown in the attached accounts and comments from the treasurer and the independent examiner, MEC remains in a financially stable position. More details are available in the submitted reports and accounts.

### *Sale of the Manse*

The building adjacent to the church at 210 Pickersleigh Road (The Manse) was owned by the church and served in the past as the residence for previous ministers. Following the decision taken by the trustees in 2023 to list the property for sale through estate agents, a few viewings of the property took place with subsequent offers received but not progressed. In September 2024 the trustees accepted an offer on the Manse, and following surveys and further negotiations, the sale was agreed but not completed by the end of the year. The church and the trustees are prayerfully looking forward to exchange of contracts and completion of the sale in the New year to improve the church's financial position and fund other areas of ministry and service.

The deacons and the treasury team continued to manage the sale of the property on behalf of the church through 2024.

### Safeguarding

Keeping children and vulnerable people safe continues to be an integral part of our Christian faith. The Safeguarding team has continued to raise awareness to remind everyone of their responsibility to protect and speak out for those in our care.

In April 2024 Christian Safeguarding Services, our safeguarding advisory service, conducted an all-day on-site safeguarding training event for volunteers and staff working with children and vulnerable adults.

A Safeguarding Sunday service was held in February 2024 to raise awareness of everyone's safeguarding responsibilities. As part of our safer recruitment guidelines, DBS checks were conducted on all volunteers involved in serving in these areas of ministry.

In 2024 there were no reportable safeguarding incidents raised with the designated safeguarding lead.

### Concluding Remarks

2024 has been the start of a new stage of MEC's journey. We look forward to all that God will do in our community in the coming years.

Thank you to all at who have served at MEC.