

# **Bethesda Baptist Church Felixstowe Annual Church Report 2024**

## **Contents**

<b>Mission and Values Statements</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pastoral Secretary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Suffolk Training Ground</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Missionary Report</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Supervisor Endorsements for K &amp; L Doust</b>	<b>8/9</b>
<b>Women's Ministries</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Y-Zone</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Mini-Zone</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Joint Youth Group</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Care Team</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Safeguarding</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Flower Report</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Bulletin Report</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Fabric Report</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Treasurer's Report</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Appendix A: Funds Summary (end Dec '24)</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Appendix B: Mission Support &amp; Assessment document</b>	<b>17</b>

# Mission Statement

We live to bring glory to God by being and making disciples of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

## Values

**Bethesda is a local church family that strives to be marked by the following characteristics...**

### ...Worshipful

#### **Marked by desire to know, love and glorify God.**

We believe that people have no higher purpose than to glorify God and enjoy him forever. Our desire is that the Triune God is glorified and worshipped in all that we do and we long to grow in our knowledge, love and enjoyment of Him each day.

### ...Biblical

#### **Marked by trust in the Bible as the living and active Word of God.**

We believe that the Bible is the very voice of God and the instrument through which he changes us.

### ...Prayerful

#### **Marked by faithfulness in public and private prayer.**

In prayer, private and corporate, we commune with God and seek to know him as both personal and powerful.

### ...Dependent

#### **Marked by dependence on the grace and power of God.**

It is only by his grace given to us in the Lord Jesus and his power at work in us by the Holy Spirit that we are able to live godly lives. We therefore seek to walk in humble dependence on his grace and expectation of his power.

### ...Loving

#### **Marked by genuine love and fellowship with one another.**

Jesus died on the cross, not only to bring us to God but to bring us together as his church. Because of this, we strive to grow in love and unity with one another as well as other gospel-centred churches.

### ...Missional

#### **Marked by passion for making disciples of Jesus Christ.**

We are committed to making disciples of Jesus Christ by taking the good news of his life, death and resurrection to the world.

<b>Stuart Baker</b>	<b>Treasurer/Elder/Trustee</b>
<b>André Beck</b>	<b>Pastor/Elder/Trustee</b>
<b>John Bridge</b>	<b>Elder/Trustee</b>
<b>Keith Doust</b>	<b>Pastoral Secretary/Elder/Trustee</b>
<b>Clifford Lewis</b>	<b>Elder/Trustee</b>
<b>Scott Savage</b>	<b>Elder/Trustee</b>
<b>Richard Adams</b>	<b>Deacon</b>
<b>Neil Blundell</b>	<b>Deacon</b>
<b>Lorraine Doust</b>	<b>Deacon</b>
<b>Jacqui Lewis</b>	<b>Deacon</b>

<http://www.bethesda-felixstowe.com/>

## 1. Pastoral Secretary report 2024

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem <sup>2</sup> and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup> When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. <sup>5</sup> "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

<sup>6</sup> " 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for out of you will come a ruler  
who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.' "

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

<sup>9</sup> After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. <sup>11</sup> On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

Matthew 2:1-12

We opened the year with André Beck, our lead and main teaching pastor, bringing us the word from Matthew's Gospel. Epiphany - "Christ For All The Nations" being his theme – what an excellent theme to keep in the forefront of our minds as we seek to be salt and light to those around us and around the world.

For some 2024 was a hard year, for others less so. As a fellowship we continued in our efforts to be Worshipful, Biblical, Prayerful, Dependant, Loving and Missional despite the struggles. Standing together we came through the year seeing God's hand and love amongst us.

As in previous years we will thank the Lord for many things as we look back. In particular...

..things **practical**. We had another year of being open every week, for which we thank our Heavenly Father. Our facilities remain able to meet our needs and our finances are still healthy (see the Treasurer's Report). Visitors came in and some stayed. We continue to have an on-line option for those who genuinely can't meet with us face-to-face.

..things **expositional**: As a fellowship we continue to engage in Word ministries across the board. This is us expressly seeking to maintain the 'Biblical' value cited earlier. We want to be 'Marked by trust in the Bible as the living and active Word of God. We believe that the Bible is the very voice of God and the instrument through which he changes us.'

Four sermon series were completed this year (2 Thessalonians, Leviticus, 1 Thessalonians and 1 John) with another started (Mark's Gospel).

André served us well, taking the bulk of the preaching until his sabbatical (Oct 7<sup>th</sup> – Jan 6<sup>th</sup>). Other preachers included three elders (Stuart Baker, Keith Doust and Scott Savage), with a number of external speakers as well, particularly in August and during the sabbatical (Mark Howson, Nathan Jack, Joe King, Malcolm McGregor, and Stephen Walker). We are grateful for the ongoing high level of the teaching we receive at Bethesda Felixstowe.

'Everyone In' services continue each month, as does the Sunday prayer meeting (all on the first Sunday of each month – see further comments in the 'Mission' section).

Our Sunday evening times together have been following the format set up in 2023 with the overall title of "Contending for the Faith". There were five mini-series throughout the year; the first three were lead by André and the final two based on videos.

- 1) What Am I Supposed To Do?
- 2) How To Study The Bible
- 3) Biblical Covenants
- 4) Evangelism Seminars (Rico Tice)
- 5) 6 Steps to Talking to Jesus (Manchester Simon and Simon Roberts)

The celebrations of Harvest, Palm Sunday, Easter (Tenebrae, Good Friday and Easter Sunday) and Christmas (Carol Service, Crib Service and Christmas Day) all added their usual additional expressions of worship to our year. The celebration of the Lord's Supper occurs each Sunday morning.

We again are grateful to the Music group which brought the usual variety of songs for our times together. Also, the support of the 'balcony team' kept us able to see and hear the services as well. Our thanks to **everyone** involved in making our times of fellowship a success.

..things **numerical**: We began 2024 with 72 members and we lost 3 during the year: Tim Burnham (moved to Swindon as Associate pastor at North Swindon Baptist Church). Nickie Savage (moved to Colchester Road Baptist Church), and Jean Hawkes (joined Jan '93 PtG May). This brought the membership total on December 31<sup>st</sup> to 69.

We were delighted to see three people baptised during the year; one in the sea (28<sup>th</sup> July) and two in the church (1<sup>st</sup> Sept). All are regular attendees of the fellowship. It was also a pleasure to have a church wedding in 2024 as well.

...and finally, thank you for *your* efforts and participation in the life of the church. Again, please continue to work faithfully and prayerfully in the coming year, maybe even seeking our new opportunities for ministry. Please remember to keep André, Liz and the children, as well as the other Elders and their families in your prayers (see above this report). As we all walk and work together, may the Lord's name be glorified and may we see His Kingdom built amongst us and amongst those with whom we have contact. Soli deo gloria.

Shalom,

*Keith Doust*

## **2. 'Suffolk Training Ground'**

Suffolk Training Ground has provided a valuable opportunity for like-minded local churches to grow together in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Designed for church members seeking training or a deeper understanding of the Bible, the sessions have welcomed 20-35 attendees from up to six different churches. The aims of this initiative have been to stir a hunger for growth in Christ, equip believers for service in their local churches, and foster unity among like-minded congregations.

This year's teaching series (three sessions), "Knowing and Loving Scripture as God-Breathed", was developed and led by Revd Mark Prentice (St. John The Baptist, Ipswich), Pastor Tom Mawson (Kesgrave Baptist Church), and Pastor André Beck (Bethesda Felixstowe). Through these sessions, participants were encouraged and equipped to handle God's Word with greater confidence and devotion. We are thankful for this partnership and trust that God will continue to use Suffolk Training Ground to strengthen His church in our region. We hope for another nine sessions on different topics in 2025.

*André Beck for the Suffolk Training Ground Facilitation Team*

## **3. Missions report**

Bethesda continued its focus on **Mission** over the year. There are prayer points in the weekly Prayer Mail for personal and Fellowship Group use. These points are regularly used during the Sunday services as well.

We continued to support **the current six organisational Mission interests** of the church both prayerfully and financially. We have developed personal connections with individuals in most of these, alongside the overall organisational input. The six are: European Mission Fellowship, Hope Community Church (Soho London), International Mission to Jewish People (formally CWI), Open Doors (the Persecuted Church), Latin Link and WEC International.

Prayerful and financial support for **Keith and Lorraine Doust in their ministries through SIL International (Eurasia Area)**, a partner organisation of Wycliffe Bible Translators, is an ongoing focus

and priority for the church (see supervisors' endorsements below). Following Keith's sabbatical he took on a new role as Director of Partnerships for SIL Eurasia Area. There has been no change to Lorraine's role following her sabbatical (SIL-Eurasia Staff Care and Wellbeing Team supporting families and children living in difficult cross-cultural environments). Both sabbaticals finished on March 8<sup>th</sup>.

Prayerful support is given to **Sue Bullard in her SIL International (Francophone Africa Area)** finance role. Her ministry, after years of experience working in the secular finance world, is a key one and greatly appreciated by her colleagues.

On the first Sunday of each month we meet for prayer at the church. The 2<sup>nd</sup> half of each time together focuses on our mission interests. We had a face-to-face presentation by Keith and Lorraine as well as video interviews from EMF workers Rogério & Sónia Ramos, Bogi Kozma from IMJP, Ruth and Benja Curin from Latin Link, Andrew Murray from Hope Church, Colin Bearup from WEC International as well as Kevin Croft who works with London City Mission.

The **weekly coffee-morning outreach** continued throughout the year. The following is from John Bridge who leads the Coffee Morning team:

I don't think that 'exciting' is too strong a word to describe what happens on Friday mornings at the church. The church building lends itself as an ideal place; well-lit and warm enough in the winter. We now have videos projected on the screen as well as music. The team pray together at 9.45AM, and then we open the doors. People are always ready to come in on the dot! Very soon the background music is drowned out by conversations all around the room. If you have never come, then you really must. I would describe it as a bit like fellowship after a Sunday church service; only as you move around, you often sit down. Frothy coffee is the firm favourite, and Bethesda frothy coffee has its unique touch, with only a few people in the know.

Good friendships are being built up, and for many it is a halfway house to coming to church on a Sunday. We are consistent in having a five-minute Bible talk around 11AM and the vast majority stay for that and are very respectful. Testimonies in particular have been appreciated and we are considering asking more from the church to come and share. Of course, you could come and volunteer before you are asked.

Having a dependable team is key! It has grown and I will not embarrass anyone, but the coffee morning reliably opens up every Friday except Good Friday and Christmas week.

We thank God for motivating us to do this work, and it is certainly very encouraging to see him at work.

Following 2023's discussions of the **church's Mission involvement** and its financial implications, a document entitled "Mission Support and Assessment" (See Appendix B) was presented to the church during 2024. The intent was as follows *"The following is a proposal intended to secure Bethesda's commitment to global missions as well as to cultivate interest and support within the congregation toward our mission partners"*. Building on all the work done over the last few years to review, process and discuss the church's Mission involvement it is expected that a vote will be taken at the first meeting of 2025 drawing our processing, though NOT our involvement, to a conclusion.

Details of the missionary financial support can be found in the Accounts section at the end of the Annual Reports.

*The Elders/Trustees*

## Supervisor Endorsements of Keith and Lorraine Doust



For supporting churches and other friends. Period: January–December 2024

### Supervisor Endorsement of Keith Doust

**Supervisor name:** John Young  
**Supervisor role:** SIL Eurasia Area Director  
**Location:** Castlerea, Republic of Ireland

Keith continues, with Lorraine, in his role as the Welcome Event co-Director; this is a vital gateway for new staff to be introduced to the uniqueness of working in Eurasia and sharing the historic past.

Keith is also the Director of Partnerships, which involves processing relationships with our major partners. Keith is well suited to this role as his personality can facilitate various conversations in multiple cultural scenarios, drawing from his many years of experience within SIL.

Keith's role on the senior leadership team within SIL Eurasia continues and I look forward to another year working with him.



## Supervisor Endorsement of Lorraine Doust

**Supervisor name:** James Covey

**Supervisor role:** SIL Eurasia Area HR, Staff Care Coordinator

**Location:** Malaga, Spain

Lorraine is a valuable member of the Eurasia Staff Care Team and serves Eurasia's staff in many ways. These include engaging in activities that bring her joy and for which she is gifted, such as leading a family forum, scheduling family check-ins with our staff living overseas, co-directing the Welcome Event, participating in global TCK connections, and facilitating training and development, among others. She advocates for our families and actively seeks ways to provide better support for them. Lorraine can both connect with and care for families in casual spaces at conferences and events, and invest in them through organised and scheduled programmes, like the family forum and regular staff check-ins.

We are incredibly grateful for your partnership with Keith and Lorraine Doust through Wycliffe UK & Ireland, which enables them to support Bible translation in Eurasia and further afield.

### 4. Women's Ministry

Linked to the **Values** of:

**Biblical** (We believe that the Bible is the very voice of God and the instrument through which he changes us.)

**Prayerful** (We commune with God and seek to know him as both personal and powerful.)

**Loving** (We strive to grow in love and unity with one another as well as other gospel-centred churches.)

**Missional** (We are committed to making disciples of Jesus Christ by taking the good news of his life, death and resurrection to the world.)

Back in 2023, we started a new series of events for women under the heading **REFRESH: inspiring, connecting, encouraging**. We launched with an introductory women's breakfast, where we gathered ideas for future events, a 3-mile staged walk and a Christmas craft event. In 2024 we organised another breakfast, where we were blessed by Yvonne's daughter, Hannah, sharing about her ministry in New Zealand, as well as another well-attended & enjoyable Christmas event. We also began a monthly, evening Book Club, *Hidden Treasures*, going through 'Gospel-shaped Womanhood' by Sarah Rice, and attended the annual Cambridge Women's Conference.

**Praise:**

- ❖ For the encouragement of these opportunities for fellowship, Bible study/discussion and sharing the gospel.
- ❖ For the enthusiasm and commitment of all those involved in planning and participation, especially Liz, Yvonne, our Book Club hosts and the team organising the Christmas events.

**Prayer:**

- ❖ For creative ideas for inspiring, connecting and encouraging women in the future.
- ❖ For inspiration to find other Bible-based resources for the Book Club.

*Lorraine Doust*

## **5. Y-Zone**

Our overall aim for the group is for our young people to become strong disciples of Jesus. To achieve this, we seek for them to become familiar with God's Word, be prayerful, be active participants in the life of the church as well as being equipped to serve Him in the challenges they encounter outside. To this end we meet on a Sunday morning during the second half of the service for about 45 minutes. There are regularly 5 young people all of secondary school age with occasional visitors. The session is led by 3 regular teachers with 5 assistants.

We use a variety of materials to aid us in our preparation. Bible books covered have been Genesis, Philippians and Mark. Most recently we have also used the 'Faithworks' programme looking at identity and relationships. There has been a strong emphasis on developing their understanding of the authenticity, reliability, and power of God's Word. They have learnt about different genres in the Bible and how all Scripture leads to the saving power of Jesus.

It has been really encouraging to see those in Y-Zone develop confidence in praying out loud and engaging with the session material. There has also been an increasing interest in mission across the world, including asking questions about the work of the two mission groups, SIL and Open Doors.

We anticipate changes in 2025 as the 2 oldest participants will leave the group and 4 are expected to move up from Mini-Zone. Please pray for the leaders as we plan for this change. Please pray also for some additional leaders.

*Joy Baker for the Y-Zone team*

## **6. Mini-Zone**

Through the year we have we have taught and studied numerous series: 'Meals with Jesus'; a series based on the Psalms called 'With God Together'; a book titled 'The Garden, the Curtain and the Cross'; Jonah; Gods armour; and ended the year exploring the Christmas story in a Lego-themed study called 'Brick by Brick'.

### **Praise**

- We would like to give praise for Richard, he was part of our team for many years but left this year. We were so thankful for his ideas, clear bible teaching, creativity, and the fun he brought.
- It is a joy for us leaders to watch the children in the church grow and be part of their journey as they learn more about the Bible and the gospel message.

### **Prayer**

- For on-going wisdom for all the leaders as we decide what and how to teach the children and as we continually adapt to the ages and needs of the children.

*Sarah Blundell for the Mini-Zone Team*

## **7. Joint Youth Group**

Over the past year, Bethesda Baptist Church Felixstowe has partnered with Christchurch Felixstowe to run a monthly joint youth group, welcoming between 12-20 young people each session, including 2-4 from Bethesda. Leadership from Bethesda has been provided by Neil Blundell and André Beck. The meetings have alternated between the two churches, fostering a shared sense of community.

Each session has included games, providing a fun and engaging environment, followed by a Bible talk delivered by André. The teaching has been based on the Apostle's Creed, covering key topics such as faith, God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. This initiative has been a valuable opportunity for discipleship and fellowship among the young people, and we are grateful for God's work through this ministry.

*André Beck for the Joint Youth Group Team*

## **8. Care-Team**

The care team endeavour to meet every three months during which time we work our way through the names on the prayer diary. Our aim is to consider the care needed in the fellowship. Each time we do this, we become gratefully aware of the obvious care that goes on between many

in the church,. There are also things we see that we want to take action on ourselves or of which we want to make the elders aware.

We always remind ourselves of the importance of confidentiality with the, often sensitive, things we discuss. Each meeting ends with a time of prayer for the Fellowship but especially, for those who are in particular need of help.

Can I ask you to continue to pray for the team which currently consists of David and Jasmine Fisk, Jacqui Lewis, Susan Chapman and myself. Thank you

*John Bridge for the Care Team*

## **9. Safeguarding Report**

In 2024, an issue, originally flagged up in 2023, was drawn to a satisfactory conclusion for everyone concerned, with no further action needing to be taken.

In May, a large group, along with many from other churches, attended safeguarding training hosted by Stowmarket Baptist Church. Individual on-line training was paid for and provided for those unable make the Stowmarket event. We are currently up-to-date with the training.

We would like to remind everyone to remain vigilant and continue to look out for the vulnerable, and reporting anything which raises concerns.

Please pray for continued protection for our church, so that God would be glorified, rather than His Name besmirched.

There are notices on 2 notice boards in the church reminding of who to contact if anything needs to be reported.

I would like to thank Theresa Adams (deputy safeguarding lead) and Alison Hudson (DBS administration) for their continued help and willingness to serve the fellowship in these ways.

*Scott Savage*

## **10. Flower Report**

Thanks to everybody that helped over the last year. Supplying flowers or helping with arrangements at Christmas, Easter and harvest, each contribution was very much appreciated.

If there is anyone else that would like to be involved then please let me know. All are welcome. Thank you.

*Andrea Bridge*

## **11. Bulletin Report**

The Weekly Bulletin acts as a welcome sheet to the Fellowship and continues to give details about the morning service, the evening sessions and any regular midweek activities. Other activities are brought to people's attention as and when they occur, and people are welcome to include information or notices.

There is always a pastoral prayer section based on John Bridge's prayer email, scripture verses will always be included and occasionally, appropriate Christian cartoons. There are also periodic articles about Christian ministries, for example: Armenian Ministries, European Mission Fellowship and Open Doors. Every month the Bethesda Prayer Diary is printed with the Bulletin and when necessary an extra A5 sheet with information can be inserted.

The Bulletin has two purposes: 1) to inform and 2) in its content, to give glory to God.

*Cathy O'Neill*

## **12. Fabric Team report**

Whether a church building is new or old there are always many items that need caring for from a 'Fabric' perspective. This is very much the case in a Victorian/Edwardian building like ours. The Fabric Team have a WhatsApp group to share fabric issues that are raised and looking back over 2024 the team (and others: too many to mention but much appreciated) have fixed, replaced, renewed and installed many things. Here is a small list of some that come readily to mind.

Urn tap leak fixed.  
Front door hinge repaired.  
Radiator cover secured.  
Hall light replaced.  
Front drain pipes moved.  
Stained glass fitted.  
Two roof lights replaced.  
Front door air curtain replaced.  
Fire alarm system, call points and extinguisher serviced.

Weeds and rubbish cleared at front and rear.  
Front area, jet sprayed.  
Kitchen wall painted.  
Bins emptied each week.  
Drains unblocked.  
Heating set up and serviced.  
Photocopier serviced.  
Christmas lights put up and taken down....

Thank you to you all for caring for the building and its internal parts.  
Thank you too for keeping us aware of what is not working quite as it should and giving us the opportunity to serve in rectifying the problems.

*Clifford Lewis for the Fabric Team*

### **13. Treasurer's Report (Year Ended 31 December 2024)**

#### **Pre-Amble:**

The church accounts for its money on a cash accounting basis with a summary of income and outgoings being prepared each month. The accounts are reviewed by the trustees when they meet and at each Church Meeting. Each year the accounts are subject to independent review and submitted to the Charity Commission.

To ensure due process smaller amounts, up to £200 are authorised by the treasurer with a second trustee being involved with the decision on larger amounts. For very large amounts, over £2000, or where a new regular commitment is required the decision is brought to the Church Meeting.

Payments from the church account are now almost exclusively via bank transfer whereby I initiate a payment online and Scott Savage or Clifford Lewis authorises it as, effectively, a second signature. This is not only more convenient than using cheques it is also cheaper and allows for greater transparency.

Our thanks go to David Fisk for continuing to take responsibility for the counting and banking of the weekly offering. Thanks also go to Sue Bullard who has continued as bookkeeper, not only dealing with the monthly reconciliation but also managing the payroll and the claiming of Gift Aid.

In line with good accounting practice Greg Weston stood down after many years as our Independent Examiner. We are very grateful for all his work and help over the last ten years or so. His place has been taken by Amanda McFeeters, a previous colleague of Sue Bullard.

Can I take this opportunity to remind regular givers of the advantages of using bank transfer for their offerings. This makes it easier

to claim gift aid where applicable and also relieves the need to travel to Ipswich with large amounts of cash for deposit.

### **Summary:**

In broad terms the church finances remain healthy, something for which we again praise God.

At the start of the year total funds in hand were £81,317 of which £69,356 was in the General Fund, by the end of the year this had risen overall to £107,987 with an increase in the General Fund to £86,017.

The funds summary is shown on the separate sheet (Appendix A).

Fuller details of income and expenditure, including a comparison with 2022, are provided in the accounts (attached).

Key points that I'd like to draw your attention to are:

### **General Fund:**

Income from regular giving and Sunday offerings rose again from £103,681 to £130,949 and we remain grateful to God for the continued generosity of his people. Gift aid recovered totalled £22,972 and rental income from the Manse £11,960.

The Manse has been a major theme running through the year as the tenant was rehoused and vacated the property. The council made good the rent arrears, a gracious answer to prayer. The decision was made to sell the manse. Due process was followed including a market valuation and report from Richard Bannister. The property was marketed by Fenn Wright estate agents and an offer of £435,000 was accepted. As the year ended the sale was going through, with the slight complication that the Baptist Union of Great Britain continue to hold the ultimate trust on the property so their written permission is required for the sale.

As the manse was empty after August the rental income for the year fell. There have also been some additional costs relating to the sale and upkeep of the property.

### **Mission Fund:**

In line with church policy the trustees allocated 40% of Offerings received to the Missionary Fund. The amount allocated in the year was £61,569.

We continued our support for Keith & Lorraine Doust. In 2024 the church received designated gifts for the support of Keith & Lorraine Doust totalling £2,640 on which £660 of Gift Aid was recovered. Support costs for Keith & Lorraine totalled £28,601. The net cost to the church was £25,301.

Gifts of £6,000 each were also disbursed to each of the six mission partner organisations. The balance on the Missionary Fund at the end of the year was £11,849.

### **Bookstall:**

For whatever reason sales of books have again been low, even with the offer of considerable discounts. This is an area that, although small in financial terms, is potentially very important for spiritual growth. It is my intention to write off the loss and make a fresh start.

### **Assistant Pastor:**

In light of the decision to move ahead with seeking an assistant pastor with a special focus on evangelism £10,000 has been designated as a starter fund separate from the general fund. The intention is to add to this amount when a prospective candidate is found so as to lessen any cash flow issues that may arise in paying a second salary.

On the **expenditure** side the cost of utilities remains high but other than that there have not been any nasty shocks.

Ministry costs fell as Tim Burnham was no longer on staff.

There have been no major church maintenance or fabric developments, most expenditure in these areas being normal recurrent costs such as boiler maintenance and gas safe checks.

If you have any questions regarding the accounts then please get in touch.

*Stuart Baker – Treasurer*



## Appendix A: Funds Summary (end Dec '24)

Bethesda Baptist Church, Felixstowe													
Funds Summary													
31 December 2024													
		General	Missionary		Bookstall	Assistant Pastor		Total	Bank		Unrestricted Reserves	Restricted Reserves	Total Reserves
			Unrestricted	Restricted		Restricted	Unrestricted						
Balances Brought Forward at 1 January 2024		(69,356.22)	(11,582.16)	(740.00)	361.40	0.00	0.00	(81,316.98)	81,316.98	0.00	(80,576.98)	(740.00)	(81,316.98) 0.00
Income		(168,282.93)	(64,868.53)	(1,655.70)	(66.23)	0.00	(10,000.00)	(244,873.39)			(243,217.69)	(1,655.70)	(244,873.39) 0.00
Expenditure		151,622.09	64,601.28	1,979.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	218,203.07			216,223.37	1,979.70	218,203.07 0.00
Closing Balances at 31 December 2024		(86,017.06)	(11,849.41)	(416.00)	295.17	0.00	(10,000.00)	(107,987.30)	107,987.30	0.00	(107,571.30)	(416.00)	(107,987.30) 0.00
								less: Designated Funds			21,554.24		
								Free reserves			(86,017.06)		
								Minimum reserves			25,000.00		
								Current available reserves			(61,017.06)		
Balance Sheet		(86,017.06)	(11,849.41)	(416.00)	295.17	0.00	(10,000.00)		107,987.30				
Diff		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00				

## Appendix B: Mission Support & Assessment:

*The following is a proposal intended to secure Bethesda's commitment to global missions as well as to cultivate interest and support within the congregation toward our mission partners.*

### The Need for Assessment and Evaluation of Our Support:

The current system, established decades ago to preserve our commitment to global mission, sets apart 40% of our income for the support of Keith and Lorraine as well as six mission organisations. This reflects an impressive commitment to global missions. However, we have three concerns with the status quo:

- It has not protected us from a drift in our understanding of mission.
- It has not fostered an ongoing enthusiasm for, or commitment to, mission amongst newer church members.
- It does not allow us the flexibility to adapt to changes in global and local mission needs.

We think that regular assessment and evaluation of our mission partners, and our support of them, will help to address these problems. The church's mission focus needs reviving. Enthusiasm has been waning for some time. We need to be excited and confident about who we support. We need to build a relationship with our mission partners and not merely send financial support from a distance.

Additionally, it is our moral obligation to steward our resources well to advance the cause of the God's Kingdom. This fits hand-in-glove with our responsibility to steward the gospel well. Can we really say that we know what our mission partners believe about the gospel? Do we really know that they still believe and practice what they once did ten, twenty or thirty years ago? Do we still believe in the causes that we support? Are the needs of the global church still the same? Is the investment of our finances still going to the areas of greatest need or highest priority? Being able to answer these questions confidently is essential

to good financial and gospel stewardship as well as to cultivate healthy interest in global mission.

I trust you are able to see that a more 'hands on' approach to our mission partners will help us to cultivate more careful and impassioned support of global missions.

### **How to assess and evaluate our support of mission partners**

To retrieve and protect both our understanding of mission and our commitment to both local and global outreach, we have concluded the following...

An annual assessment and evaluation of our mission partners

This assessment will be based on the following criteria, which have all been agreed by members already:

- Statement of faith (including position papers and doctrinal distinctive)
- Values (biblical, prayerful, missional, loving, dependent, worshipful)
- Mission Statement / Philosophy of ministry (mission = great commission)
- Degree of relational partnership possible

Furthermore, rather than allocate a percentage of our unrestricted income into a "mission" fund, our mission giving will come directly out of the general fund. This means that our contribution to mission each year is less determined by a percentage than by deliberate consideration. Some years the mission allocation from the unrestricted income may be more than 40% and other years it may be less.


To increase commitment to mission, spending on mission will be authorised annually at a church meeting according to how much money we have coming in and what other spending priorities we might have in a particular year. We also envisage this will add a layer of accountability which will help safeguard our mission interest.

### **Conclusion**

We invite you to pray with us about the challenges we have identified and the steps we have outlined. We also invite you to contribute any ideas, suggestions, and questions about our mission partners and our support of them. Please could you direct your emails, comments to the elders via Cliff's E-Mail address

Yours in Christ

The Elders.

	Bethesda Baptist Church, Felixstowe				No (if any)		CC16a
	Draft Subject to Independent Examination						
	Receipts and payments accounts						
	For the period from		1-Jan-24	To	31-Dec-24		

Section A Receipts and payments

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
		to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £

A1 Receipts						
General Fund (Unrestricted)				0	0	0
Offerings	130,949				130,949	103,680
Tax Recovered on Gift Aided Donations	22,972				22,972	24,391
Manse Rent Received	11,960				11,960	14,492
Gifts & Bequests	193				193	586
Interest	2,138				2,138	1,282
Church Awayday	71				71	0
Transfer to Missionary Fund	(61,569)				(61,569)	(51,229)
Transfer to Assistant Pastor Fund	(10,000)				(10,000)	0
Transfer to Bookstall Fund	0				0	0
Missionary Funds (Designated Unrestricted; Restricted)					0	
40% tithe of Offerings & Gift Aid	61,569				61,569	51,229
Gift Aid Tax Recovered	660				660	660
Transfer from General Fund					0	0
Gifts and Donations	2,640		1,656		4,296	4,854
Bookstall Sales (Unrestricted)					0	
Sales	66				66	116
Transfer from General Fund	0				0	
Building Fund (Restricted)					0	
Gifts and donations					0	
Tax Recovered on Gift Aided Donations					0	
Training Fund (Designated Unrestricted)					0	
Gifts					0	
From General Fund					0	
Assistant Pastor Fund					0	
Gifts and Donations	10,000				10,000	
Tax Recovered on Gift Aided Donations					0	
Sub total(Gross income for AR)		171,649	1,656	0	173,305	150,061
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).						
	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sub total		0	0	0	0	0
Total receipts		171,649	1,656	0	173,305	150,061

A3 Payments						
General Fund (Unrestricted)				0	0	0
Ministry	44,786			0	44,786	50,463
Outreach	409			0	409	572
Youth & Children's Work	77			0	77	372
Church Utilities	13,406			0	13,406	14,051
Church Cleaning	2,220			0	2,220	1,717
Church repairs & Maintenance	3,211			0	3,211	10,410
Church Fabric & Fttings	2,406			0	2,406	3,139
Insurance	2,842			0	2,842	2,804
Manse Repairs	2,370			0	2,370	1,357
Manse Council Tax	1,058			0	1,058	0
Manse Utilities	319				319	0
Manse Insurance	429			0	429	603
Online and Print	457			0	457	309
Refreshments	1,245			0	1,245	1,085
Gifts and Donations	2,364			0	2,364	2,672
Professional Fees	2,279			0	2,279	1,512
Church AwayDay	0				0	0
Miscellaneous	176			0	176	778
Transfers to/from Other Unrestricted Funds:					0	0
Missionary Funds (Designated Unrestricted; Restricted)				0	0	0
International Mission to Jewish People	6,000			0	6,000	4,500
K & L Doust	28,601			0	28,601	28,601
European Missionary Fellowship	6,000			0	6,000	4,500
Hope Community Church	6,000			0	6,000	4,500
Latin Link	6,000			0	6,000	4,500
WEC International	6,000			0	6,000	4,500
Open Doors	6,000			0	6,000	4,500
Samaritan's Purse	0		0	0	0	0

	Other	0	1,980	0	1,980	1,604
	Open Doors Restricted	0	0	0	0	0
					0	0
	Bookstall Purchases (Unrestricted)	0		0	0	477
					0	0
	Building Fund (Restricted)			0	0	0
	Payments to Contractor			0	0	0
	Loan interest and repayment			0	0	0
	Fees			0	0	0
					0	0
	Training Fund (Unrestricted)				0	0
	Expenditure	0			0	4,567
					0	0
	Assistant Pastor Fund (designated, Unrestricted)				0	0
	Expenditure	0			0	0
					0	0
				0	0	0
	Sub total	144,655	1,980	0	146,635	154,093
	A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
		0	0	0	0	0
		0	0	0	0	0
	Sub total	0	0	0	0	0
	Total payments	144,655	1,980	0	146,635	154,093
	Net of receipts/(payments)	26,994	(324)	0	26,670	(4,032)
	A5 Transfers between funds	451	(451)	0	0	0
	A6 Cash funds last year end	49,377	3,224	0	52,601	85,349
	Cash funds this year end	76,822	2,449	0	79,271	81,317

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period					
Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £	
B1 Cash funds	CAF Current Account	100		-	
	CAF Gold Account	105,439	2,449	-	
				-	
	Total cash funds	105,539	2,449	-	
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	OK	OK	
		Unrestricted to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment to nearest £	
	Details				
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-	
		-	-	-	
		-	-	-	
		-	-	-	
		-	-	-	
		-	-	-	
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)	
B3 Investment assets			-	-	
			-	-	
			-	-	
			-	-	
			-	-	
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)	
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Manse at 8 Mill Lane, Felixstowe	General	-	435,000	C
	Church furniture	General	-	9,000	
	Church building, Cavendish Road, Felixstowe	General	-	-	
			-	-	
			-	-	
			-	-	
			-	-	
			-	-	
			-	-	
			-	-	
			-	-	
	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)	
B5 Liabilities			-		

				-	
				-	
				-	
				-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature		Print Name	
<b>NOTES</b>					
A	We set up a designated (unrestricted) assistant pastor fund and transferred £10,000 from the General Fund.				
B	In 2024 the church received designated gifts for the support of Keith & Lorraine Doust totalling £2,640. £660 of Gift Aid was recovered on these donations. Support costs for Keith & Lorraine totalled £28,601. The net cost to the church was £25,301				
C	The sale of the Manse was going through on 31 December 2024. The agreed sale price was £435,000				
D					
E					
F					





# CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

## Independent examiner's report on the accounts

### Section A

### Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

Charity Name  
Bethesda Baptist Church, Felixstowe

On accounts for the year  
ended

31 December 2024

Charity no  
(if any)

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2024.

Responsibilities and  
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent  
examiner's statement

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

- 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 order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Date:

19-5-2025

Name:

Amanda McFeeters

Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):

FCCA

Address:

19 Cobb Road

Berkhamsted

HP4 3LE