

RUGBY METHODIST CHURCH CENTRE

ANNUAL REPORT

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PROGRAMME

Approx. 11.30am Opening prayer

Attendance and Apologies

Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 30th April 2023

Matters Arising

Appointments: Church Stewards

Representatives to Church Council

Representatives to: Action for Children

The Mite Scheme

Christian Aid

Closing Prayer

RUGBY METHODIST CHURCH CENTRE

General Church Meeting held on 30th April 2023 after morning service

The meeting was a blended one, with some people in the church and others attending via Zoom.

Attendance

Rev Andrew Farrington chaired the meeting.

Marie Thomas wrote the minutes and 36 others attended in the church. 3 people attended via Zoom. The attendance list is filed with the church report.

Apologies

Don Bellham, Joan Bellham, Susan Heinink

Minutes of last year's meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 3rd April 2022 were signed as a true record.

Rev Andrew Farrington's pastoral report - included in the Annual report

Matters arising

- We give thanks to Ruth Henderson for all she has done and continues to do. She has blessed us in her work as Youth Pastor and has been a joy to work with. Ruth will now be a Community Chaplain in Rugby, working from Rugby Methodist Church and Hillmorton Paddox Church.
- Thanks to Stephen Arthur (Treasurer) and Howard Binns (Senior Steward) who have produced a Statement following the recent Gift Day, detailing money raised at Rugby Methodist Church towards the Community Chaplain's role.
- People are invited to an open meeting to talk about the future of the café – Tuesday 9th May 2pm
- Cities and towns are endeavouring to identify places where migrants will know they can find a place of welcome. We are invited to become a Church of Sanctuary, and asked to consider whether we want to welcome people, and we agreed to register Rugby Methodist Church for this purpose.
- Rev Andrew thanked Eleanor Sirman and Laura Low for their work and commitment in preparing a church newsletter for many years. Colin Bemrose has now volunteered to become the new editor, and we agreed to accept this offer. We would like someone to offer to take on the role of his assistant. Would anyone who is interested in doing this please talk to Colin.

Appointments

Church Stewards

The following were thanked and re-elected:

Howard Binns – Senior Steward
Michael Margetts
Richard Rutte
Susan Smith

Stepping down as Church Stewards – Richard Harris, Joshua Quansah, Janet Timperley

Rev Andrew thanked Richard Harris for the help, direction and support he has given him, and his graciousness and skill over many years as Senior Steward, and all for their work and commitment to their role. Anyone who is interested in becoming a Church Steward, and helping to discern and lead the church should talk to Rev Andrew.

Congregational Representatives to Church Council

The following 9 representatives were willing to stand for a further year.

Sue Beckett 5 th	Susan Heinink 2 nd
Colin Bemrose 5 th	Ruth Henderson 5 th
Ruth Bemrose 4 th	Dorn Margetts 3 rd
Rachel Binns 5 th	Andrew Peck 5 th
Michael Fielding 5 th	

Stepping down - Sarah Currie, Pauline Lilley, Laura Low, Steve Low, Kelly McGowan

Rev Andrew thanked those who are now stepping down from Church Council for their commitment over many years.

Rev Andrew asked whether those forming the Church Council so far fully represent the diversity of the congregation, and appealed for others to consider joining them so we might make more appointments at the next Church Council meeting, where we will start the conversation about where we are as a church.

Representatives to Action for Children and The Mite Scheme - Linda Sore
Christian Aid – vacancy

Rev Andrew invited anyone who has further thoughts about what has been said, to share those with him over coffee after this meeting.

The Meeting concluded with prayer at 12.05pm

Date of next meeting

To be arranged for June or July 2024

REPORT FROM REVD NATHAN FALLA

Dear siblings in Christ,

It is a privilege to write my first report for the Annual Church Meeting as minister with pastoral oversight of Rugby Methodist Church Centre. I begin by paying tribute to the ministry of my predecessors Revd Jane Gaffney and Revd Andrew Farrington. I was very aware when I was coming to RMCC of the legacy that I was inheriting, and that the church was facing a particular season of change and transition.

It is fair to say that we are still in that season as we seek God's will and discern God's purposes for us as a church especially following the recent resignations of Ruth Henderson (as Lay Community Chaplain) and John Hemmings (as Hub Café Manager). We thank them both for all that they have contributed to RMCC in these roles whether their season of ministry has been long or short.

It is always important to keep in mind that the Methodist Church as a whole is aiming to be a growing, evangelistic, justice-seeking and inclusive church through its worship, learning and caring, service and evangelism, and so my reflections are framed under these headings.

Looking back

In the fortieth anniversary year of RMCC it is natural to look back, and I want to begin by looking back just to September 2023 and to share what I have seen in my first year:

Growing

When I look around RMCC, I see new faces, people are coming to RMCC and finding a warmth and a welcome and they are staying. Yes, I recognise that there are some people that we haven't seen for a long time, but the 4 adult baptisms that I have conducted over the past 8 months are a testament that we are growing. We are also growing in faith too through the nurture, support and faith development that is received in house groups, through the daily morning prayer group and through personal study as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Evangelistic

What does it mean to be evangelistic? Evangelism can be such a scary word, but I believe that it means to speak of God's love and to share the good news of Jesus Christ, and this is something that we all can do. We do this at RMCC especially when we are intentionally invitational: inviting people along that they may encounter Jesus through worship, and through our loving actions, activities and witness.

Justice-seeking

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is all about transformation and liberation. God is concerned about those on the margins and we are too. The welcome that we have continued to provide to refugees and asylum seekers, the radical hospitality that is offered and challenging the injustices that are all around us through engagement with the JPIT (Joint Public Issues Team) initiatives.

Inclusive

When I look around at RMCC I give thanks and celebrate the fact that we are an inclusive and diverse church. We don't all look alike nor think the same, and that is what makes us beautiful. We celebrate it in our worship and how we provide often bi-lingual slides. The introduction of BSL interpretation for the 3:11 service and all that we are doing to explore the breadth of inclusion is very encouraging. We are also getting bolder about actively stating our inclusion.

I am continually filled with excitement and optimism when I look at RMCC; I am grateful for the love and acceptance that I have received, and it is both a delight and a privilege to be minister here. We are not perfect, and we won't always get things right, but we are striving to be the growing, evangelistic, justice-seeking and inclusive church that I believe God is calling us to be!

Looking forwards

Our work is not yet done, I believe that we are on the right track, but we must not get complacent, or think that we have ever arrived. As a church we should be constantly seeking! Being open to the changing power and transforming love of God. open to serving the community demonstrating God's inclusive love in action to all.

It seems that the only certainty in life is change. Change is all around us, and RMCC is continuing to face changes that will impact our future mission and ministry. Amidst all the excitement and possibility

there is a vulnerability too, and the need for those who can, to actively contribute to the mission and ministry of the church.

A huge big thank you to everyone who makes this church what it is, whether your contribution is small or large, seen or unseen, you make this church what it is, and God uses us all to build up one another. As we serve one another and our community, so we serve God.

We particularly give thanks to God for the following, whose time in ministry has or is drawing to a close this year:

Brian Baker	Organist for over 50 years
Marie Thomas	Church Council Secretary
Ruth Henderson	Lay Community Chaplain
Richard Harris	Senior Church Steward
John Hemmings	Hub Café Manager
Sue Maguire	Hub Committee

Together, called by God and equipped by the Holy Spirit we can do so much more than we can hope for or imagine. Let us continue to trust God and be bold in sharing God's love, that we may see the transforming loving of God changing us and our community

Every blessing



The Revd Nathan S Falla
Minister of Rugby Methodist Church Centre

REPORTS FROM CHURCH ORGANISATIONS

2023 - 2024

CHURCH COUNCIL and LEADERSHIP TEAM

Church Council has met 3 times during the past year. We have continued to review the activities of the church under the four Our Calling headings – Worship, Learning and Caring, Mission and Service, and Evangelism. There is always something in each section where we can give thanks to God. Matters raised by the supporting groups, especially Property and Finance also receive due attention.

Significant topics of discussion and decision have been:

- Rev Jane Gaffney's retirement
- Appointment of Rev Nathan Falla
- Inclusive Church
- Rugby Community Hub
- New carpet and high-level lighting in the Church
- GDPR
- Policy updates
- Church membership
- 40th Anniversary

The **Leadership Team** have met monthly.

The team brings proposals to Church Council for discussion and takes forward decisions made by Church Council, so helping the life of the Church to move on between Council meetings. Discussion has focussed on how to respond to issues and needs within the church, so we can continue to serve God and the local community, to grow and extend the reach of ministry. We must be open to change and support one another.

Jane Richard

OUR CALLING - WORSHIP

WORSHIP GROUP

The Worship Group has met 3 times since the last report, mostly to discuss and plan the pattern of Worship on Sundays and at other times during the week, especially during the Advent, Christmas and Lent and Easter seasons.

2 special services have taken place – on 30th August we welcomed Rev Nathan to the Circuit and to RMCC with members from across the circuit taking part in various ways. Our 40th Anniversary and Covenant Service held on 28th January was led by Rev Helen Cameron and Rev Nathan, followed by a delicious celebratory lunch.

Other items discussed at meetings have included signing for the hard of hearing at the 3:11 service, future use of Zoom in services and the midweek Communion service.

I would like to say a special thank you to Brian Baker who has retired as Organist after many years. I shall miss our Sunday morning duets!

Jane Richard

CHURCH STEWARDS

The work of the Stewards is mostly about ensuring that Church services and some other events at Church run smoothly. It is mainly routine and straightforward, but nonetheless very necessary. There are presently three Stewards who are willing to serve for a further year. The Church would benefit from more people getting involved. As already mentioned, it is not a difficult job, but the more Stewards there are, the less onerous it becomes. There is also scope for flexibility; people can assist without necessarily becoming full Stewards. For example, there is a real need for people to help with

arranging the seating for Sunday services. While full stewards have a leadership role, those willing to assist in various functions wouldn't have to take on that too.

I wish to thank two people in particular for the assistance they have given the stewards over the past year: Sue Smith for operating the PA at Sunday services, and Allen Chan for stewarding at some of the other events at Church.

Please consider either becoming a Steward or assisting. Then, if you feel that you can help in any way, or would like to know more, please talk to one of the Stewards.

The same applies to the AV Team: more people are needed to help with this work, (which is done using SongPro software on the Church laptop) so if you think you could do it, or would like to learn, please talk to Peter Richard or Steve Sirman.

Howard Binns – Senior Church Steward

PRAYER

The importance and value of prayer both personal and corporate continues to be expressed through many different opportunities for involvement. These embrace ways of prayer which are comfortable for each individual. Many, or even most, of us find one way of praying with which we are comfortable. This report provides an overview of specific prayer activities within the church during the past year.

Each member of the church has received a copy of the church's annual prayer diary to aid personal prayer for each other and for the life of the church.

Some people use the Methodist Prayer Handbook and District Prayer Diary for their private daily devotions – please ask if you don't have a copy. This year the District Prayer Diary has again been made available on line.

The prayer room has been decorated and furnished appropriately. It is available for private prayer when the church is open. The room is used for smaller communion services such as the monthly midweek communion and is now also being used as the vestry since that space became the circuit office.

There is a box available in church for anyone to make requests for prayer although this facility seems to be little used. Any requests are passed to an appropriate prayer group for inclusion in their prayers.

Other aspects of the church's prayer life are covered in the following specific reports.

Prayer chain

During the year the email prayer chain has been reviewed. Members were asked to confirm their wish to continue receiving prayer messages. The prayer chain continues to be used extensively enabling people to keep up to date with ongoing situations as well as new, and often urgent, requests for prayer. Messages are sent by email although there are a few people unable to receive email who receive messages by phone.

If you are not currently involved in this prayer ministry, do ask one or other of the people named below who will be delighted to add your name to the list. There is no obligation other than to include the relevant matter in your private prayers as you are able. This is a vital part of the church's response to needs of many sorts.

For the email list the contacts are Colin Bemrose (colin@crbemrose.co.uk or 01788 810978) or Sue Beckett (nic7laura@virginmedia.com or 01788 336648).

Requests for prayer (with the permission of the person involved) can be made to either of those named or to the minister, Rev Nathan Falla.

Morning Prayer

Prior to lockdown there was a time of prayer each Tuesday morning from 0900 - 0930 in church, following the order of morning prayer from the Northumberland Celtic Community.

From the start of lockdown in 2020 this became a daily time of prayer on Zoom each weekday (Monday to Friday) from 8.30 to 9.00 am. This continues and uses the basic Celtic liturgy along with a background commentary published online each day by the Methodist Church. There are matters for us to ponder and these lead into prayers using not only the Prayer Handbook but also the District prayer diary and the RMCC prayer diary where each member is remembered on one day in the month. We continue to do all this in little over 30 minutes. Each session is normally led by one of the members on an informal rota basis.

There is a core attendance of 7 or 8 people but some who come less frequently. Most find it a fitting start to the day's activities. The format also enables individuals to join by telephone.

If you would like to participate in this cycle of prayer, please ask Rev Nathan or the writer for the Zoom code.

Colin Bemrose

FLOWER ARRANGING

My appreciation to the ladies who have ably provided assistance during the past twelve months with the fortnightly flower arranging roster. Some ladies assist on a regular basis whilst others participate occasionally and thereby we keep the church supplied with flowers. The involvement of a range of people has enabled us to have formal pedestal displays, attractive vase arrangements and a variety of artificial flower arrangements over the past twelve months.

Some arrangers kindly pay for their own flowers for which I thank you, but money is available should arrangers require payment. Please do ask. We also remain happy to do a pedestal arrangement for a specific date or event, and to use flowers or colours if we are given about three weeks' notice.

Though we do have a group of ladies who help with the arrangements should any ladies or gentlemen (some of the top arrangers at NAFAS are gentlemen) wish to participate please add your name to the roster found on the table at the back of the church. The task involves purchasing your flowers (alstromeria, chrysanthemums and carnations are particularly long lasting), then doing the arrangement and afterwards keeping the water topped up or oasis damp for the two-weeks between arrangements. If you require additional information, please speak to me.

My appreciation once more.

Josephine Royle

OUR CALLING - LEARNING AND CARING

PASTORAL REPORT

Our membership currently stands at 115. Since the last annual report Ali and Farzad have been welcomed into membership. Hamzeh and Mehrdad have been baptised. Sadly, Yvonne Gooding passed away last September. Steve and Laura Low have transferred their membership to Long Lawford.

In March we celebrated the baptism of Juliette and Jocelyn Bemrose. On Easter Day we had the joy of sharing the full immersion baptism of Mia and Naomi together with them being welcomed into membership. On the same day Isaac Bambel joined us as he transferred his membership from Ghana. All church members have a Pastoral Visitor to support them with prayer and practical care, if needed. If you know of anyone who is unwell or needs support but you do not know who their Pastoral Visitor is, please contact me. Equally, if anyone wishes to know more about becoming a member of the church, please speak to Rev Nathan Falla.

Part of my role is to keep an accurate record of members' contact details, so if anyone moves house, changes their phone number or email, please do let me know.

Cards are sent out to church members if they in hospital, suffer a bereavement or reach a significant birthday milestone. Please get in touch with Chris Sidley if you know of someone who might appreciate a card.

Linda Sore
Pastoral Secretary

SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is treated with great importance in the Methodist Church. RMCC has a Safeguarding Policy, which is reviewed and updated annually by Church Council, in line with the Methodist Church's guidelines.

Copies of the RMCC Policy Statement are displayed in several places around the building giving details of who to contact if anyone has a concern over a potential safeguarding issue. Our full policy is

displayed on the lounge noticeboard. We also advise that children should be supervised at all times while on the premises, including in the toilets.

Everyone who is paid to work with or volunteers to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults is asked to complete a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check and to attend a safeguarding awareness course. (Creating Safer Spaces). All Local Preachers and Worship Leaders, plus paid workers and Church Safeguarding representatives are required to complete the Advanced Safeguarding course. Each of these courses should be renewed every 4 years.

Outside groups who use the premises are also asked to sign that they agree to abide by our policy, if they do not already have one of their own.

Safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is everyone's concern. If you have a concern, please speak to one of us or to Rev.Nathan Falla.

Jane Richard and Linda Sore
Church Safeguarding Representatives

FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

WORDSWORTH FELLOWSHIP

Mention was made last year that Wordsworth Fellowship had new members. After some three years of meeting on Zoom for 40 minutes each week it was felt that some face-to-face meetings would be helpful. This enabled those who had very genuine reasons for not using Zoom meetings to join. In the autumn of 2023 zoom meetings were abandoned in favour of weekly meetings in different homes, taking it in turns to lead the evenings. The attendance can now be up to about 13. We are greatly blessed by having a wide range of experience and views which can lead to helpful debate.

At the start of the year the discussions were on a variety of ad hoc topics which were thought to be relevant to Christian living in the 21st century. During the autumn we began a series of 26 studies taking the whole of John's gospel chapter by chapter. These studies have been led by different members. They offer a series of short questions relating to the chapter and have led to some new insights. The material is now ending and new material is being sought.

During Lent most members of the group joined with the helpful Lent studies organised by Rev Nathan on the film "Les Misérables". These led to some very thought-provoking discussion on challenging aspects of Christian living.

The long-standing Christmas meal did not happen in 2023 for a variety of reasons but a simple social gathering with drinks and nibbles was hosted by one member. As always, there is a welcome for any who wish to join.

Colin Bemrose (On behalf of the group)

ACCESS FELLOWSHIP

Access is a small bi-weekly fellowship group.

We meet on the 2nd, 4th, 5th Wednesday each month at 8pm.

We rotate around each others homes, and take turns to lead the meeting, but understand some prefer not to host or lead.

Sometimes we follow a study guide. We recently used the circuit Good Soil.

The last few weeks we have looked at Ascension and Pentecost.

We are about to consider 'what are our doctrines?'

We will shortly be having our short summer evening walk, followed by a longer 'catch-up' over a drink.

Please contact Dorn if you would like to join us.

We would love more of you to join us.

We understand work & family commitments mean not everyone can make it always.

Please let me know if you would like to know more.

Dorn Margetts (dornmargetts@aol.com)

PUBLICITY

RMCC NEWS

The revised format for RMCC News has now reached 12 monthly issues. This fourth series is more in the form of a magazine rather than a straightforward news sheet. The editors aim to include not only items of specific relevance to RMCC but also items of wider interest from the Circuit, the District and the Methodist Connexion, and ecumenical matters locally and nationally. The aim is to produce RMCC News for the first Sunday in the month.

Each issue starts with a pastoral letter from the minister, Rev Nathan Falla, and also includes details of forthcoming services for the ensuing month along with those particularly involved with that worship. In this respect, RMCC News seeks to occupy the space formerly filled by weekly notice sheets.

RMCC News cannot continue without regular information from all parts of the church and relies on this basic flow of information including diary dates and forthcoming activities. Items of family news (with the subject's consent) are always welcome. As well as items specifically sent for inclusion in News each month, a variety of sources are used. These include the weekly Methodist News service. The church also has a subscription to "Parish Pump" which offers a vast array of illustrations, articles, anecdotes, cartoons and children's items.

Each month News is circulated electronically to those people on the church's email list. It is printed as A5 booklets which are available to all around the church. Please do not be shy to share it widely with those who come to the church for any reason. A number of larger print copies are also available.

There is an additional email circulation list of around 15 people who used to be at the church or who have an interest in the church.

The editors would always appreciate more feedback about content and presentation. What is helpful? What would you like to see more of? Or less? Do let us know.

Colin Bemrose
Suie Heinink (Editors)

POSTERS

We have continued to display a variety of posters on the main notice board fronting Russelsheim Way recognising the festivals of Christmas, Easter and Pentecost and generally offering a welcome to our church for all. A smaller selection of posters has been used at the notice board at the entrance to the car park and it is likely this will be used more by the Hub in future as it expands its activities.

John Over

OUR CALLING – MISSION AND SERVICE

JUNIOR CHURCH, YOUTH AND FAMILY

Junior Church Report

We have anything between 2 and 8 young people in attendance at Junior Church weekly, with a range from 4 to 15 years old.

We have a small team of volunteers and need to find a way to recruit more, as well as look at what Junior Church format works well at this stage in the Church's life.

There is a more traditional version of Junior Church held in the foyer or Prayer Room on the 1st, 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month.

Although there is no specific allocated children's group leaders during the 3:11 service, volunteers are encouraged to attend and help to make the service a safe and welcoming space, just as they do with the Junior Church group on the other Sundays.

There is an ongoing discussion with visiting preachers to remind them that we like to encourage the participation of the children in the opening of our worship, which has been working successfully.

Youth, Children and Families.

Since November 2021 I have resumed my work at Avon Valley School, supporting 4 young people weekly for 6 weeks each. This is for a variety of reasons such as complicated home lives, bereavement, anxiety, depression, young caring responsibilities etc.

And since September 2022 I have been working in Harris Church of England Academy with young people in small groups and individually, for similar reasons to those at Avon Valley.

I continue to support several young people in a 1 to 1 capacity on a variety of issues connected to mental health and wellbeing, and school issues. I currently work with around 5, with many leaving to head to university and some weekly, some monthly and some more erratically. I also provide half-termly sessions at Harris School's Christian Union. It is a blessing to be a voice and representative of the Methodist Church.

We have welcomed school children from several Primary schools attending Prayer Spaces Easter Experience, as well as offering Transition Prayer Spaces for Year 6 children in June/July, and Christmas Prayer experiences in the Winter,

Our monthly 3:11 service continues to be well attended and a vibrant time of worship.

Last October we joined with others in the East Mercia Circuit to take 20 young people to 3Generate at Birmingham NEC. It was a wonderful time of gathering with others from all over the circuit.

On Friday evenings, parallel to the English lessons, we run The Mix, a Friday evening Kids and Family club with crafts, games, snacks and chat! It is a wonderful opportunity to get alongside families, to see and understand their needs if any, and enjoy a family feel to our time together.

Over the past year we have offered one off events such as Light Parties and Pancake parties! We have offered many one off events during school holidays.

We had the joy to see the Baptism of Mia and Naomi on Easter Sunday which was such an amazing occasion.

It really is a joy to have seen so many familiar and new faces in church, attending services and groups and making links over the winter, and I pray that each person finds their home at RMCC in whatever way suits them.

This will be my last report as Community chaplain as I move on to a new job at Coventry Cathedral. It has been a total joy to have worked at RMCC for the past 6.5 Years. The role of Youth Pastor and the Community Chaplain has morphed and changed over time, but throughout I have known the support and love from all at RMCC. I am very proud of the relationships built, the conversations had, the Good News of Jesus shared, the risks taken and the worshipping community fostered in my time here. I will be maintaining my membership as a congregation member at RMCC, and continuing, at least for now, my Local Preaching training in the East Mercia Circuit. This means that I will still have the pleasure and delight in leading most 3:11 services for the time being, building a team to ensure its longevity.

When I started working here I was a young single parent, and you accepted Faye and I with open arms, and now I finish my paid ministry role as a married woman, and the way you have all welcomed my wife Claire, and made us feel welcome as a family has been the most wonderful and joyous thing. I also found my faith home within the Methodist Church whilst here at RMCC, a real testament to the churches commitment to growing the Methodist church, and sharing Methodist values.

I pray that in the recruitment process that will follow my departure, RMCC will find a way to continue to be All Welcoming, Justice Seeking, Brave, exciting, caring home for all people, and for the next generation of our church family!

I am excited for my new role, and will be starting it on Monday 3rd June knowing that although a sad time, I have been loved and valued here at RMCC and I will return to worship here, knowing it will be like going home.

Ruth Henderson

TINY TOTS

Tiny Tots meet every Thursday 9:30-11:00 during term time.

We are a fun, busy, noisy group.

We have a membership of newborn babies (yes recently we had 2 babies start at about 2 weeks old!), and toddlers up to the age of about 3, who come with their carers.

Carers are parents, grandparents, child minders.

There is lots of happy chatting.

There is lots of play.

It is wonderful watching how our babies become toddlers and before we know it are our big ones (at all of 2.5 years).

We really do need more help.

Could you help set up (9am for 20mins)

Join in the fun: Give a warm welcome and chat with the carers & children (9:30 -11:00)

Help tidy up (10:30-11:00)

We would be grateful if you could help with one or all of the above.

Or if you just want to pop in and say hello one week we would love to see you.

Dorn Margetts (Tiny Tots Co-ordinator)

RUGBY COMMUNITY HUB

As you no doubt all know, Miriam Sitch made the decision to leave Rugby in July to move to Bristol near her family. She worked incredibly hard during her time as a volunteer at RMCC, masterminding the very successful café which provided refreshments and lunches 4 days a week and liaising with many other voluntary groups including those working with refugees. We were delighted that so many of them found RMCC a friendly, safe space where all felt welcome and some became regular volunteers in the café. Most have now moved on and we miss them.

Since September a small team of volunteers from the church and the community have kept things ticking over, providing drinks and cakes 10-12 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. We have not been able to offer lunch or a baking group to make the delicious cakes customers were used to – these have to be baked on the premises to comply with Food Hygiene regulations and we have had to rely on shop bought cakes and biscuits. Associated groups continue to meet in the café on various days including the Craft Group, the Wednesday Coffee Group (formerly Connect Well) and the Extra Mile sewing ladies.

Church Council and the Hub Committee put together a job description for a Hub Manager to oversee the day to day running of the café and associated activities. A grant from the Circuit was sought and after some delay was approved and the post was advertised in December 2023. Two applicants were interviewed and John Hemmings was appointed and started work in February for 15 hours per week. One of his main objectives was to seek new volunteers and some are now participating in café activities.

Unfortunately John resigned from the role after a few weeks for personal reasons and we are now continuing much as before. The Hub Committee and Church Leadership team are in the process of deciding how to move forward.

Jane Richard
(on behalf of the Hub Committee)

ENGLISH CLASS FOR SPEAKERS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES (ESOL)

We have been awarded a small grant for the year by Warwickshire County Council's Migrant Communities Grant Fund, which is a grant aimed at community and voluntary sector organisations which support asylum seeker, refugee, and migrant communities. The Fund is to support small-scale projects across Warwickshire that support the following outcomes:

People fleeing conflict and persecution can rebuild their lives in Warwickshire, fulfil their aspirations and contribute to the social, economic and cultural life of the communities they live in.

We help to sustain the capacity of volunteer English language provision in Rugby for any newly arrived communities, including refugees, asylum seekers and migrants.

- Improve English language skills.
- Enable learners to access some language provision throughout the academic year before they are able to enrol on the mainstream ESOL provision, which is usually in September or January
- Provide classes that can reach learners who have barriers to accessing mainstream classes such as transport/ childcare issues/ lack of former formal learning.

Now that asylum-seekers are no longer living in the Rugby Hotel, the English Class is attended mainly by people from Hong Kong as well as two or three other nationalities. (Between 12-16 students each Friday afternoon). Chelsie, the volunteer tutor, plans a variety of activities to develop spoken language skills and introduce many of the hundreds of idioms we use in everyday conversation. She is supported by a small number of volunteers who work with individuals or small groups under her direction, but we can always use more.

If you are interested in helping in this way, please speak to Howard Binns or Marie Thomas.

Howard Binns and Marie Thomas

CHARITIES WE SUPPORT

ACTION FOR CHILDREN

The Methodist Church has been linked with the charity Action for Children over many decades. Their mission is to protect and support children, young people and families with practical and emotional care, making sure their voices are heard.

We regularly support the charity via our Christmas Day service collection, which amounted to £359.20 at the 2023 service.

There are several ways to support the charity, such as collection boxes, regular giving etc for anyone wishes to.

If you would like to know more about Action for Children, details are on their website **actionforchildren.org.uk** or have a word with me.

Linda Sore (Action for Children representative)

CHRISTIAN AID

After due consideration as to how we could raise money this year for Christian Aid I approached Reverend Nathan and received permission to hold a lunch. The Royle household became a hive of activity as I decided to do as much preparation as possible prior to the event. Cottage pies and vegetables were prepared and members of the church kindly donated desserts. A number of people commented on the wonderful range of puddings. A timetable for the lunch was prepared and went nearly according to plan. Once more wonderful members of the church helped with the raffle and serving of the meal. We served 48 meals in total in quick succession with some coming back for seconds. Having fed the body we had a quiz to exercise the mind.

There were many smiles and much laughter during the lunch and I hope I'm correct in saying a good time was had by all. My sincere appreciation to all who helped, we couldn't have done it without you.

Jose Royle



EXTRA MILE

May 2024

As we approach June in Sierra Leone everyone looks to the skies to search for rain clouds which could herald the onset of the wet season. There was a short shower last week but nothing since and so we continue to wait. The dust on the sun-baked streets is so fine and by now ankle deep. By the time pupils arrive in school their white socks are brown to the knees. Most of the girls now bring a spare pair or even wear none until they arrive and put them on. The later arrival of the rains portends the crisis that will eventually worry the whole continent. Wheat yields are down and the prices of bread and now rice have 'shot through the roof'. Breakfasts at school have become even more important as parents struggle as does Extra Mile, to provide.

After a long promise we have just managed to put windows into our final few classrooms and guards on the external ones. The rains which swept through these rooms last year will no longer destroy our papers and books. We still need to tile the floors to keep down the dust but progress continues, thank you everyone. We are now putting shelves and hooks and a mirror in our new, girl's toilets. In March (2024) we sent out 23 re-usable sanitary pads packs for our older girls. Our ten-strong team of joyful sowers work every second and fourth Thursdays at RMCC's Hub producing these much-needed packs to combat the severe period poverty in the local Goderich community. Thank you ladies.

We've had lots of staff changes this year as teachers leave to find schools which pay better wages and although we've given small rises and the Government promises to pay some of them eventually, nothing happens very quickly here and so we have to continue to wait. However, we do have a core of good, loyal teachers who have been with us for a few years now, wanting to give back to our pupils the same chance they were given in getting an education.

Almost twenty-five pupils have now 'graduated' from Extra Mile's School with six staying on to become 'junior' staff, a number now attending college/university whilst others are 'junior' staff at other schools, and the rest trying to find other work, though with mixed success. However, as they disperse we know they will lighten the darkness they may find wherever they may go and improve both their own as well as the lives of those around them, as they have been taught throughout their time at Extra Mile School, who's motto is, to be, "a light for Sierra Leone". (see above)

To all those RMCC members and friends, who continue to help and support Extra Mile in the amazing way in which you do, **a very big thank you.**

Mike Fielding

THE MITE SCHEME

The Mite Scheme, which was started in 1986 by the late Mr Roy Barnett MBE, raises funds to purchase Oral Rehydration Sachets through UNICEF to keep children around the world healthy and safe. For a child suffering from cholera or malnutrition, five sachets could mean the difference between life and death.

RMCC has been supporting the Mite Scheme for many years. There is a basket to the left of the doors as you enter the church for any donations of small change. I collect these donations over the year and send them on to the local Mite Scheme representative. Last August I sent £21.22. I am pleased to say this year the amount collected so far is already quite an increase on the last figure.

Please look out for the basket and donate any small change you can spare.

Linda Sore

PROPERTY GROUP

The Property Group is responsible for dealing with the fabric of the building, its systems and facilities.

This has been a busy time for Property matters, with several 5-yearly inspections due, plus annual checks and inspections, the church carpet replacement job, and the usual maintenance things that continuously crop up.

The **Methodist Insurance Survey** was done in September 2023 by Mr Nick Morris to check the up-to-date value and condition of the property for insurance purposes.

The **Quinquennial Inspection** (QI) was done in August 2023, which is a survey by a chartered surveyor appointed by the Circuit, (Mr Adrian Male), resulting in a detailed report on the condition of the building.

Key recommendations included a full electrical circuit test and report, (due anyway and done by our regular electrician in November), checking and clearing the gutters, (done by a gutter cleaning company in January who re-aligned and cleaned the gutter systems using a vacuum system and drone), and renewing the mastic seals around doors and windows on the south-west side of the building (done in the Autumn.)

The **Annual Property Schedule** was completed and submitted to Connexion before Christmas. This covers the general state of the building, along with records of documents, safeguarding, finance and administration.

The **Boiler System** was drained down and cleaned out in September following the failure of the stand-by pump. A faulty zone valve was also replaced, enabling the classroom suite to be independently controlled.

Unfortunately our regular gas/boiler engineer (Steve Gregory) has retired from such jobs, but a recommended gas engineer did a good job, and will hopefully be able to service the boiler system on a regular basis. The fan heaters in church and hall were cleaned and serviced as part of the heating system checks. A smart meter has been fitted in the 3-phase supply in the boiler room, but the tariff is still being sorted out with Octopus Energy.

The **Fire Alarm system** was tested and the fire extinguishers serviced (with a new one installed by the car-park door) in October/November 2023, and the automatic front door was serviced in the Autumn.

Church Carpet:

The decision was taken to replace the worn yellow church carpet with carpet tiles, and at the same time replace the fluorescent tubes in the ceiling, which were beginning to fail, with efficient LED tubes. The two jobs (including scaffolding platform) were costed at around £12,000, and a circuit grant was obtained for half of this amount. A scheme was launched to fund most of the remainder by "sponsoring a square" for the carpet tiles, with a target of £4,000, and the scheme raised about ¾ of this amount, with generous donations from various church users. The scaffolding and lights were done within a week in August, and the tiles and dais carpet were completed by Tom Schoales the following week, and look very good.

Minor Maintenance:

Jobs include improving the video signal in church, both at the AV console where it had started flickering, and at the monitors; replacing a broken toilet seat in the gents; replacing a couple of boiler thermo-couples; mending a leak and replacing both sets of mixer taps in the kitchen sinks; replacing the junction-box in the electric oven in the kitchen as it failed on the Church Anniversary dinner day; replacing one of the door-bells; fixing the battery-packs for the radio mics; fixing the prayer-room tables, and getting the church laptop hinge mended.

A new notice-board sign with up-to-date details was ordered and fitted in the front external notice-board, and more tiling was laid around the flower-bed borders to reduce maintenance and keep the church surroundings looking tidy.

On the admin side, church policies for Fire, Lone Working, Health & Safety and Safeguarding have been collated together in a policy file in the office, which has also had a tidy-up, with new inks for the Laserjet printer, and some shelving installed for the circuit office (formerly the vestry).

Peter Richard

CHURCH BOOKINGS

Over the last year many of our long-standing bookings have continued although we have lost a couple of regular users due in one case to falling numbers and the other to the offer of a free venue. However the Exercise Class has increased from 2 sessions to 4 on a Tuesday morning. Recently a large group of children have been using the hall on some Saturday mornings to practise the 11+ under exam conditions. We also have a variety of one-off bookings including Boaters Christian Fellowship, Waterways Chaplains, Pawprints Dog Charity, a concert performance of Gilbert and Sullivan's 'Iolanthe' and a concert given by Scirocco Wind Band.

Jane Richard

GARDENING

I do hope that you will agree that thanks to Roger, Robert, Anthony my gardener, Linda and myself that the garden and church front have looked well kept and attractive over the past twelve months. The pots have been kept in keeping with the seasons and the other gardens weeded regularly, a range of shrubs and plants added and will hopefully provide plenty of colour throughout the coming seasons. The large tree was lopped last Summer which helps in keeping the car park tidy. Thanks to Peter and Allen who slabbed the three beds by the church door. We now move into the Summer and any offers of assistance in keeping the garden tidy would be most gratefully received.

Jose Royle

FINANCE GROUP REPORT TO RMCC AGM – June 2024

The **Annual Accounts** for the year ended August 2023 accompany this report.

The Accounts have been duly verified by Douglas Wells.

Notes on Annual Accounts - 2022/2023

Opening and Closing Balances

The amounts carried forward from 2022/23 are as shown in the annual account. The restricted balance of £ 8,838 consists of the balances held for the Community Chaplain, breakthrough and benevolent fund. The unrestricted balance is that of TMCP, CFB, and General fund accounts.

Income

The offertory figure of £45,702 was lower than 2021/22. Tax recovered was also slightly lower. Lettings were £5,461 higher than previous year due to significant rent received from Rugby Community Hub. The RMCC agreed funding contribution for the Community Chaplain, with expected members pledges and gift aid of £2,500 a year and remaining £2,500 from RMCC reserves. The Rugby Benevolent Group Fund paid £6,000 to support the work of Community Chaplain. Circuit Grant of £6,100 was received for refurbishment of carpet & lights whilst members contributed £822 - with further funds being received "next year" . An amount of £3,213 was received as interest from Central Finance Board account and tax recovered from gift aid amounted to £ 9,471 for the year.

Expenditure

As in the previous years, the major item of expenditure was the Circuit Assessment of £59,365. Expenditure on cleaning, repairs, and maintenance was slightly higher by £373 compared to 2021/22. In addition, the annual gas and electricity bill was also slightly higher by around £621 compared to the previous year. Community Chaplain expenditure was £20,368 as compared to the previous year £29,189 due to employment transferred to Circuit payroll. Expenditure on carpet & lights refurbishment was £ 7809 with funding of £6100 from the Circuit and the remaining from RMCC. Donations of £400 were made to The Bradby club and Hoskyn Community.

Budget for Year Ended August 2024

The budget for 2023/24 was presented at the Church Council in July 2023 for consideration. The Finance Group will continue to "rework" the budget post a full 6 months of this year (i.e. after May 2024) to enable a more accurate forecast.

Position at End of August 2023

The balances in all accounts as of August 2023 were approximately £109,611 – down from £120,489 at the end of August 2022. The restricted funds of £981 down from the previous year of £8,838. Any variation in the Circuit Assessment figure depends on the Circuit budget. The overall deficit for the year was (£10,878) as compared with the previous year overall gain of £2,131. The Finance and Property Group will meet in May 2024 to consider a revised forecast for 2023/24.

Stephen Arthur - Treasurer

THE METHODIST CHURCH
STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS

Rugby Methodist Church Centre	Church
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FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 August 2023

Circuit	Circuit no.	23/14
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Registered Charity - Charity Registration number

1186270

If not a registered charity **Her 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. Andrew Farrington

Church Stewards:

Richard Harris
Howard Binns
Michael Margetts
Richard Rutte

Treasurer:

Stephen Arthur

DA Wells
20-10-23

SECTION A		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
		£	£	£	£
a1	RECEIPTS	Note			
a2	Offerings and Tax recovered	54,533	640	55,173	60,728
a3	Bank and CFB interest and Investment income	3,213		3,213	424
a4	Lettings	23,130		23,130	17,669
a5	Other receipts	76	18,793	18,869	69,326
a6	TOTAL RECEIPTS	80,952	19,433	100,385 (a7)	148,147

SECTION B		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
		£	£	£	£
b1	PAYMENTS				
b2	Circuit Assessment or Share	59,365		59,365	50,148
b3	Donations	400		400	400
b4	Repairs and Maintenance	11,097		11,097	10,724
b5	Utilities (Insurances, water charges, heating & lighting)	9,505		9,505	8,884
b6					
b7	Other payments	1,633	28,177	29,810	73,372
b8	TOTAL PAYMENTS	82,000	28,177	110,177 (b9)	143,528

SECTION C		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
		£	£	£	£
c1	NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR (a6-b8)	(1,048)	(8,743)	(9,792)	4,619
c2	Total funds brought forward from last year	111,651	8,838	120,489 (c6)	118,359
c3	Sub total (c1+c2)	110,603	95	110,697	122,978
c4	Transfers and adjustments Grant transfers & Capital loss,	(1,086)		(1,086) (c7)	(2,489)
c5	TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR (c3+c4)	109,517	95	109,611 (c8)	120,489 (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	716	
d2	Offerings/Gifts - received for external organisations	1,338	3,040
d3	Offerings/Gifts - passed to external organisations	2,054	2,324
d4	BALANCE STILL TO BE PAID (d1+d2-d3)		716

Shel
18-10-2

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 2023 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 Community Hub	3,157	1,780	1,377			1,377
e2 Tiny Tots	580	242	338		443	781
e3 Mite Fund	21	21				
e4						
e5						
e6						
e7						
e8 Sub total of Internal Organisations funds	3,758	2,043	1,715		443 (e11)	2,158 (e12)
e9 Church accounts (totals brought forward from page 2 - totals column)	100,385 (a7)	110,177 (b9)	(9,792)	(2,489) (c7)	120,489 (c6)	108,208 (c8)
e10 TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH	104,143	112,220	(8,077)	(2,489)	120,932 (x)	110,366 (y)
	TOTAL RECEIPTS	TOTAL PAYMENTS				

Continue on a separate sheet if necessary and bring the totals forward

SECTION F

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

CHURCH - CASH FUNDS HELD at 31 August : 23

	OPENING BALANCES	CLOSING BALANCES
f1 Cash in hand		
f2 Bank Current Account	21,009	11,661
f3 Bank Deposit Account		
f4 Central Finance Board	81,165	97,950
f5 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes	18,315	
f6 Other funds (Uncashed cheque)	(715)	
f7 SUB TOTAL - Church accounts	119,774 (c6)	109,611 (c8)
f8 Total funds held by Internal Organisations (the closing balance total from above) (e12)	443 (e11)	2,158 (e12)
f9 TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH	120,217 (x)	111,769 (y)

SECTION G

OTHER ASSETS and LIABILITIES

	At 1 September 2022	At 31 August 2023
g1 Investments (include Endowments)		
g2 Land & Buildings (see notes re Insurance value)		
g3 Other Assets		
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

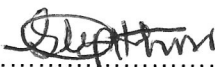
g1 Include any other investments (not the cash element of TMCP trusts accounts this is included in line f5)

Dhw
18.10.23

Name of Church .. **Rugby Methodist Church Centre**

Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these Receipt and Payment based accounts for the year to 31 August 2023 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 18/10/2023

Name and address of treasurer Stephen Arthur

53 Windsor Street Rugby CV21 3NY

Presentation to the Church trustees

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2023 were/will be* presented to the meeting of the Church trustees held on 25/10/23

Signature of the Chair of the meeting  25/10/2023

Name of the Chair of the meeting Rev. Nathan Falla Date

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

Rugby Methodist Church Centre Church

Charity Number . 1186270

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Rugby Methodist Church Centre. Church for the year ended 31 August 2023 set out on pages P1 to P3. 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 Rugby Methodist Church Centre No 183

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.

[the [the

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 *D.R. Wells*

Name of independent examiner *D.R. Wells*

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner

Name of firm (where appropriate)

Address *96 Tannysan Avenue*

..... *Rugby* Post Code *CV22 6JF*

Date *18-10-23*

* delete or circle as appropriate

Sep-23

D.R.
18-10-23