



# **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

## **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2020**

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## **Trustee Report**

for the period 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020

### **The Trust & Trustees**

Hope Church Sittingbourne is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), registered with the UK Charity Commission (#1186867).

Hope Church Sittingbourne was officially registered as a CIO on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019, and as such this is our first submitted annual report.

Hope Church Sittingbourne is a newly established church-plant connected to Relational Mission within the Newfrontiers family of churches.

The Trustees of the Hope Church Sittingbourne CIO during this reporting period were:

- Christine Monica Willmott – Chair of Trustees
- Jonathan Hugh Butson – Trustee & Treasurer
- Jite Ufuoma Idowu – Trustee & Safeguarding Lead
- Nathaniel Turner – Trustee

No Trustees have resigned and no new Trustees were appointed during this reporting period.

### **Trust Objectives**

The object of the CIO is for the public benefit, the advancement of the Christian faith in Sittingbourne, Kent and in such other areas as the charity Trustees may from time to time decide.

Hope Church Sittingbourne exists to grow & multiply the HOPE of Jesus in the hearts of everyone, everywhere, everyday.

We aspire to reproduce disciples who; Honour Jesus, Obey His Word, Pray beyond themselves, Everyone a witness. We gather in homes & public places as well as weekly on Sundays to hear & obey the Word of God. We engage with local social justice & poverty issues.

### **Premises**

Hope Church Sittingbourne do not currently lease or own any premises.

Our church office and registered CIO address is currently the home of Gordon Watson, the church-plant leader. This is the office base for administrative purposes.

Since Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> October 2018, Hope Church Sittingbourne have gathered every Sunday morning at our local Costa Coffee located in The Forum Shopping Centre. This has proven to be a successful public gathering point for our growing church community.

## **COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic, which started in March 2020, had a hugely detrimental impact, not only on the organised activities and effort of Hope Church Sittingbourne, but indeed across our local community of Sittingbourne and the wider world.

Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2020 was our last in person gathering at Costa Coffee as the UK entered it's first lockdown. This caused the church to find new ways of meeting digitally, making use of online services such as Facebook Live and Zoom to replace physical 'in-person' gatherings.

Our midweek Hope Group multiplied from one group to two in February 2020, but when the COVID-19 restrictions came into place we took the collective decision to merge them back together as one and for them to be hosted online via Zoom. This remained the case throughout 2020.

During the short period of freedom between the first and second lockdowns, the church were again able to gather on Sunday mornings on two occasions; Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> September and Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020. These two gatherings were held under COVID-19 restrictions with limitations on singing, seating and personal proximity.

Our Family Fund was used to support those in crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic. Financial support was extended to individuals, couples and families where income was affected through sickness, unemployment, self-isolation or other direct effects of the pandemic. This additional support was able to provide those in need with money for food, essential bills, car repairs and rent contributions.

Many of the services and projects we had hoped to explore and launch throughout 2020 were frustrated due to this time of uncertainty. Our hope is that as lockdown eases in 2021 we will be able to revisit the needs of our local area through fresh eyes and respond with appropriate provision where possible.

We are thankful that the majority of our church community avoided the adverse effects of COVID-19. The majority remained in good health throughout the year and those in employment avoided job cuts.

Throughout this Trustees Report, many of the things reported on will be in light of this overarching COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Membership**

As the church-plant community continues to establish and evolve we have experienced a steady increase in the number of individuals and families that connect with Hope Church Sittingbourne.

We do not have a formal membership at present, but at the end of the year we had 30+ people, of all ages, ethnicities and backgrounds, regularly connecting with us through our midweek and Sunday online gatherings.

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CHARITY NUMBER #1186867

## **Finances**

The finances for Hope Church Sittingbourne continue to be in good health. Many of the church community give faithfully, regularly and joyfully to the church. The majority of these donations are able to be gift-aided.

Although we do not pay a rental fee for use of Costa Coffee every Sunday morning, we do pay for the cost of the drinks that the church and any visitor's order. This equates to approx. £200-£300 a month, which we feel is a good investment due to the environment and social nature of the space Costa Coffee provide.

We continue to support the Spocchia family with a monthly gift of £100. They are planting the nearby Sheppey Gospel Plant with Relational Mission. There proves to be an increasing degree of overlap in our local missions together with some families and individuals crossing over from Sittingbourne to Sheppey.

We were able to welcome Jordan Olney (Pioneer 61) to be with us physically in August and September. We continue to see our friendship and partnership with Jordan as a positive thing for the advance of the Gospel, and supporting him as part of our wider global mission. In August 2020 were able to give Jordan a financial gift to aid his next steps as he returns to Melbourne, Australia, and then hopefully Mozambique.

Lily Bays had a planned mission training trip with YWAM in Norway scheduled for September 2020, which was then pushed back to December (due to COVID-19 travel restrictions), and then sadly postponed for a later date in 2021. We were able to gift Lily £607 towards her costs. We hope that Lily is able to finally go to Norway in September 2021.

We were able to financially support and send 6 people from Hope Church Sittingbourne to participate in the 2-year LEAD training programme with Relational Mission. Some of those sent were paid for completely, or had half of their fees paid for from our regular church giving. We trust that in 2 years' time these friends will be better equipped for future ministry, both in the church and in their everyday worlds.

## **Reserves Policy**

The Board of Trustees has established a policy to cover day-to-day cashflow and also any financial liabilities in the event of a sudden and unexpected drop in income, or the closure of the charity.

The Reserves Policy states that a figure of £5,000 should be maintained for the above.

## **Leadership and Staffing**

Gordon and Natalie Watson continue to lead the church-plant as the pioneering couple sent by our parent church, Cornerstone City Church (Medway), and are spiritually supported by Adam & Susie Voke (Cornerstone City Church, Medway) alongside David and Tricia King (New Life Church, Tunbridge Wells), both of whom are the lead eldership couples for their respective Relational Mission churches.

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Throughout 2020 Gordon Watson was employed on a self-employed part-time basis. These hours were revised throughout the year. It is our hope that in April of 2021 the Trust will be in a position to employ Gordon under PAYE.

Natalie Watson volunteered to operate one day a week as our Christians Against Poverty (CAP) Life Skills Manager. A supporting team included Chris Willmott and Teresa Buston, both of whom also underwent training with CAP.

The team were able to deliver an online trial of the Life Skills programme with a handful of friends from Hope Church Sittingbourne. This 8-week course was a great start for our team and helped them to familiarise themselves with the content and its delivery. It is our hope that in 2021 the course will be able to be delivered in-person and in partnership with other local agencies, with referrals from supporting organisations such as local churches, Swale Foodbank and local housing associations.

Adam & Lizzie Gregory continued to lead worship throughout the pandemic, recording short videos which were made available on YouTube with accompanying lyrics to aid those watching in singing along.

Our 6 LEAD delegates started LEAD in August 2020, and although the training was online, they each seemed to benefit from various aspects of the course. As part of LEAD, they are each assigned a local mentor, having regular reviews on their personal experience and development on LEAD. Our hope is that in 2021 the LEAD delegates will be able to meet physically at the local base with others from across Relational Mission.

## **Overview of Church Life and Activities**

### **Vision of multiplication for 2020**

In the run up to 2020 we felt God was speaking to us about a multiplication of faith and disciples across the town of Sittingbourne, and that we were to start preparing ourselves so we were able to walk in step with this spiritual increase.

We multiplied from one midweek group to two new HOPE Groups. These were launched in mid-January and led by Jonathan and Teresa Butson and Adam and Lizzie Gregory. As COVID-19 caused the UK to enter its first lockdown we took the decision to merge these two new groups back together as one single online group.

### **Swale Foodbank & an appointed trustee**

From March 2020 the local Sittingbourne Foodbank became a charity in its own right, renaming as Swale Foodbank to encompass their wider mission to Sheppey and Faversham.

The Hope Church Sittingbourne Trustees agreed for Gordon Watson to serve as a Trustee for this new charity, serving specifically in a role to help develop their new policies and also to develop systems for their finances, including overseeing their premises management and employment contracts.

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Hope Church Sittingbourne became a member church of Swale Foodbank, encouraging at least 5 people from Hope Church Sittingbourne to give a small monthly gift to the Swale Foodbank.

**Easter online**

Due to COVID-19 restrictions all of our planned Easter services were revised at short notice.

Gordon Watson was able to take a lead for Churches Together in Sittingbourne in helping organise and deliver an online Good Friday service in partnership with other local church leaders on YouTube. This eleventh-hour provision was greatly appreciated and had great representation from across the local body of Christian believers.

Our Easter Sunday Celebration service was hosted on Facebook Live with viewing numbers in excess of 1,000 views. We were very thankful to be able to offer a broad celebration service online to believers beyond our local context. This was during a season when many UK churches were unequipped to offer online provision.

**Registered as members with the Evangelical Alliance**

On 7<sup>th</sup> May we were able to register as a member church of the Evangelical Alliance. Their policy is that new churches have to have been established for at least 2 years before they can become members. 7<sup>th</sup> May 2020 marked 2 years to the day since the Watson family moved to plant Hope Church Sittingbourne.

**3 people are baptised**

Following a short-message on baptism in water, 3 people responded to the invitation to be baptised. Between 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020 we had the privilege of baptising these 3 dear friends in bathtubs in local homes (due to COVID-19 restrictions), videoing their baptisms and sharing the moment with the Hope Church Sittingbourne community afterwards.

**A Christmas like no other**

On 20<sup>th</sup> December 2020 we hosted Christmas Unwrapped, an online Carol Service with Rachel Brooke. We had a large number of people connecting in with the service which was a combination of sung carols and engaging video content. We are thankful for Rachel's excellent leading of the event throughout.

We brought 2020 to a close with our HOPE online Christmas Party on Christmas Eve. The evening was a fun social occasion with many of the church in attendance. The evening was a light hearted mix of jokes, Christmas jumpers, highlights from the year passing and hopes for the new year ahead.

**Partnership with Relational Mission**

2020 presented multiple opportunities for Hope Church Sittingbourne to engage with and foster deeper connection with Relational Mission, our family of churches. Our employment of Gordon Watson enabled us to release a portion of his employed hours (in a season when the local church had less demand) to serve beyond the local context within our family of churches.

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**The Swale Squad**

We continued to find a growing level of synergy between Hope Church Sittingbourne, Faversham Community Church and the Sheppey Gospel Plant. As three local Relational Mission church families in Swale, we partner together to encourage and spur one another on, both practically, and in prayer. This emerging friendship between the three churches is affectionately known as #swalesquad.

**Relational Mission Community**

During 2020, Relational Mission birthed 6 new Communities (RMCs) across the UK, primarily as a vehicle towards extending our combined apostolic mission of starting and strengthening churches, as well as fostering more meaningful relationships and connection between the churches within each RMC.

Adam Voke of Cornerstone City Church (our sending church) has been appointed to lead one of these RMCs. It was an easy decision for our church-plant to be aligned within this community. We are thankful that nearby friends Faversham Community Church and New Life Church, Tunbridge Wells are also in this community.

At the future point when elders are appointed to spiritually govern Hope Church Sittingbourne, the decision of which Relational Mission Community we most strongly relate to will be revisited.

**ENOUGH prayer**

We were privileged to be able to participate in all of the ENOUGH prayer initiatives that were hosted throughout 2020 in partnership with both local and global church families from across the UK, Europe and nations beyond.

The ENOUGH initiative continues to speak into our local and global mission as a family of churches.

**Taking Church Communities Online**

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March and April 2020, Gordon Watson organised a collaborative group of 6 leaders from across Relational Mission to help deliver 3 webinars. These webinars were specifically aimed at equipping churches from across the spectrum to operate and deliver their services in the new digital space.

A large number of churches from across different networks, streams and denominations took part in the 3 webinars.

**Everyone a Witness team**

In March 2020, Gordon Watson took on a facilitatory role in leading the Everyone a Witness team. It was felt that the COVID-19 pandemic presented a window of opportunity for local believers to effectively communicate the Gospel message in word and deed.

Gordon spent 9 months gathering a core-team to lead a wider team representing established and pioneering Relational Mission contexts from across the globe. This team,

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once established, was then entrusted to David Bareham and Steve Dunn to move it into its next season.

**The 'Take a Step' initiative**

As part of leading the Everyone a Witness team, Gordon helped to develop, co-ordinate and deliver a 10-week online course to help people gain Gospel confidence in their everyday lives.

This course was a combination of written and recorded materials which involved a team of 20 people in its conception, development and production.

The course has in excess of 4,500 views and has served as a great free resource to equip believers in their everyday opportunities to witness to friends, family, neighbours, colleagues and complete strangers.

**PLANT UK**

As part of the new apostolic vision of Relational Mission, Gordon Watson was invited to join Stef Liston in a small team to help deliver the inaugural PLANT UK event which was hosted online on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> November 2020.

The event helped to catalyse further the collective vision of multiplying 100 New Testament churches across the UK by 2040. The weekend featured a combination of real-life stories from those who have planted or are planting new church expression, along with inspirational and equipping sessions to help the delegates better understand their next steps in the journey ahead.

It is the hope of the PLANT UK team that this will become an annual event with other touch points throughout the year.

**Summary**

We are incredibly thankful for all that God has done throughout 2020, even through the seemingly barren season of COVID-19 restrictions.

In many ways this was a year that no one was expecting or had predicted, but through the year there were many highlights as we saw the local church community continue to establish and flourish in new and unexpected ways.

We have many hopes and aspirations together for 2021, but if this year has taught us anything, it is to hold all of our plans loosely and to make the most of the day that we find ourselves in.



# **HOPE CHURCH SITTINGBOURNE**

## **ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

Bankers: Nat West Bank plc  
PO Box 209  
Sittingbourne  
Kent  
ME10 4AU

Independent Examiner: Mr Rob Trice MAAT  
210 King George Road  
Chatham  
Kent  
ME5 0PH

# **Hope Church Sittingbourne Annual Report**

## **Year Ended 31 December 2020**

### **Governance & Trustees**

Hope Church Sittingbourne is governed by its Constitution dated 16<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

The Registered Office is Hope Church Sittingbourne, 32 Homewood Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1XW.

The Trustees are:

Jonathan Hugh Butson  
Jite Ufuoma Idowu  
Nathaniel Turner  
Christine Monica Willmott

### **Legal Status**

Hope Church Sittingbourne is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the Charity Commission. Charity Number: 1186867.

### **Charitable Objects**

The purpose of the Church shall be:

- (1) The advancement of the Christian faith in Sittingbourne and in such other areas as the Charity Trustees may from time to time decide.

## **Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Hope Church Sittingbourne**

This Report on the accounts of the Church for the year ended 31 December 2020, which are set out in this annual report, is in respect of an examination carried out under s.145 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

### **Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and the examiner**

As Trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 144(2) of the Act does not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the Act.

### **Basis of this report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 144(5)(b) of the Act. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

### **Independent Examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

*Rob W Trice*

17th May 2021

Mr Rob Trice MAAT  
210 King George Road  
Chatham, Kent, ME5 0PH

# Hope Church Sittingbourne

## Receipts & Payments Account - Year Ended 31 December 2020

	First Year 2020 £
<b>RECEIPTS</b>	
Giving (Gift Aided)	22,575.00
Giving (Non Gift Aided)	7,338.25
HMRC Gift Aid repayment	4,965.75
Financial Support	5,427.26
ACTS 435 income	840.00
Refunded expenditure	1,234.85
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>42,381.11</b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>	<b>2020 £</b>
Employee wages and salaries	23,656.00
Travelling	156.70
Printing	158.05
Office Stationery & Admin	364.02
Computer & software	798.29
Mobile Charges	217.96
Business Insurance	272.82
Equipment	469.49
Books bought	92.39
Food & drink	174.95
Family Fund	885.67
Gift (visiting speakers)	1,320.00
Gift (missional support)	3,592.98
Mission trips	(30.00)
CAP Life Skills	804.89
Cleaning	33.06
Miscellaneous expenses	187.51
Subscriptions	189.00
DBS/Safeguarding	221.25
Training Costs	2,390.00
Conference tickets	150.00
Venue/Hall hire	817.15
Independent examiner	-
ACTS 435 expenditure	690.00
Office Equipment and IT - cost	498.41
Unrecorded payments	254.50
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	<b>38,365.09</b>
<b>Excess of Receipts over Expenditure</b>	<b>4,016.02</b>
<b>General Fund Balance brought forward</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Funds introduced</b>	<b>4,135.67</b>
<b>General Fund Balance carried forward</b>	<b>8,151.69</b>

**Hope Church Sittingbourne**  
**Statement of Assets and Liabilities - As At 31 December 2020**

	2020 £
Bank Balances	
- #1 Main Account	3,693.89
- #2 Hope CAP Funds	324.80
- #3 Training & Future Staffing	3,371.00
- #4 Building Fund	1.00
- #5 Crisis/Family Fund	761.00
	<u>8,151.69</u>

Assets	
Office Equipment and IT - cost	<u>498.41</u>



May 2021

Signed on behalf of Hope Church Sittingbourne

Jonathan Butson  
Treasurer.

# Hope Church Sittingbourne

## Notes to the Accounts - Year Ended 31 December 2020

1. The accounts have been prepared using the receipts and payments basis.

### 2. Funds Movement Note

	<b>Brought Forward £</b>	<b>Receipts £</b>	<b>Payments £</b>	<b>Transfers £</b>	<b>Carried Forward £</b>
Unrestricted Funds	-	40,756.78	(37,058.89)	(4.00)	3,693.89
Hope CAP Funds	-	750.00	(426.20)	1.00	324.80
Training & Future Staffing Fd	-	3,370.00	-	1.00	3,371.00
Building Fund	-	-	-	1.00	1.00
Crisis/Family Fund	-	800.00	(190.00)	1.00	611.00
ACTS 435	-	840.00	(690.00)	-	150.00
	-	46,516.78	(38,365.09)	-	8,151.69