

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Bentley Baptist Church.

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31 December 2023, which are set out on pages 2 to 3.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

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 all 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 in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Name: Mark David Kidney

Qualifications: BA (Hons), ACMA

Address: 6 Akeferry Road, Westwoodside, DONCASTER, DN9 2DX

Date: 1st February 2024

Bentley Baptist Church Accounts - Year Ending 31st Dec 2023

Summary

Income £98,880.41

Expenditure (£116,297.77)

Surplus for the year	(£17,417.36)
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Bank Accounts (Instant Access & Petty Cash)

Brought Forward £54,950.20

Transfer from/(to) Saving Account £0.00

Movement in Year (Net Income & Expenditure) (£17,417.36)

Sub Total as per Dec 23 Statements	£37,532.84
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Business Reserve Account / Longer Term Savings

Opening Balance £37,042.85

Transfer from/(to) Current Accounts £0.00

Bank Interest £836.94

Sub Total	£37,879.79
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Net Funds	£75,412.63
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Summary of Income & Expenditure

Income: Offering / Donations	£83,302.03
Income: Grants/Loans	£0.00
Income: Gift Aid refund	£13,958.11
Income: Other	£1,620.27
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	£98,880.41

Expense: Staff Costs	(£39,396.91)
Expense: Building	(£27,216.96)
Expense: Gifts	(£9,471.04)
Expense: Repairs	(£21,560.75)
Expense: Loan Repayment / Loan Given	(£200.00)
Expense: Other	(£18,452.11)
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	(£116,297.77)

Net Inflow	(£17,417.36)
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Minister's Report for 2024 AGM

Looking Back on 2023

Our focus for 2023 was 'Who are you?' given to us by God from 2 Corinthians 5:17, which tells us we are "a new creation", as well as "be transformed" (Romans 12:2) which were passages God had spoken to the elders about on several occasions.

We agreed that our preaching focus and ongoing discernment about how to be a church hub with spiritual outposts was served well by this focus.

4 Key Strategic Goals for 2023 In line with our vision to Make Disciples who Make Disciples , and informed by our Discipleship Journey Strategy	What did we achieve?
Enable Bentley BC to explore and understand the vision to plant Church Outposts	The concept of outpost church continued to be shared through preaching and church meetings. We also welcomed a visit from Chrissy Remsberg and Chris Knight (Beacon Church and Firestarters Network), who shared with us how they have been using a multi-congregational church model to grow. In 2023 we also welcomed our first new church members who exclusively attend our Stepping Stones outpost church and not the Sunday morning service.
Train and develop leaders to lead in the Church Hub and to plant and lead Church Outposts	To train and equip new leaders we have begun a new leadership course – the 'Empower' course – and welcomed new church outpost leaders. We have also been pleased to welcome those from other churches onto the course.
Discern what and where the next two Church Outposts should be	Whilst we haven't had confirmation from God, nor a specific plan of action to formally start a new outpost church, we have been excited by the ministry of Broderick and Ancelater at the Kirkstone Close Community Centre as they began stepping out in running a Bible study and prayer time following their existing craft group. We have also been exploring the potential for a church outpost in a local care home, though once again nothing concrete is in place.

Employ a new Youth and Children's Worker to help us continue to develop our work with children and young people	<p>We began advertising for a new Youth and Children's Worker in mid-2023 but were unsuccessful in our first attempt to appoint.</p> <p>Following this, Toby Davies applied for the position, and following interviews and prayerful discernment, the church decided to invite him to take on the role, which he started in January 2024. Toby was formally commissioned on Sunday 14th January.</p>
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Sunday Teaching

During 2023, we ran a teaching series on the Great Commission of Jesus (to make disciples who make disciples); explored our identity in Jesus, asking: 'Who are you?'; looked at 'Encounters with Jesus' in the Gospels; taught around the theme of 'Overcoming'; explored some popular Psalms; and of course placed our focus upon Easter and Christmas during those seasons.

Of particular note was our series on Human Sexuality, accompanied by many discussions and two opportunities to discuss big questions on this theme with the church leadership. We were very pleased that though many of us were challenged by the different topics and/or held different views to one another, we remained unified in love with a mature and Christ-like attitude displayed by most of the church.

I am overjoyed that many people have been able to respond for prayer or give their lives to Jesus through our Sunday ministry and there are many testimonies of God's goodness as a result!

Looking Up – what is God saying?

As we press into 2024, the Elders believe God is calling us to the focus of 'Be Holy, because I AM Holy' (1 Peter 1:16). This will be reflected in the Elder's personal growth and devotions, as well as our teaching series and culture.

We also strongly feel that this is a year of mission, when God will pour us out into the surrounding streets and areas of the city to reach the lost in a significant way. This has been confirmed by several opportunities God has given us in the coming year and a prophetic vision given to Evelyn Lithgow, who had seen *'the church building, with water flowing out into the streets and community from every door and window'*. This fits well with the theme of Holiness, as we will be unable to pour out God's goodness to those around us if we are being held back by areas in our lives in need of transformation.

Looking Forward – Minister and Elders' Strategic Objectives for 2024

1. Investing in Toby and our Youth and Children's ministry
2. Two Alpha Courses - one daytime course at Renew 127 through Winter/Spring, and one evening course in the Summer months when the evenings are lighter

3. Two Summer Missions:

- Bentley members to receive training and be a hub for one of Kyria 180's 'Big 3' City outreach missions in May
- Partner with an American team sent by Youth for Christ (YFC) working in Bentley schools and community in June

Ongoing Objectives

- Planting Outpost churches to create capacity for growth
- Ensure health and growth of our Life Groups

Joel Ward
Minister

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Secretary's Report

The Admin Team exists to resource and equip frontline ministries to fulfil the vision of the church

Nearly five thousand people came through the door for our main services in 2023. The averages per week were 82.2 Adults, Youth 5.4 and Children 15.1. Our Second Sunday services averaged 22.1 Adults. On three occasions, we had over 120 people in the building - on Easter Sunday, when the Orlando Mission visited, and on November 12th.

With no credit to Richard Curtis, in 2023 we had four weddings and a funeral.

Once again, we have been blessed with new people coming into church. We have had 10 new members (although we lost four, who either stopped attending or resigned). The membership, which stands at 77, does not reflect the number of new people coming to church.

A really good measure of where we are at is the number of people giving their lives to God through baptism. It is always a special time and in 2023 we saw 9 people baptised.

As a CIO, it is important for the Leadership Team to enhance their skills and build up their knowledge. To that end, three of us attended the Fresh Streams Conference in January, and three of us attended the two-day Firestarters conversation at Headingley (Leeds) at the end of February.

In addition, all of the Leadership Team, along with others in church, have completed their Level 2 Safeguarding Training, and those that were identified as requiring a higher level have completed their Level 3 Safeguarding Training.

In September, the wider leadership once again had an away-day on the outskirts of Sheffield. This was a chance to pray, listen to God, and discern what He was saying for the church moving forward in Bentley.

November saw 10 church members undergo a day's First Aid Training.

Most areas of church life are covered in individual reports, and I thank everyone who gives their time for God's work. I will mention Peter, who is here most Sundays to provide tea and coffee for us as we arrive, and those that step up to serve refreshments after the services, greet at the door, and look after our youngest children in the creche.

The biggest change to Admin came in 2023 with the arrival of Church Suite. It will take time for everyone to get used to using it to its full potential, and thanks go to Lorraine for setting everything up.

Andrew Thompsett
Church Secretary