

**Abbotsham Baptist Church  
Annual Report for the year 2021  
Charity Number 1191292**

**Registered Address** – Green Cliff Lane, Abbotsham, Bideford, Devon EX39 5AP

**Trustees –**

Mrs H Reynolds, Secretary  
Mrs P Fishleigh, Treasurer  
Mr N Booth, Chair Person  
Mr G Williams

**Membership** – The current membership number is 14. Regular Sunday Service attendance is between 20 and 30.

**Principle purposes of the Church**

- The advancement of the Christian faith according to the principles of the Baptist denomination.
- The advancement of Christian education and other Christian charitable purposes in the United Kingdom and other parts of the world.

The church has read the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit, and is satisfied that the activities outlined below clearly demonstrate that the charity is providing a benefit to the public.

**Services**

Sunday services take place every Sunday at 10:30 am. Holy Communion is celebrated on the third Sunday of the month. Services are led by members of our own fellowship and by a known and trusted small group of visiting speakers including some registered Baptist ministers.

**The purpose of the annual report**

The purpose of the annual report is to report on how the church has been able to fulfil its aims and objectives as defined in the constitution over the course of the year.

The year continued to be impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic, changing the church's pattern of worship, preaching and pastoral care. However, we are thankful to God that ministry has continued and the church was able to reunite in physical worship in the chapel during the Autumn and this has continued uninterrupted. It is undoubtedly true that the impact of the social constrictions has affected people's well-being, placing differing demands on the church's capacity for pastoral care. We have seen some of the congregation's health and confidence deteriorate during the year. The pattern of our communication has changed, the use of electronic communication and "Zoom" meetings have been a regular feature. Meanwhile, the church has through prayer, news updates and financial means continued to support both overseas and local Christian ministry partners. We rejoice to share in these forms of gospel outreach. Mission partners are: Baptist Home Mission, Baptist Missionary Society, Arab World Mission, Barnabas fund, Christians Against Poverty, Counties and David Symons, the Fawzi family, Laura-Lee Lovering, MAFF, Tim Derbyshire, Rehoboth and Wings.

**Worship and teaching**

For the year up to Autumn the church did not hold physical services. However, the Sunday planned teaching programme continued in a recorded form and was published on the church website. We thank God for the faithful support of our visiting preachers in preparing these sermons at home,

especially as several of them had to learn new IT skills to do so. The feedback we received was very positive and it was of great significance in maintaining the unity of the church.

The trustees were very concerned that high quality spiritual support and encouragement should be provided for everybody possible during a time of great spiritual challenge. In response to this need midweek daily bible study notes were provided covering a range of New and Old Testament books and were emailed to all those on the church's contact list. Additionally, each week an email newsletter was sent out along with a prayer diary. The newsletter contained fellowship news while the prayer diary provided a structured approach to pray for the fellowship, our mission partners, our own outreach courses, local and national issues. The base content of the prayer diary is the BMS prayer diary and in this way the fellowship is kept up to date with the projects of our own denominational missionary society.

The midweek Zoom meeting in 2020 using the Bible Society's Bible Course was so successful that we decided to keep the pattern going. During 2021 we followed Christianity Explored, some of the Alpha course video material and Discipleship Explored. We were joined by some people who are not currently attendees at ABC. These included some who have in the past been part of the church, some who had contacts with our members by other means including people who one might term investigators of the Christian faith. These midweek Zoom meetings probably increased the amount of faith based dialogue from that which was common pre-pandemic because they were such focused meetings and the content of the videos was of a high quality. They also enabled prayer over issues raised in the sessions.

Once we were able to resume Sunday services in the chapel it was a time of rejoicing. We were conscious that several of our congregation have to be very careful about potential infection and so Covid protocols including the wearing of masks during services has continued into 2022. We have invested in an air purifier to further improve preventative measures. Other members of the congregation have not been able to return to Sunday services due to deterioration in health or the need to isolate.

#### **CIO**

The January AGM saw the start of our new charitable status as a CIO. However, the process of merging the old and new charities has continued through the year and is still not completed. The major obstacle has been opening new bank accounts in the name of the CIO as banks were not opening new charitable accounts for the first half of the year. This has now been overcome but there remains work to be completed with HMRC and a completion of the legal process. We have to thank Pat for the huge amount of work she has done in this field facing considerable frustrations along the way.

#### **Pastoral Care**

Last year we reported that as a Fellowship we should aim to all support each other, and this has worked out in practice. The Pastoral Care Team co-ordinate and where possible give extra support as needed. The team is smaller now, as Rita moved to a different church midway through 2021. We are grateful for her kindness, hard work and dedication to the church over many years. The current team is Sara and Marge and Liz has said she hopes to join the team when she is able.

All birthdays within the Fellowship are celebrated with a card. Pastoral visiting is less frequent because of the Covid risk but still occurs along with supportive phone calls.

#### **Children and Youth**



In 2021 the church did not have any young children in regular attendance. The church is delighted that a teenage member of one church family is an active participant in the church and once the church re-opened for Sunday services has been in regular attendance. His preference is to stay in for the full service rather than have separate provision. He was also a regular and positive participant in the midweek Zoom courses held throughout the year.

As a church we are very conscious of the need to be prepared to make high quality provision for children should they come to church and be supportive of families. It has been agreed to prepare contingency materials. The regular booking of the village hall has been stopped but it can be booked with a week's notice so withdrawal groups can happen.

#### **Fabric**

The church has started the process of obtaining a 5 yearly building survey. A grant has become available to offset part of the cost. The Baptist Union strongly recommend this approach although it is not yet a legal requirement for Baptist Churches. (It is a legal requirement for CofE churches.) The grant has been agreed and the survey will take place in 2022.

As the Chapel building continues to be open during 'Covid' we have made changes in line with the restrictions and Baptist Union recommendations. These include an adapted lectern screen, a vestry hand sanitising station and the latest air purifier. The changes have helped the fellowship feel safe. We have a one way system with separate entrance and exit doors.

A small scale 'spring clean' included an attic tidy up and subsequent storage of unused items which had been temporarily placed within the main worship area. Our paid cleaner continues to visit for basic weekly cleaning.

Externally shrubs as well as undergrowth adjoining our land have recently been tidied. Weeds in the paved area have been treated. We continue to have regular visits from our usual professional window cleaner. The front railing has recently been re-painted and a tidy up of all other exterior paintwork is planned for this spring. High level cleaning and whatever decorating requirements are deemed necessary is also being arranged for later in the year.

We are planning to increase the front door security measures which will mean that the more modern and secure 'rear door' becomes our first point of entry and last point of exit when locking up. Members will be advised when the work is complete. Our regular electrical inspection has been carried out by one of our own members - Garth Reynolds

Many thanks to those who have assisted with the ongoing maintenance and buildings paperwork.

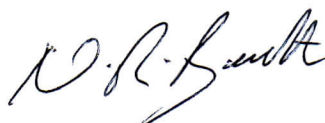
#### **Trustees and Church meetings**

The trustees met monthly, initially via Zoom and then physically once the lifting of restrictions allowed. There are filed minutes for all meetings. The trustees' role is the oversight of all the functions of the church. The church has continued with quarterly members' meetings following the same pattern of initially meeting on Zoom and then in the chapel.

**Nick Booth**

**Chair of Trustees on behalf of the Trustees**

**20.01.2022**

  
20th Jan 2022

ABBOTSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS  
FOR THE PERIOD 15.9.20 TO 31.12.21

Receipts

Offerings	1649.00
Gifts	4743.30
Giving through Gift Aid	6739.99
Tax Refund	1406.25
HSBC compensation	40.00
Sub Total	<u>14578.54</u>
Trans in from Dep A/C	9594.05
TOTAL	<u>24172.59</u>

Expenses

Speakers	1360.00
Gifts	10175.00
Teaching	560.52
Services	741.62
Utilities	1160.22
Cleaning	350.33
taxi	0.00
Admin	1036.13
Equipment	2014.59
Building	0.00
Legal Fees	1801.80
Total	<u>19200.21</u>
Trans to Deposit a/c	10000.00
	<u>29200.21</u>

Receipts Less Expenses -5027.62

interest from deposit accounts 1.27

Bank Accounts

Current Account opening balance 15.9.20	34543.15
add receipts	<u>24172.59</u>
	58715.74
less expenses	<u>29200.21</u>
Closing balance 31.12.21	<u>29515.53</u>

Deposit account closing balance 31.12.21 10000.00

The Deacons approve the Accounts and Statement of Assets and Liabilities  
set out above for the period 15.9.21 to 31.12.21

Signed (Treasurer)

Dated

20/1/22

Report of the Independent Examiner for the deacons and members of  
Abbotsham Baptist Chapel

In accordance with the provisions of Section 42 of the Charities Act 1993, I have examined the  
Receipts and Payments Accounts of the Church set out above relating to the period 15.9.20 to 31.12.21

The examination did not extend to a comprehensive audit of such Accounts or Statement. I  
confirm that the Accounts and Statement accord with the accounting records of the Chapel. I am not  
aware of any matter to which attention needs to be drawn in order to obtain a proper understanding  
of the Accounts.

Signed (Independent Examiner)

