

**Abbotsham Baptist Church**  
**Annual Report for the year 2022**  
**Charity Number 1191292**

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

**Trustees –**

Mr N Booth, Chair Person

Mrs P Fishleigh, Treasurer

Mr G Williams, secretary

**Membership** – The current membership number is 16. Regular Sunday Service attendance is between 20 and 30.

**Principal 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 Trustees have read the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit, and are satisfied that the activities outlined below clearly demonstrate that the charity is providing a benefit to the public. It is the view of the Trustees that the Church continues to be a going concern, financially, spiritually and in terms of numbers attending regular services.

**Church governance**

The church has a formal constitution which conforms to the recommended constitution for Baptist churches who are in association with the Baptist Union of Great Britain. It is available from the church on request. Trustees, commonly called deacons, are elected by the church meeting which is the meeting of church members. The term of office for a trustee is three years. A trustee must be a church member. Anyone who is a regular attender of the church and confesses Jesus as their personal Saviour, according to traditional Baptist beliefs, is eligible to apply for membership. It is the church meeting which is the final authority in the church under Christ. The trustees are responsible for the day to day running of the church and are accountable to the church meeting. The Trustees are responsible in law for the decisions made by the church.

**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 church's principal purpose is the advancement of the Christian faith. This is achieved through regular worship, bible teaching and learning, prayer, pastoral care of the congregation and providing opportunities for people to explore the Christian faith for themselves.

At the beginning of the year fairly strict processes were followed to reduce the likelihood of the transmission of Covid. These included spaced seating in family groups, use of an antiviral air purifier, refreshments taken outside and a pathway through the church. Over the year these restrictions have been lifted although seating remains comfortably spaced and we still use the air purifier. We have also reintroduced social events such as a summer high tea, Tearfund Quiz Night and a church meal.

A monthly prayer gathering has been reintroduced and small group bible study is planned for the beginning of 2023.

We have been pleased that attendance has returned to near pre-covid levels with usual attendance being between 20 and 30.

### **Worship and teaching**

Sunday morning services are warm, relaxed times where everybody is valued. There is plenty of time after services to develop relationships and when wanted to receive personal prayer or support. The main aim for the preaching/teaching during 2022 has been to emphasise the Christian spiritual growth of church as the people of God. To achieve this there has been a balance of teaching from the Old Testament about what it meant to be the people of God in Ancient times through the study of Judges. Matthew's gospel has been the means by which Jesus' teaching has been explored and Ephesians was chosen as a New Testament epistle on the theme of church life.

As a fellowship we have also placed an emphasis on invitation and hospitality as a first way to include additional people into church life.

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.

### **Pastoral Care**

Our Pastoral Care team consists of three women who know all our fellowship personally. Our fellowship is small and so folk tend to notice when anyone has been absent for a few weeks and give them a ring. We have an older lady who can never get to chapel now, but we ensure she is visited regularly. We sadly had a bereavement late in 2022, but the fellowship were able to visit the gentleman who died in his final illness. The funeral was taken by a local minister who used to be minister at Abbotsham Baptist. The thanksgiving service was a lovely tribute to his life and Christian faith. We have also a very frail lady who comes along with her carer, but as the carer doesn't usually come in, we have a support network in place for her within the chapel. One of our fellowship has recently moved into a Residential Home, and has been visited by fellowship folk when needed. The church keeps a fund to pay for a taxi for anyone who wishes to come to church but cannot organise transport for themselves through either incapacity or lack of funds.

### **Children and Youth**

In 2022 the church did not have any young children in regular attendance. The church is delighted that a teenage member of one church family is a regular attendee whose preference is to stay in services. We love children coming to church. 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.

We encourage anyone who wishes to bring children to church if even for a one-off service, to let us know in advance if possible so we can prepare suitable activities for them.

### **Communication**

The principal forms of communication with the fellowship outside of meetings has been through electronic methods. A weekly email newsletter is distributed which includes news about our own activities including services, news related to both local and international mission partners and a daily prayer diary the core of which is the Baptist Missionary Society prayer guide. The website has been updated during the year. It always has an up-to-date copy of the newsletter and an audio file of the weekly sermons.

### **Church premises**

The chapel building is an 1852 listed building in a good state of repair. A quinquennial survey was conducted this year and is now the basis for a maintenance plan. Good progress has been made this year. The chapel building is in good order. Regular fire and electrical safety checks are made.

### **Trustees and Church meetings**

The Trustees normally meet on a monthly basis to ensure the smooth administration of the church. Church members' meetings are held quarterly, one of which is the annual general meeting. Church Meetings are held in person in the chapel. A monthly prayer meeting has been reintroduced following the lifting of Covid restrictions.

### **Future Plans**

During 2022 the church held a consultation on the way ahead for midweek activities. These have started to be implemented through increased social opportunities, prayer meetings and opportunities to eat together. In 2023 it is planned to continue with these and also introduce midweek bible study opportunities in homes. There is also the opportunity to hold sessions for those wishing to enquire into the Christian faith or baptism. We will be reviewing the number of mission partners we wish to continue supporting to ensure they have meaningful contact with us during the year and that the financial support reflects the balance of need. The preaching/teaching programme will continue to be planned in advance to ensure preachers have good time to thoroughly prepare.

**Nick Booth**



(Signed)

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

**26.01.2023**

# ABBOTSHAM CHURCH STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

1/01/22 - 31/12/22

## Receipts

Offerings	3911.00
Gifts	2225.00
Giving through Gift Aid	9230.00
Tax Refund	1629.60
BU Support	292.50
HSBC compensation	0.02
Sub Total	<b>17288.12</b>
Trans in from Dep A/C	0.00
TOTAL	<b>17288.12</b>

## Expenses

Speakers	1990.00
Gifts	9090.00
Teaching	265.59
Services	803.67
Utilities	1089.60
Cleaning	1227.40
taxi	40.00
Admin	1030.46
Equipment	230.99
Building	2051.61
Legal Fees	0.00
Total	<b>17819.32</b>
Trans to Deposit a/c	0.00
	<b>17819.32</b>

Receipts Less Expenses -531.20

interest from deposit accounts 9.62

## Chapel account

Balance b/fwd	29515.53
add receipts	17288.12
less payments	17819.32
Closing Balance	<b>28984.33</b>


## Deposit Account

Bal b/fwd	10000.00
add interest	9.62
closing balance	<b>10009.62</b>

The Deacons approve the Accounts and Statement of Assets and Liabilities  
the year ending 31 December 2022

Signed (Treasurer)

Dated

 26/1/23

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 year ending December 2022. 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)

