

For the period 29th October 2020 to 30th September 2021

Objectives

The charity's objectives are defined in the constitution as follows:

"The promotion and practice of the Christian faith as expressed in the 'Articles of Religion of The Free Methodist Church in the United Kingdom' by organising regular meetings for worship, teaching, community support, evangelism and prayer and by supporting other organisations who share similar aims. These objectives will be carried out primarily, but not exclusively, in Bentham and surrounding areas."

Although interrupted by the restrictions to control the COVID epidemic, the trustees have endeavoured to remain faithful to these objectives in the period covered by this report:

- We have held weekly meetings in person as permitted and offered online substitutes where necessary in order to continue to worship and teach our church community. We have utilised a variety of speakers to this end including our own lay and ordained leaders and invited speakers from Free Methodist and other evangelical churches.
- We have held weekly prayer meetings online and made available lines of communication to receive and distribute requests for prayer from our members and others where appropriate.
- Other events aimed at strengthening our connection with the local community were organised:

A holiday club for primary school aged children.

A "light party" substitute for Halloween.

A musical evening with a professional classical musician.

A harvest meal.

Carol singing in the community.

- The trustees have determined that a minimum tithe of 10% of all income to the charity should be allocated to support other organisations with similar aims. Some of the organisations supported from this tithe are:

The Adullam Project provides help and training for some of society's needful members.

Bradford Red Cross in support of their work with Syrian refugees.

Bentham Older People Together providing community services and companionship to Bentham's older citizens.

SportsReach uses sport, particularly football and netball to reach young people at home and abroad with the Christian message.

The Bethany Project runs an orphanage and school in Tanzania.

Missions without Borders International works in six of the poorest countries in Europe and offers practical and spiritual support.

Free Methodist Church in Győr, Hungary to support the cost of a member of staff in that church.

Finances

The charity does not undertake money raising events but relies on free will offerings from members and attendees. Many of the members contribute by monthly standing orders and many of these are from taxed income and, together with a substantial proportion of cash income, qualify for Gift Aid income tax recovery.

A summary of the financial position of the charity is:

Free will offerings		£	20,670
Income Tax Recoved			2,475
Total Income in the period		£	23,145
Room Hire	£	1,447	
Visiting Speakers		750	
Performance Licences		540	
Insurance		413	
Printing		479	
Other Expenses		1,314	
Total Expenses in the period		4,943	
Other Causes		3,183	
Total Expenses and Causes			8,126
Surplus for the period		£	15,019
"Free" reserves at the end of the period		£	21,156

Governance

When planning the church's activities the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion.

The charity's governing document is the CIO dated 29th October 2020. The four founding trustees, who also form the church leadership team, served until the annual meeting of members which was held on 18th January 2022 at which they offered themselves for re-appointment and were duly appointed unanimously in a ballot vote. They meet monthly for prayer and planning and are conscious of their responsibilities under relevant charity law. They are assisted and advised by a team of three members who undertake practical responsibility for finance and other administrative functions.

The trustees are:

Mr Thomas Fawcett
Mr David Lawson
Mr Steven Lawson
Rev Dr Marcella Marie Potts

The church is affiliated with the Free Methodist Church in the United Kingdom and derives fellowship and guidance from that wider network. In turn, the denomination benefits from the contribution the church is able to make both practically and financially.

The trustees have recognised the need for the appointment of a paid pastor to more effectively carry out the objectives of the charity. To that end, a recruitment advertisement has been placed with a view to an appointment being made for the latter part of 2022.

None of the trustees have received any benefit from the charity save for the reimbursement of expenses legitimately incurred on its behalf.

Signed on behalf of the trustees:

.....

David Lawson (Chair)
21st February 2022