

For the year to 30th September 2022 (reflecting decisions taken at the annual member's meeting held on 17th February 2023)

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."

The trustees consider that they have met these objectives by the following activities:

With the lifting of government restrictions imposed for the COVID epidemic, weekly live worship services were reintroduced. Meeting in the Low Bentham Victoria Institute, average attendance across the age groups is about 50. We conclude each Sunday service with a time of fellowship over refreshments. Our messages are recorded and uploaded to YouTube each week where we have an average of 100 views.

Our Sunday School has a total of thirteen enrolled with an average attendance of six. We also have a monthly meeting of teens and twenties; "Firepit" has an average of 12 attending. In alternate months, we host a Sunday evening Youth Service in Burton Pavilion with an average attendance of 30.

Our prayer meeting meets weekly in the home of one of the members with an option to join by Zoom link for those who prefer. We offered a "Picnic in the Park" on Tuesdays in August for mums with pre-school children.

A ladies group meets for fellowship and Bible study and a men's group has met over breakfast and for a local walk.

A pastor was appointed to the church effective from 1st February 2023 and we are excited to see how this appointment will impact the ministries of the church and our relationships in the community.

We continue to reserve a minimum 10% of our income to other causes and have nominated five to receive a share of this support this year:

- Adullam Programme, a recovery programme in Lancaster.
- Project Scotland, a start up in a deprived area of Glasgow.
- The Pantry, a food club in Bentham.
- Bentham Older People Together, a friendship club.
- Sportsreach, using sport to take the gospel mainly to the UK and Europe.

We will become full members of the Free Methodist Church in the UK at our meeting on 30th April 2023.

Finance

The charity continues to rely on the free will offerings of its members, many of whom choose to remit directly to the bank account and the church is able to benefit from the government Gift Aid scheme.

A summary of the year is as follows:

Free will offerings	£	29,699	
Income Tax Recoved		7,676	
Total Income in the period		£ 37,375	
Room Hire	£	2,501	
Visiting Speakers		1,057	
Performance Licences		820	
Insurance		389	
Other Expenses		2,427	
Total Expenses in the period	£	7,194	
Other Causes		4,830	
Total Expenses and Causes		£ 12,024	
Surplus for the period		£ 25,351	
Balances at the start of the period	£	22,473	
Balances at the end of the period	£	47,824	

Governance

Rev Dr Marcella Marie Potts resigned as a trustee prior to the annual meeting held on 17th February 2023 and the newly appointed pastor, Alan Parkinson was proposed as a replacement. The annual meeting voted by ballot and, together with the pastor,

Mr Thomas Fawcett,
Mr David Lawson and
Mr Steven Lawson were unanimously appointed as trustees.

The trustees will continue to meet monthly, as the "Pastoral LeadershipTeam" to provide spiritual oversight and direction to the church. They will be assisted by the "Administrative Leadership Team" who will provide advice on practical matters and will meet with the PLT on a quarterly basis.

Other than the pastor, who is paid a stipend in accordance with Free Methodist conference guidelines, and the reimbursement of expenses incurred on behalf of the church, including travel, none of the trustees are remunerated for their services.

Signed on behalf of the trustees:
David Lawson (Chair), 3rd May 2023