

For the year to 30th September 2025

The trustees submit their report for the financial year to 30th September 2025.

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 believe that they have met these objectives in the following ways::

They continue to hold Sunday morning worship services in rooms rented at Low Bentham Victoria Institute (LBVI). Our service has a mix of contemporary and traditional Christian music and a time of Bible based teaching as well as prayer. Occasional Sunday evening services are held at the same venue. Our pastor and some of our congregation are trained in Bible ministry and, together with guest speakers, our services usually follow a theme (for example the epistle of Paul to the Romans, "Lessons from the life of ..." key characters from the Bible). The congregation is encouraged to apply the message to their own walk and witness in the community.

Our Sunday services offer Sunday School classes to primary aged children. A total of twelve people are involved in this ministry on a rota. Every other month we offer a Youth Service in Burton in Lonsdale Sports Pavilion and host young people from a wide radius to hear testimony from Christians in differing walks of life.

Significant occasions within the Christian calendar are marked by special services.

We were pleased to baptise, by immersions, three candidates following the example that we believe the Bible encourages. Thanks go to a local Anglican church for the loan of their baptistry pool.

We have welcomed two families into our fellowship as they have moved into our community.

We have a strong relationship with a newly planted church in Glasgow. We welcomed a team to a weekend of special meetings held in another local village hall and enjoyed their input. In turn, we sponsored a team of six to work alongside them in Glasgow providing support (with a large team from the USA) to a children's sports camp held in July. Two of our members provided practical help as the Glasgow church readied a rented building to be used as a drop in coffee shop and worship centre.

Our outreach into the community continues and in the summer months, we held a series of "Ice Cream Saturdays". On three Saturdays, we served ice cream free of charge to any and all visitors. We are grateful to a local businessman who loaned a traditional ice cream cart for these occasions.

Also in summer, we held a barbecue and offered, free of charge, hamburgers, hot dogs and cakes to visitors. A bouncy castle was hired for the event which also included field games.

Prayer meetings and three house groups meet regularly in the homes of our members. A Zoom link is available for any who can't attend the prayer meeting. Part of our Sunday service is recorded and uploaded to YouTube and is viewed by (a recent average) of close to fifty people.

In the weeks before Christmas, we held separate children's and ladies craft events which were both well attended.

As a church, we participate in events as part of the Churches Together in Bentham group. Such events have included a Good Friday service, an Easter Sunday sunrise service and a monthly gathering in a local supported living complex.

We continue to enjoy the ministry of our pastor and his wife and believe that we see the results of that appointment both in increased numbers and an increasing depth of commitment and growth in the faith of our members.

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

- Adullam Programme, a recovery programme in Lancaster.
- Project Scotland, a start up in a deprived area of Glasgow.
- Bentham Older People Together, a seniors friendship club.
- Sportsreach, using sport to take the gospel mainly to the UK and Europe.
- Open Doors, working with the persecuted church internationally.
- Josiah Ventures, offering spiritual and educational support in Eastern Europe

Governance

The trustees continue to meet monthly, as the "Pastoral Leadership Team" to provide spiritual oversight and direction to the church. They are assisted by the "Administrative Leadership Team" who provide advice on practical matters and 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.

Finance

The charity relies 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 below:

Free will offerings		£	47,806
Income tax recovered			9,112
Total income in the period		£	56,918
Stipend and employee costs	£	29,735	
Visiting Speakers		1,829	
Room Hire		5,080	
Licences and Safeguarding		4,684	
Insurance		1,150	
Church Away Day		4,787	
Other expenses		3,808	
Total expenses in the period		51,073	
Other causes		5,395	
Expenses and other causes		£	56,468
Surplus for the period		£	450
Bank balance at start of period			48,107
Bank balance at end of period		£	48,557

Signed on behalf of the trustees:

Alan Parkinson (Chairman), 27th July 2026